

## GSA Council Meeting CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

Monday, 25 May 2020 at 6:00 pm

Held electronically via Zoom

The GSA respectfully acknowledges that the University of Alberta is located on Treaty 6 territory, traditional lands of First Nations and Métis people.

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

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

**Speaker Pranidhi Baddam in the Chair**

### OPEN SESSION

**Attached  
Numbered Pages**

1. Approval of the 25 May 2020 Agenda (*suggested time: 1 min*)
2. Approval of the Minutes from the 20 April 2020 GSA Council Meeting (*suggested time: 1 min*)  
*Attachment:*
  - i. Minutes from the 20 April 2020 GSA Council Meeting
3. Changes in GSA Council Membership (*suggested time: 1 min*)
  - i. Introduction of New GSA Council Members (*If you are new to GSA Council, please let us know it is your first meeting*)
  - ii. Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members (*If this is your last GSA Council meeting, or if your last GSA Council meeting is approaching, please let us know*)

**2.0 - 2.5**

### GSA Council Member Announcements

4. GSA Council Member Announcements (*suggested time: 5 mins*)

### Action Items

5. Changes to Coverage Under the GSA Health and Dental Plan (*suggested time: 20 min*)  
**Marc Waddