

GSA Council Meeting - List of Reports Circulated
Monday, December 11, 2017
Cancelled

| | Attached Numbered Pages |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Minutes from the 20 November 2017 GSA Council Meeting <i>Attachments:</i> | |
| i. Minutes from the 20 November 2017 GSA Council Meeting | 1.0 - 1.6 |
| 2. President (Babak Soltannia, GSA President) | |
| i. President's Report | 2.0 - 2.3 |
| ii. GSA Board | 2.4 |
| iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee | 2.5 |
| iv. GSA Governance Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| 3. Vice-President Academic (Firouz Khodayari, GSA Vice-President Academic) | |
| i. Vice-President Academic's Report | 3.0 - 3.1 |
| 4. Vice-President External (Masoud Khademi, GSA Vice-President External) | |
| i. Vice-President External's Report | 4.0 - 4.1 |
| ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| 5. Vice-President Labour (Sasha van der Klein, GSA Vice-President Labour) | |
| i. Vice-President Labour's Report | 5.0 - 5.1 |
| ii. GSA Negotiating Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| iii. GSA Labour Relations Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| 6. Vice-President Student Services (Royle Feng, GSA Vice-President Student Services) | |
| i. Vice-President Student Services' Report | 6.0 - 6.1 |
| 7. Senator (Trent Nabe, GSA Senator) | |
| i. Senator's Report (no written report at this time) | |
| 8. Speaker (Joshuha Connauton, GSA Speaker) | |
| i. Speaker's Report (no written report at this time) | |
| 9. Chief Returning Officer (Darcy Bemister, GSA Chief Returning Officer) | |
| i. Chief Returning Officer's Report (no written report at this time) | |
| 10. GSA Nominating Committee (Radim Barta, GSA Nominating Committee Chair) | |
| i. GSA Nominating Committee Report | 10.0 - 10.1 |
| 11. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (Leigh Spanner, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair) | |
| i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report | 11.0 |
| 12. GSA Management (Julie Tanguay, GSA Associate Director and Acting Executive Director) | |
| i. Executive Director's Report | 12.0 - 12.3 |

GSA Council Meeting MINUTES
Monday, November 23, 2017 at 6:00 pm
2-100 University Hall, Van Vliet Complex

IN ATTENDANCE:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| Babak Soltannia (President) | Francesca Jean (Biological Sciences) | Adrian Christ (History & Classics) | Stephen Hunter (Phys Ed & Recreation) |
| Firouz Khodayari (VP Academic) | Ashmita De (Biomedical Engineering) | Kenzie Gordon (Humanities Computing) | Scott Karbashewski (Physics) |
| Masoud Khademi (VP External) | Rongrong Zhang (Business PhD) | Ruqayyah Almizraq (Lab Med & Pathology) | Yilun Wu (Physiology) |
| Sasha van der Klein (VP Labour) | Karl Roesner; Shweta Pipaliya (Cell Biology) | Kris Joseph (Library & Info Studies) | Noureddin Zaaout (Political Science) |
| Royle Feng (VP Student Services) | Michael Armstrong (Chemistry) | Catherine Ford (Linguistics) | Michal Juhas (Psychiatry) |
| Teddy Carter (Deputy Speaker) | Pedro Mateo (Civil & Environmental Engineering) | Michelle Michelle (Math & Statistical Sciences) | Joanna Scanlon; Will Service (Psychology) |
| Darcy Bemister (Chief Returning Officer) | Craig St. Jean (Communication Sciences & Disorders) | Milad Nazarahari (Mechanical Engineering) | Kevin Lien (Public Health) |
| Abdullah Alzubaidi (Councillor-at-Large) | Melissa Woghiren (Computing Science) | Fahed Elian (Medical Genetics) | Alesha Reed (Rehab Science) |
| Spencer Balay (Councillor-at-Large) | Julie Piche (Dentistry) | Quinten Kieser (Med Microbiology & Immunology) | Owain Bamforth (Religious Studies) |
| Kim Nguyen-Phoc (Councillor-at-Large) | Dorian Lang (Drama) | Derya Cinar (MLCS) | Ryan Stanfield (Renewable Resources) |
| Dasha Smirnow (Councillor-at-Large) | Alison Thomas (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences) | Sadie Deschenes (Nursing) | Yangzhe Cao (Resource Economics & Environmental Sociology) |
| Andrews Tawiah (Councillor-at-Large) | Danny Wallbank (Economics) | Jaclyn Hutchinson (Occupational Therapy) | Robert Piazza (Secondary Education) |
| Hongbing Fan (Agricultural, Food & Nutritional Science) | Chantal Labonté (Ed Psych) | Daniel Krys; Braden Chow (Oncology) | Miraaj Yousif (Women's and Gender Studies) |
| Talisha Chaput (Anthropology) | Golam Kibria Chowdhury; Salah Alheejawi (Electrical & Computer Engineering) | Brittany Matenchuk (Paediatrics) | |
| Vicki Kwon (Art & Design) | Nicole Jamison (Elementary Education) | Andrew Woodman (Pharmacology) | |
| Ghazaleh Sedighi (Biochemistry) | Richard Maran (English & Film Studies) | Hamdah Al Nebaihi (Pharmacy & Pharm Sciences) | |

Guests: Dr. Steven Dew (U of A Provost and Vice-President (Academic)); Gitta Kulczycki (U of A Vice-President (Finance and Administration)); Marc Waddingham (Biological Sciences).

Deputy Speaker Teddy Carter in the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Speaker acknowledged the Traditional Territory of Treaty Six and Métis Homeland.

Roll Call

Prepared by L Hareuther and F Robertson for the Council Meeting of 20 November 2017
/Volumes/GoogleDrive/My Drive/Council/Meetings/2017-2018/December 2017/GSA Council 11 December 2017 Item 1 - Minutes GSA Council 20 November 2017.docx

1. Roll Call of Council Members in Attendance

Approval of Agenda

2. Approval of the 20 November 2017 Consolidated Agenda

Members had before them the 20 November 2017 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 17 November 2017. K Gordon **MOVED**; F Khodayari **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

3. Minutes from the 23 October 2017 GSA Council meeting

Members had before them the 23 October 2017 GSA Council Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 10 November 2017. F Khodayari **MOVED**; R Maran **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

Changes in Council Membership

4. Changes in GSA Council Membership

- i. **Introduction of New Councillors**; C St. Jean (Communication Sciences & Disorders); S Deschenes (Nursing); J Piche (Dentistry); B Matenchuk (Paediatrics); A De (Biomedical Engineering); GK Chowdhury (Electrical & Computer Engineering); G Sedighi (Biochemistry); N Zzaamout (Poli Sci).
- ii. **Farewell to Departing Councillors**; None

Councillor Announcements

5. Councillor Announcements

B Soltannia noted that the Non-Academic Staff Association was looking for volunteers to participate in the December 6 event to mark the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. He invited anyone interested in volunteering to contact NASA at nasa@ualberta.ca.

R Feng invited GSA Councillors to participate in the Campus Food Bank (CFB) 25th Anniversary Celebration during the week of November 27, 2017. More information about the Celebration can be found to the CFB website and Facebook.

S van der Klein invited GSA Council members to attend the GSA Coffee Break on November 24 at 1 PM in partnership with Unitea (Community Social Work Team Initiative).

F Khodayari invited GSA Councillors to share their research with high school and elementary students by volunteering for U School.

Presentation

6. Financial Sustainability and the U of A Budget Model

B Soltannia explained that toward the end of Fall term, the GSA invited the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), Steven Dew and the Vice-President (Finance and Administration), Gitta Kulczycki, to attend GSA Council to provide an update on tuition fees and Mandatory Non-Instructional fees. He added that, given the Government of Alberta has not yet released their updated tuition guidelines, S Dew and G Kulczycki offered to attend GSA Council to discuss the University's financial sustainability and the new budget model and planning process.

S Dew explained that the University Administration was currently waiting on output from the Alberta Government around updated tuition regulation. He added that they would return to GSA Council to have a more specific discussion on fees when they received more information from the government. S Dew explained that, in the current funding model, most of the University's operating dollars come from the Campus Alberta grant or from tuition (approximately 70%-30% split). This funding model was under review, in terms of how dollars would be distributed among the 26 institutions in the province.

S Dew noted that, with respect to the Institutional Strategic Work Plan, For the Public Good, which was approved about a year and a half ago, there were 23 objectives and that 15 of them were large in progress initiatives.

G Kulczycki introduced several pieces around the University's financial future. She noted that the University has had a structural deficit for some time, the ongoing commitments being greater than the revenues received. She added that the University relied heavily on investment income and that that source of income needed to be relied on cautiously as investments were subject to

market volatility. She explained that the University wanted to address this deficit and to start having a longer horizon planning and that to reach this goal they were looking at a 4% reduction for 2018-2019 and a 2% cut the two following academic years. S Dew added that the University's financial pressures come from the internal expenses and externally from the government.

She added that the University is moving to a multi-year planning and a new internal funding model and that Administration was meeting with all faculties and units to present these changes. She indicated that a new budget model would neither create nor solve the deficit. S Dew added that the three-year planning framework would create a budget model that helped the University better understand how funds were divided, rather than how much and outlined ways to be more efficient.

GSA Council members asked a series of questions concerning, among many issues, transparency of the process for finding a new framework (G Kulczycki explained that their consultations and reporting have been and will continue to be extensive; S Dew added that the new budget model will be a place to start from), the affect of new regulation on international tuition (the current framework is for domestic, not international. S Dew noted that he suspected that MNIFs and international tuition will fall under new regulations and that the Board of Governors would not revisit the international graduate differential), how cuts would be applied (across the board), the effect of cuts on the graduate student experience, funding of staff benefits, and curtailing the administrative budget. GSA Councillors further inquired about the graduate funding review currently underway and the issue of reduction of time to completion. S Dew closed with a reminder to graduate students that the vast majority of the University's resources to support students came from research funding, not the operating budget.

Action Items

7. GSA 2017-2018 Budget and Expenditure Report

Babak Soltannia (GSA President) presented the item. Courtney Thomas (Financial Team Lead), Shirley Ball (Accountant), Dorte Sheikh (Financial Manager), Heather Hogg (Director of Operations), and Julie Tanguay (Acting Executive Director, Associate Director) were present to answer questions.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2017-2018 Fall Term Financial Report.

B Soltannia noted that the latest update on the 2017-2018 GSA's fiscal year was presented to the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, GSA Board, and GSA Council in June and July 2017, and that this was the second update to GSA Council for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. He indicated that the GSA's fiscal year runs from April 1 to March 31 and that he was pleased to report that the GSA is on track and will likely have a surplus at the end of the year. B Soltannia noted that the cover letter also outlined major highlights. He indicated that, as previously discussed with the GSA BFC and GSA Council, the GSA was keeping a close eye on the implementation of Bill 7 and may consider spending part of the Operating/Contingency Fund as they get closer to negotiations and drafting revised bylaws. He summarized that the GSA continues to be in excellent shape financially and thanked the Financial Team and the members of the GSA BFC for their great work.

MOTION: That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2017-2018 Fall Term Financial Report. F Khodayari **MOVED**. M Khademi **SECONDED**.

Motion PASSED unanimously

8. Proposed Changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures, and the Legal Defence Fund

Babak Soltannia (GSA President and GSA Budget and Finance Committee Chair) presented the item.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council, on the recommendation of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, **APPROVE** the proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures, and the Legal Defence Fund, as shown in the attached double column documents and effective immediately.

B Soltannia noted that GSA Council had before it proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on the Budget and Finance Committee, Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures, and the Legal Defence Fund. He indicated that this was the second reading of proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and the first reading of proposed changes to GSA Policy. He indicated that at the October 23 GSA Council meeting, a request was made for a friendly amendment by D Smirnow, GSA Councillor-at-Large and GSA BFC Member, to the Legal Defence Fund policy to specify that any income earned by the fund would be returned to the fund and that the change was highlighted in yellow in the corresponding double column. B Soltannia reminded GSA Councillors that key proposed changes included removing reference to quarterly reports, removing a specific amount for the Financial Stabilization Fund to indicate that the GSA's Auditor would make an annual recommendation on the amount that should be

included in this fund, updating GSA Bylaw and Policy on the Legal Defence Fund to align with the structure of the GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, and clarifying the circumstances in which this fund could be utilized and accessed.

A GSA Council member asked a question about the GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF) (in response, it was noted that if any adjustments to the fees were made resulting in a surplus, this money would go into the (HDPRF). It was also noted that the HDPRF may be used, with the agreement of GSA BFC, GSA Board, and GSA Council, to offset significant increases to the GSA Health and Dental Plan fee).

MOTION: That the GSA Council, on the recommendation of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, **APPROVE** the proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures, and the Legal Defence Fund, as shown in the attached double column documents and effective immediately. B Soltannia **MOVED**. F Elian **SECONDED**.

Motion PASSED unanimously

9. Proposed Changes to GSA Policy on GSA Recognition Awards

Masoud Khademi (GSA Vice-President External and GSA Awards Selection Committee Chair) presented the item.

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

M Khademi noted that following the adjudication of the GSA Recognition Awards in January and February 2017, the GSA Awards Selection Committee (GSA ASC) provided feedback and proposed changes to the criteria for the GSA Recognition Awards. He indicated that the GSA ASC developed the proposed changes and that they had been reviewed by the GSA Board as well.

GSA Council members posed a series of questions including, among others, questions concerning whether GSA ASC members were required to have adjudication experience in order to serve on the committee, and if nominees for this committee go through an evaluation process before their names were brought forward to GSA Council for election (K Gordon explained that the bios and resumes for all nominees for GSA Standing Committees were reviewed by the GSA Nominating Committee to ensure that they meet the eligibility criteria of the committee. It was also noted that there were no requirements for GSA ASC to have prior experience adjudicating awards and that all GSA ASC members receive training before adjudicating), the reason as to why the criteria for contributing to graduate student professional development had been removed from the Non-Academic Staff Award (this criteria was identified as being more challenging to adjudicate for those who work on the non-academic side of things, as opposed to the academic side), and whether the GSA keeps statistics for the number of applicants that were received and the distribution of departments that applied each year for GSA Awards (the GSA kept track of the number of applicants received and the applicants' department, the GSA did not keep the adjudication information).

MOTION: That the GSA Council, on the recommendation of the GSA Awards Selection Committee, **APPROVE** the proposed changes to GSA Policy on the GSA Awards, as shown in the attached double column documents and effective upon approval by GSA Council. M Khademi **MOVED**. R Feng **SECONDED**.

Motion PASSED unanimously

Elections

10. GSA Council Elections

Kenzie Gordon (Vice-Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee) presented the items.

GSA Standing Committees

- a. GSA Appeals and Complaints Board Vice-Chair (1 vacancy)

K Gordon presented the item and noted that the nominee was not able to attend GSA Council.

Nominees for GSA Appeals and Complaints Board Vice-Chair:

Benjamin Descardi-Nelson (Chemical and Materials Engineering)

- b. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (1 vacancy)

K Gordon presented the item and introduced the nominee, who was given the opportunity to address GSA Council by responding to a question provided in advance. K Gordon asked the following question of the candidate and the candidate was given 45 seconds to respond: “Please tell us why you’d like to serve on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee.”

Nominees for GSA Elections and Referenda Committee:

Yilun Wu (Physiology)

c. GSA Board (1 vacancy)

K Gordon presented the item and noted that the nominee was not able to attend GSA Council.

Nominees for GSA Board:

Yilina Liubaoerjijin (Rehabilitation Science)

For Discussion

11. Graduate Students’ Mental health Power Point Presentation

S van der Klein indicated that part of her portfolio this year included mental health, and that in response to a suggestion from a former GSA Councillor, she undertook a review of the current literature on graduate student mental health and how it related to funding. She then went through the presentation she had developed in collaboration with F Khodayari, and encouraged GSA Council members to contact her if they would like to utilize this information within their own faculties and departments.

The following points, among others, were made during the presentation: the mental health continuum showed that the existence of an unsupportive environment could affect mental health and its symptoms; in the 2013 National College Health Assessment, statistics from the U of A regarding all students (not specifically graduate students) indicated that 36.6% felt so depressed it was difficult to function, and the 2016 National College Health Assessment indicated that in Canada 13% of students said they seriously considered suicide in the prior year; data from Belgium, Poland, and Canada illustrated various challenges graduate students face, including a team decision-making culture where graduate students were often part of a team but weren’t able to make decisions, supervisor leadership styles, lack of remuneration, and the use of PhD students as low paid workers at universities; the U of A funded around 83% of thesis-based students, there was a great variety across programs, departments, and terms and that funding often remained unpredictable; *and* 50% of graduate students were living with a partner/spouse and 25% of graduate students had at least one child. Finally, S van der Klein noted that this data indicated that there was a relationship between graduate student mental health and funding, and that improving funding for graduate students in an already stressful environment could assist with mental health issues.

GSA Council members asked a series of questions, including, among others, questions concerning the University’s response to student suicides on campus (S van der Klein noted that she served on a Suicide Prevention Implementation Committee which was examining the current Suicide Prevention framework which work among other things on raising awareness of resources available to graduate students including Clinical and Counselling Services, and the Graduate Student Assistant Program), minimum funding package (it was noted that the GSA was currently in conversations with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and the Vice-Provost and the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) on this matter), mental health assessments for graduate students before they start graduate school or during their program (the ACCESS program was discussed and it was noted that FGSR has started doing exit interviews to find out why students may be leaving their program). The Student Mental Health Report, initiated in 2012 through the Office of the Dean of Students was discussed, and S van der Klein noted that the Board, Safety, and Environment Committee had placed student mental health as a standing item on their committee agendas.

Reports

12. President

i. President’s Report:

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 November 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition B Soltannia noted that he recently attended the CAGS (Canadian Association for Graduate Studies) Annual Conference and had great opportunities to speak with deans from different universities and Tri-Council representatives about diverse issues. He also invited GSA Councillor to attend the GSA Coffee Break this Friday.

ii. GSA Board

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 November 2017. The report stood as submitted.

iii. Budget and Finance Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 November 2017. The report stood as submitted.

iv. GSA Governance Committee

No meetings this reporting period.

13. Vice-President Academic

i. Vice-President Academic's Report:

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 November 2017. The report stood as submitted.

14. Vice-President External

i. Vice-President External's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 November 2017. The report stood as submitted.

ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 November 2017. The report stood as submitted.

15. Vice-President Labour

i. Vice-President Labour's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 November 2017. The report stood as submitted.

ii. GSA Negotiating Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 November 2017. The report stood as submitted. S van der Klein added that the GSA had sent out their Opening Position for collective bargaining.

iii. GSA Labour Relations Committee

No meetings this reporting period.

16. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 November 2017. The report stood as submitted.

ii. GSA Student Affairs Advisory Committee

No meetings this reporting period.

17. Senator

i. Senator's Report

No written report at this time.

18. Speaker

i. Speaker's Report

No written report at this time.

19. Chief Returning Officer

i. Chief Returning Officer's Report

No written report at this time.

20. GSA Nominating Committee

i. GSA Nominating Committee Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 November. The report stood as submitted.

21. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

ii. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 November. The report stood as submitted.

22. GSA Management**i. Executive Director's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 November. The report stood as submitted. In addition J Tanguay noted that we were currently in the process of Early Call for Talent and Training; two sessions had been added for students interested in elected positions.

Question Period**23. Written Questions**

None at this time.

24. Oral Questions

GSA Councillors raised the issue of security on campus, referencing specifically the recent incident in CCIS where an individual was suspected of having a firearm. It was noted that some graduate students were unhappy with how the incident was reported by the University. Several GSA Councillors also expressed concerns with security issues in their labs and offices and further reported a lack of actions and support from the University. GSA Councillors noted that certain buildings were more problematic than others. Some GSA Councillors expressed that these issues were not being properly addressed. S van der Klein explained that she served on the Board of Governors subcommittee that dealt specifically with health and safety and that she would bring these concerns forward. She also clarified that the acute messaging system was not used in the case of the CCIS incident as it was deemed a false alarm. S van der Klein asked to speak with GSA Councillors after the meeting about their experiences and concerns and encouraged others to bring their issues forward so the GSA can assist and support them. M Khademi also encouraged GSA Councillors to bring these issues to the GSA Directly-Elected officers for assistance.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

**GSA President
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 11, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Babak Soltannia
Date: December 8, 2017



Dear Valued Councillors and Colleagues,

I would like to start my report again by commemorating the 14 women killed at L'École Polytechnique in Montreal in 1989 and all women affected by violence. The women slain in 1989 were prospective engineering students, murdered for one reason: they were women. Our world is less for losing them and having lost their extraordinary contributions. As a diverse nation, Canada is enriched by the lives, contributions, and expertise of everyone. December is an important month of action against violence against women (including Indigenous women) and the LGBTQ2 community. Now is the time to continue our fight for gender equality and equity around the world and here at home. We need to create spaces where everyone is welcome and safe. I hope one-day violence is nothing more than a dark and embarrassing part of history.

This year the Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) again coordinated a memorial that gathered representatives from different groups on campus together to commemorate the 1989 event (you may remember that the previous GSA President reported on this last year). The ceremony also featured Amanda Gould, who works in the U of A's Indigenous Initiatives Office, who spoke about missing and murdered Indigenous women. I was honored to take part as gender-based violence continues to be an issue in Canada and around the world.

Continuing my report on my activities over the last month, with respect to the Government of Alberta's announcement regarding tuition fees, the GSA is pleased to hear that domestic tuition and mandatory non-instructional fees are frozen for 2018-2019. The freeze will also be accompanied by a backfill of \$17 million for the 20 public post-secondary institutions across the province, though details about the allocation of this backfill funding have not been determined. While we are happy that the Government of Alberta recognizes the importance of affordability and accessibility, we will continue to advocate to the University to consider tuition for international students for 2018-2019 in this same spirit of affordability and accessibility.

2.1

In response to this announcement, the Alberta Graduate Provincial Council (ab-GPAC) also issued a [statement](#) noting its concerns regarding the lack of regulation of international student tuition and fees, and the potential impact on institutional quality. Following the announcement, I have also started conversations with senior administration with regards to international graduate student tuition fees. Education has paramount importance in changing lives and creating a better society and economy, hence having stable and predictable funding is essential.

Over the past few months I have also been closely working with other members of the ab-GPAC on other projects including the recent publication of its 2017 Advocacy Priorities and a 2018-2019 Provincial Budget Submission. Both documents can be found on the ab-GPAC [website](#).

As Royle noted in his report, Studentcare has negotiated a lower GSA Health and Dental Plan premium for the GSA, as our usage rates were slightly lower than anticipated by our insurer, Desjardins. As a result, and as per GSA Bylaw and Policy, the difference between the current fee paid by graduate students (previously approved by GSA Council) and the premium will be transferred to the Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPFRF) to help offset future increases.

Another important item to report involve the presentation that Sasha and I made to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC) on November 28. BHRCC invites the GSA to one meeting annually to discuss areas of concern for graduate students. Although it is hard to predict the impact of this presentation, my sense was that the committee's overall impression of the presentation was positive. As discussed at the November GSA Council meeting, the presentation emphasized the link between mental health and funding and the necessity for predictable and stable funding for graduate students. Other barriers that affect graduate students and potential solutions were also discussed. Committee members asked questions about the minimum funding proposal and encouraged us to continue our collaboration with the FGSR on this project.

Other highlights include:

- Our winter orientation event will be held on January 8. Our warm welcome and best wishes for the new graduate students joining the University and the GSA.
- Very recently we opened the nomination period for our GSA Recognition Awards. These awards recognize graduate students who have distinguished themselves in research, teaching, academic achievement, leadership, and service to the University and to the wider community, as well as faculty and staff members who have made outstanding contributions to graduate education. Applications will be adjudicated by the GSA Awards Selection Committee and recipients will be honored at the annual GSA Awards Night in March.
- We are currently wrapping up our annual Early Call for Talent and Training. Each year, as per GSA Policy, the GSA Nominating Committee is charged with the responsibility of actively seeking out graduate students for the positions of GSA President, Vice-President Academic, Vice-President Labor, Vice-President Student Services, and Vice-President External. The Early Call for Talent and Training program is designed to provide training and information to students considering running for elected office. The GSA Chief Returning Officer will start advertising details about the 2018 GSA General Election in January. I strongly encourage you to talk with your colleagues about getting involved with the GSA as the organization depends on graduate student involvement.

- We will host our final GSA Coffee Break of 2017 on December 15 (dates for the 2018 GSA Coffee Breaks are available on our website) and are planning a GSA engagement event to be held in February – we're all very thrilled to have these opportunities to connect with GSA members.
- Sasha continues to participate in the FGSR Parent Link project and the Student Parent Project, to explore the establishment of policies to support student parents, including the provision of physical spaces for student parents, the establishment of a parent network, and the creation of flexible childcare options.
- The GSA continues its partnership with the Student Success Centre to provide 20-minute writing sessions with two different graduate writing instructors. This resource is open to graduate students in any discipline and works to assist graduate students experiencing writer's block or other difficulties. The winter semester schedule will be advertised in the new year.

I will be more than happy to answer any concerns or questions you may have over email.

In conclusion, I hope everyone is planning to have a splendid time during the holidays. I wish everyone a very Happy New Year filled with health, wealth, love, happiness, hope, peace, prosperity, pure bliss, good food, friends, and family. I also wanted to highlight resources available for those who are potentially alone during the holiday season. For example, many different campus groups offer programs for students who would like to be hosted for a holiday meal over the break. Holidays can also be difficult for some people, affecting their mental health and wellness, hence please kindly reach out to those around you and check in with them regularly, especially if you or they are far away from home. Here is a quick [contact sheet](#) for mental health resources on campus and the Edmonton Crisis Line (780-482-4357) is available when the University is closed between December 25 and January 1.



Wishing you happy holidays and a wonderful New Year – from Sasha, Babak, Royle, Firouz, Masoud, and the Graduate Students' Association

Looking forward to seeing everyone again in 2018!

Warmest regards,

Babak

2.3

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 20, 2017 and December 11, 2017. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| November 21 | Early Call - External Advocacy |
| November 22 | Fall Convocation |
| November 22 | Honorary Doctoral and PhD Recipients Reception |
| November 23 | Meeting with Heather Zwicker, Vice-Provost and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) |
| November 23 | Meeting with Andre Costopoulos, Dean of Students |
| November 23 | Managing Up Workshop |
| November 24 | GSA/Unitea Coffee Break |
| November 27 | Meeting with Nicole Van Kuppeveld, Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director and Willem Klumpenhower, ab-GPAC Chair |
| November 27 | General Faculties Council (GFC) |
| November 27 | Peter Loughheed Leadership College Lectures |
| November 28 | Presentation at the Board and Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC) |
| November 28 | GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) |
| November 28 | Board and Finance Committee (BFPC) |
| November 29 | GFC Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC) |
| November 30 | Phone call with the Minister of Advanced Education, Marlin Schmidt |
| November 30 | Meeting with Graduate Student |
| November 30 | Campus Food Bank (CFB) November Noodles Event |
| November 30 | Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Governance Committee Meeting |
| November 30 | Phone Call with Brit Paris, University of Calgary GSA President |
| December 1 | Board University Relations Committee (BURC) |
| December 1 | Board Learning and Discovery Committee (BLDC) |
| December 4 | Student Tuition Payment Options Review |
| December 4 | PAW Centre Strategic Operating Committee (PAWSOC) Meeting |
| December 4 | President's Holiday Party |
| December 5 | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Open House |
| December 6 | National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women Memorial Event |
| December 6 | Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Meeting |
| December 6 | Festival of Carols |
| December 8 | St. Joseph's College Christmas Open House |
| December 11 | Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board of Directors Meeting |

GSA Board (GSAB)
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 11, 2017 Meeting

To: GSA Council
 From: Courtney Thomas, Executive Director; Julie Tanguay, Acting Executive Director and Acting Coordinator of the GSA Board; Heather Hogg, Director of Operations; and Lisa Hareuther, Assistant Director
 Date: December 8, 2017

The GSAB reports regularly to GSA Council by listing its agenda items, Motions/agreements, and main items of discussion (meeting reports are also offered at each meeting). 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, and the administrative team will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the GSA Council meeting. Also see the weekly Management Reports to the GSAB in Item 20 (Executive Director's Report to GSA Council) on pages 12.1 - 12.3.

22 November 2017 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

GSA Board Strategic Work Plan Initiatives Update (**Closed Session**); and Meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements:

Members **AGREED** to move in **CLOSED SESSION**.

Members discussed **Residence Associations**.

Members **AGREED** to move out of **CLOSED SESSION**.

29 November 2017 GSA Board Meeting:

Main Agenda Items:

Meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements: None at this time.

6 December 2017 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Actual Expenses for Attendance at the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) Annual Conference, November 7 to 9, in Quebec City, QC: Travel Expenses; and Meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements:

The GSA Board is asked to **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the attached summary of actual expenses incurred through attendance at the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies (CAGS) Annual Conference, November 7-9, 2017, in Quebec City, QC. FK **MOVED**. SvK Seconded. **CARRIED**.

**GSA Budget and Finance Committee
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 11, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Babak Soltannia
Date: December 8, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

On November 28, the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) met to discuss the 2018-2019 GSA operating budget and engaged in a high level discussion of the anticipated features of the budget.

The next GSA BFC meeting will be held in January to review the proposed budget in advance of its presentation for approval at the February GSA Council meeting.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,
Babak Soltannia, GSA President and Chair of the GSA BFC

**GSA Vice-President Academic
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 11, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Firouz Khodayari
Date: December 8, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

I would like to wish you all a wonderful time during the upcoming holidays. As Vice-President Academic, I have attended several meetings and been involved with various discussions during the last month; I share the highlights with you in this report.

Tuition Update

As I had already mentioned in my past reports, the Government of Alberta has been working on a new tuition model and this new model will be announced in early 2018. While this work is being completed, and as Babak also discusses in his report, on November 30 the Advanced Education Minister, Marlin Schmidt, announced the government's decision to extend the tuition freeze for domestic students for a fourth year, to the end of the 2018-2019 academic year, and to provide backfill payments to post-secondary institutions to compensate for lost tuition revenue. The tuition freeze also applies to mandatory non-instructional fees. The government did not release anything about tuition fees for international students, though we anticipate that international tuition fees will be part of the government's new tuition and funding model. We will continue to advocate for the regulation of tuition and therefore its predictability for international graduate students as they are entitled to an affordable education at the U of A as well.

Experiential learning

I have recently been involved with discussions around experiential learning on campus. The Council on Experiential Learning (CEL) has been formed to support the work to implement Objective 7 of *For the Public Good*, which is to "increase graduate and undergraduate students' access to and participation in a broad range of curricular experiential learning opportunities that are well-integrated with program goals and enrich their academic experience." The CEL will act as an overarching body to examine curricular, cocurricular and external opportunities for experiential learning. The CEL will consider multiple stakeholder perspectives and share best practices that allow students to recognize the value of experiential learning and to possibly receive credit or recognition. Experiential learning could be different in different faculties and it is currently unclear how to integrate it within classes or teaching practices. The following categories could fall under experiential learning:

- ✓ Co-op Programs
- ✓ Field Experience
- ✓ Internships
- ✓ Mandatory Professional Practice
- ✓ Service Learning
- ✓ Study Abroad Programs

Some of the questions to be explored by the CEL are:

- How do we define experiential learning in different programs across campus?

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- How do we help people (students and faculty members) recognise existing experiential learning opportunities?
- How do we increase access to and participation in experiential learning?
- What do we need to create new experiential learning opportunities which are aligned with program goals?

I would definitely welcome thoughts and comments on this topic as this work is in its early stages.

I am happy to answer any questions or comments over email that you might have regarding this report. Also, I would be more than happy if you would like to share your suggestions or concerns regarding any academic related issue you have encountered the University.

Thanks,

Firouz Khodayari, GSA Vice-President Academic

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 20, 2017 and December 11, 2017. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| November 21 | Meeting with Centre for Teaching and Learning re: Open Educational Resources |
| November 21 | General Faculties Council (GFC) Caucus |
| November 22 | Honorary Doctoral and PhD Recipients Reception |
| November 23 | Council of Student Affairs (COSA) Revitalization Meeting |
| November 27 | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council Caucus |
| November 27 | General Faculties Council (GFC) |
| November 28 | Undergraduate Research Initiative (URI) Advisory Committee |
| November 29 | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council |
| November 30 | Meeting with a Graduate Student |
| November 30 | Meeting with a Graduate Student |
| December 5 | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Open House |
| December 6 | General Faculties Council Committee on the Learning Environment (GFC CLE) |
| December 8 | Board of Governors (BoG)/General Faculties Council (GFC)/Senate Summit Working Group |
| December 8 | UAlberta International Holiday Party |
| December 11 | General Faculties Council Executive Committee (GFC Exec) |

**GSA Vice-President External
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 11, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Masoud Khademi
Date: December 8, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you are doing well and have enjoyed the mild winter that we have had so far. As we are in the final exam season, I just wanted to thank you for your hard work throughout the semester, particularly these past few exam days. I also wish you all luck for those of you who still have more exams to take or who are waiting for your results.

In the past month, I have attended several Early Call for Talent and Training sessions to discuss the GSA's pressing issues and external advocacy efforts. I wanted to use this opportunity to encourage all of you who are interested in student politics to run in the GSA General Election next February.

One of the other meetings that I attended during the past month was the first Residence Joint Oversight Committee (ROC) meeting. This committee, established following one of the recommendations of the Residence Life Task Force, is focused on strategic planning for residence affairs. In this first meeting, Bill Spinks, the Director of U of A Protective Services, talked about some of the safety issues in different residences such as HUB, Newton Place, and Michener Park. During this meeting, it was also discussed that the Dean of Students office established a working group to deal with the internet connectivity issues in residences, and they have already started to conduct thorough research to solve these issues. The committee was also informed that the University is working on roommate assignment issues and maintenance requests.

Another meeting that I attended this month was the Council on Student Affairs (COSA). The first part of this meeting was focused on the scheduling of various 2018 orientation events, and different formats and programs were discussed. Trevor Buckle, Associate Director of Education Abroad with University of Alberta International (UAI), discussed UAI's proposed mandatory instructional support fee for internships. As he explained, UAI has already started the consultation process with respect to this proposal. Based on his presentation, this fee is paid to cover staffing and services such as resume review, on-site orientation, and housing assistance. The fee will be charged whether the internship is paid or not. The last item that was discussed was the renovation of the change rooms in the Van Vliet complex and allocating a gender-neutral locker room area.

This month Babak and I met with Nicole Van Kuppeveld, the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director, and Willem Klumpenhouwer, ab-GPAC Chair, to discuss ab-GPAC's work and to invite them to our January Council meeting.

If you need more information or have any questions regarding the meetings that I have attended this past month, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Masoud Khademi, GSA Vice-President External

Please find below a list of meetings I attended November 20, 2017 and December 11, 2017. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| November 21 | Early Call - External Advocacy |
| November 24 | Residence Joint Oversight Committee (ROC) |
| November 27 | Meeting with Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director |
| November 28 | Lunch with UAlberta Senator, Camille Bérubé |
| November 29 | Meeting with a Graduate Student |
| December 5 | Meeting with Nicole Van Kuppeveld, Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director and Willem Klumpenhower, ab-GPAC Chair |
| December 5 | Council on Student Affairs (COSA) |
| December 5 | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Open House |
| December 6 | Alumni Council Holiday Dinner |
| December 11 | Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board of Directors Meeting |

**GSA Vice-President Labour
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 11, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Sasha van der Klein
Date: December 8, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

The holidays are coming, time to destress! I hope all your exams that are coming up go well and if you are working on your thesis, don't forget that winter is an excellent season to take a break outside and refresh your mind. I have restructured my Council report to give you an easier overview of what I have been busy with this last month. I hope you like it.

New

Presentation to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee – I focused on issues with supervision and funding in graduate programs, and how these relate to the graduate student experience and mental health issues, where I reused some of the slides that I presented to you in the last Council meeting.

Started planning Graduate Student Safety training – I hope to introduce new safety training for graduate students in the upcoming term. I have initiated contact with several stakeholders, such as University of Alberta Protective Services and the Environment, Health and Safety Office to discuss this project.

Field Law Post-Secondary Summit – I attended the Field Law Post-Secondary summit in Calgary, which was organized for administrators in post-secondary institutions in Alberta, and which focused on the changes in the labour legislation. A lot of information was shared that will be helpful in amending our bylaws to ensure their compliance with Bill 7.

Ongoing

Meetings with graduate students – This is still case-by-case work. The trend I see is that more graduate students either know about the GSA and/or feel empowered to come and talk to us about their labour issues.

Tuition payment through deduction from scholarships – Babak and I had a meeting with Financial Services about the changes for the upcoming academic year regarding payment options for tuition, so this was the perfect opportunity to also bring up the possibility for deduction of tuition from paychecks for scholarship holders.

GSA Coffee Break with Unitea – The World Hello Day coffee break together with Unitea was a success! A lot of grad students came out of their office and connected with us and played some board games. I had a lot of fun!

That was December! Let me know if you have questions, and feel free to contact me at any time!

Thanks,

Sasha van der Klein, GSA Vice-President Labour

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Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 20, 2017 and December 11, 2017. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| November 21 | Fall Convocation |
| November 22 | Meeting with a Graduate Student |
| November 22 | Honorary Doctoral and PhD Recipients Reception |
| November 23 | Meeting with Andre Costopoulos, Dean of Students |
| November 24 | GSA/Unitea Coffee Break |
| November 27 | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Student Parent Project Meeting |
| November 27 | Meeting with J Murphy, Counselling & Clinical Services Director |
| November 27 | University of Alberta International (UAI) Information Session on Express Entry and Alberta Nominee Program |
| November 28 | Meeting with a Graduate Student |
| November 28 | Homeless Student Campus Project Team Meeting |
| November 28 | Meeting with a Graduate Student |
| November 28 | Presentation at Board and Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC) |
| November 28 | GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) |
| November 29 | Board Safety, Health and Environment Committee (BSHEC) |
| November 29 | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council |
| November 30 | Field Law Post-Secondary Summit |
| December 4 | Student Tuition Payment Options Review |
| December 4 | President's Holiday Party |
| December 5 | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Open House |
| December 5 | Meeting with a Graduate Student |
| December 6 | Meeting with a Graduate Student |

**GSA Vice-President Student Services
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 11, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Royle Feng
Date: December 8, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

With the holidays coming, this busy semester will finally draw to an end. Before enjoying the holiday season, I hope all of you can achieve your goals you set at the beginning of this semester. I was mainly involved in the below activities this month.

The Campus Food Bank (CFB) 25th anniversary events were impressive. We also held a successful Annual General Meeting, where the Executive Director's and Chair's reports and financial report were received/approved, along with a modification to the quorum for Board meetings. Returning to the anniversary celebrations, I gave a speech during the November Noodles event, emphasizing that the CFB has made great contributions to food security on campus and that with support from students and staff in our community, the CFB can continue its crucial work. Babak and I were really glad to act as volunteers at this event and served a lot of guests some delicious mac and cheese.

During the General Faculties Council Facilities Development Committee meeting, the committee approved the general space program for the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine. It was also reported that the University has identified deferred maintenance as a top priority. Regarding the Augustana Campus Long Range Development Plan Amendment, very positive comments and responses have been collected during the first Open House and the feedback received will help further shape this plan.

At the ONEcard Advisory Committee meeting, it was reported that the University is still waiting for the budget costs for the new technology that will be required to integrate with the new ETS SmartFare. Attendees also discussed campus security at length, including the recent issues in FAB, and current challenges with ONEcard access.

I also wanted to inform you that Studentcare had negotiated a lower GSA Health and Dental Plan premium for the GSA (our usage rates were slightly lower than anticipated by our insurer, Desjardins, and so Studentcare, as our broker, was also to negotiate this for us). As explained at last GSA Council meeting and as per GSA Bylaw and Policy, the difference between the current fee paid by graduate students (previously approved by GSA Council) and the premium will be transferred to the Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF) to help us offset future increases.

Finally, I wish a happy and wonderful holiday season!

Thank you!

Best regards,

Royle

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Please find below a list of meetings I attended November 20, 2017 and December 11, 2017. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing. Please note that I am away December 4 to December 15, 2017 on personal leave.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| November 22 | Fall Convocation |
| November 23 | Meeting with Andre Costopoulos, Dean of Students |
| November 23 | General Faculties Council Faculties Development Committee (GFC FDC) |
| November 24 | ONEcard Student Advisory Group |
| November 27 | Campus Food Bank (CFB) Annual General Meeting |
| November 30 | Campus Food Bank (CFB) November Noodles Event |

**GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC)
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 11, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Radim Barta
Date: December 8, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

The report from the GSA NoC this month is a summary of discussions/decisions the GSA NoC has made since its last report, together with a list of all vacancies filled and those which will be filled shortly.

GSA Policy governing the GSA NoC is located in GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E: Nominating. As provided for in its Terms of Reference, the GSA NoC has been conducting business via e-mail.

Sincerely,

Radim Barta, Chair of the GSA NoC

GSA Standing Committees

None to report at this time.

External Committees

1) ONEcard Student Advisory Group (1 Graduate Student Position)

This position was advertised in the GSA newsletter of November 9 and November 17, 2017 with a nomination deadline of November 22, 2017. One (1) nomination was received. **Kasturi Mahajan (Civil and Environmental Engineering)** was elected to serve on the ONEcard Student Advisory Group.

2) Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) Selection Committee (1 Graduate Student Position)

This position was advertised in the GSA newsletter of November 9, November 17, and November 24, 2017 with a nomination deadline of November 29, 2017. One (1) nomination was received. **Shirin Afzal (Electrical Engineering)** was elected to serve on the TLEF Selection Committee.

3) University of Alberta Museum Policy and Planning Committee (1 Graduate Student Position)

This position was advertised in the GSA newsletters of November 3 and November 9, 2017 with a nomination deadline of November 15, 2017. Three (3) nominations were received. **Athena Photinopoulos (Educational Policy Studies)** was elected to serve on the UAlberta Museum Policy and Planning Committee.

Current Vacancies

1) Learning Technologies Advisory Committee (1 Graduate Student Position)

This position was advertised in the GSA newsletter of November 24, 2017 with a nomination deadline of December 1, 2017. No nominations were received. This vacancy will be advertised again.

2) Arts Faculty Council and Associated Committees (A Total of 8 Faculty of Arts Graduate Student Positions)

This position was advertised in the December 1, 2017 GSA newsletter and will be advertised again in advance of the nomination deadline of December 13, 2017.

3) Integrative Health Institute (IHI) Scientific Advisory Board (1 Graduate Student Position)

This position was advertised in the December 8, 2017 GSA newsletter with a nomination deadline of December 14, 2017.

4) Various GSA Standing Committees and Council-Elected Officers (A Total of 4 Positions)

The vacancies for one (1) graduate student in the position of GSA Deputy Returning Officer (DRO), one (1) graduate student on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB), one (1) GSA ACB member in the position of GSA ACB Chair, and one (1) GSA Councillor on the GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC) will be advertised in January 2018.

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC)
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 11, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Leigh Spanner
Date: December 8, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) met on November 23, 2017, to continue planning the 2018 GSA General Election.

At this meeting, the GSA ERC reviewed and advised the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) on the draft 2018 GSA General Election Mock Ballot, the 2018 General Election Communications from the CRO, the 2018 General Election posters, and the 2018 All-Candidate's Meeting agenda.

At their next meeting in January 2018, the GSA ERC will continue their work on the 2018 GSA General Election.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,
Leigh Spanner, Chair of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

**GSA Executive Director
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 11, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Courtney Thomas and Julie Tanguay
Date: December 8, 2017

Dear GSA Council Members,

Firstly, as reported in the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) report, the Financial Team, after receiving input and guidance from the GSA BFC, is working on the draft 2018-2019 GSA Budget. It will come before GSA Council for consideration in February 2018.

Secondly, as reported in the previous months, the annual Early Call for Talent and Training, led by the GSA Nominating Committee, took place over the months of October and November. In these two months the office team and the Directly-Elected Officers hosted a series of sessions on governance, the GSA's budget, and GSA Council.

Lastly, on December 1, the GSA opened the nomination period for the GSA Recognition Awards. These awards celebrate graduate students that have distinguished themselves through teaching, research, and community service. They also recognize selected University faculty and staff members for their outstanding contributions to graduate education. The nomination period will close on January 15. Information on these awards are available on the GSA website.

As always, the detailed weekly reports from the management team to the GSA Board are attached for your review.

We will be happy to answer any questions.

Best,
Courtney Thomas, Executive Director, and Julie Tanguay, Associate Director and Acting Executive Director

Management Report to the GSA Board, November 22, 2017

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the past week since the last GSA Board meeting on November 15, 2017:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Early Call Talent and Training Program (sessions have started); work associated with changes to the Collective Agreement; budget building for the 2018-2019 fiscal year; staff training; preparing for GSA Council mailing and doing associated post-meeting actions; preparations for and follow-up from meetings; drafting of external reports and external presentations; and forward planning for the 2018 GSA General Election.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review:** Changes to the GSA Board Policy on Communications; changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy with respect to bargaining processes; and various editorial changes.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Ongoing strategizing related to residence associations; relationship building and maintenance with Student Group Services (revisiting an outdated MoU, etc); review with the Dean of Students of the Student Groups Policy and Procedures and review of various group constitutions.

Grants and Office Operations

- Preliminary preparation for the GSA Recognition Awards.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Nominating Committee (Teaching and Learning enhancement Fund (TLEF) Selection Committee, UAlberta Museum Policy and Planning Committee, ONEcard Student Advisory Group).
- Planning for the Winter Orientation and the Winter Social Event.
- Transfer of content to Sitecore 3.
- Facebook = 1082 likes (up 3 from November 15); Facebook posts reached 531 users this week and our "post engagement" count was 38. Twitter = 810 followers (up 2 from November 15); our tweets earned 707 "impressions" over the last week.

| | Total Amount Available This Period | Total Amount Remaining This Period (Post-Processing) | Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB | Total Number of Applications This Period |
|--------------|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| ATAs | \$90,782.97 | \$11,812.11 | 2 | 166 (2 pending processing) |
| CCGs | \$83,105.48 | \$0 CLOSED | 0 | 46 (0 pending processing) |
| ASGAs | \$7,744.57 | \$5,599.57 | 0 | 4 (0 pending processing) |
| EBs | \$133,952.00 (no periods) | \$47,966.00 | 0 | 23 (0 pending processing) |

Management Report to the GSA Board, November 29, 2017

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the past week since the last GSA Board meeting on November 22, 2017:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Early Call Talent and Training Program; work associated with changes to the Collective Agreement; budget building for the 2018-2019 fiscal year and GSA Budget and Finance Committee meeting; follow-up actions from GSA Council mailing; ongoing delivery of the Unwind Your Mind GSA Coffee Breaks; preparations for and follow-up from meetings; drafting of external reports and external presentations; and forward planning for the 2018 GSA General Election.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review:** Changes to the GSA Board Policy on Communications; changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy with respect to bargaining processes.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Ongoing strategizing related to residence associations; relationship building and maintenance with Student Group Services (revisiting an outdated MoU, etc); review with the Dean of Students of the Student Groups Policy and Procedures and review of various group constitutions.

Grants and Office Operations

- Preliminary preparation for the GSA Recognition Awards.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Nominating Committee (Teaching and Learning enhancement Fund (TLEF) Selection Committee and Festival of Learning and Teaching Steering Committee).
- Planning for the Winter Orientation and the Winter Social Event.
- Transfer of content to Sitecore 3.
- Facebook = 1090 likes (up 8 from November 22); Facebook posts reached 350 users this week and our "post engagement" count was 38. Twitter = 813 followers (up 3 from November 22); our tweets earned 787 "impressions" over the last week.

| | Total Amount Available This Period | Total Amount Remaining This Period (Post-Processing) | Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB | Total Number of Applications This Period |
|-------|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| ATAs | \$90,782.97 | \$9,846.11 | 4 | 170 (4 pending processing) |
| CCGs | \$83,105.48 | \$0 CLOSED | 0 | 46 (0 pending processing) |
| ASGAs | \$7,744.57 | \$5,599.57 | 0 | 4 (0 pending processing) |
| EBs | \$133,952.00 (no periods) | \$47,966.00 | 0 | 23 (0 pending processing) |

Management Report to the GSA Board, December 6, 2017

The following issues have dominated management’s attention in the past week since the last GSA Board meeting on November 29, 2017:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Work associated with changes to the Collective Agreement; budget building for the 2018-2019 fiscal year (GSA Budget and Finance Committee will meet in January to review the budget); preparing GSA Council mailing; follow-up actions from the government announcement about tuition; application for the Green Spaces Certification; preparations for and follow-up from meetings; tracking updates on the GSA Board’s Strategic Work Plan; drafting of external reports and external presentations; and forward planning for the 2018 GSA General Election.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review:** Changes to the GSA Board Policy on Communications; changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy with respect to bargaining processes.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Ongoing strategizing related to residence associations; relationship building and maintenance with Student Group Services (revisiting an outdated MoU, etc); review with the Dean of Students of the Student Groups Policy and Procedures and review of various group constitutions.

Grants and Office Operations

- Opening of the nomination period for the GSA Recognition Awards and preparation for adjudication.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Nominating Committee (Provost’s Academic Advisory Council on Sustainability (PAACS), Teaching and Learning enhancement Fund (TLEF) Selection Committee, and Arts Faculty Council and associated committees).
- Planning for the Winter Orientation and the Winter Social Event.
- Transfer of content to Sitecore 3.
- Facebook = 1083 likes (down 7 from November 29); Facebook posts reached 667 users this week and our “post engagement” count was 83. Twitter = 814 followers (up 1 from November 29); our tweets earned 619 “impressions” over the last week.

| | Total Amount Available This Period | Total Amount Remaining This Period (Post-Processing) | Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB | Total Number of Applications This Period |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|
| ATAs | \$90,782.97 | \$6,846.11 | 6 | 176 (6 pending processing) |
| CCGs | \$83,105.48 | \$0 CLOSED | 0 | 46 (0 pending processing) |
| ASGAs | \$7,744.57 | \$3,849.57 | 1 | 5 (1 pending processing) |
| EBs | \$133,952.00 (no periods) | \$39,154.00 | 3 | 26 (3 pending processing) |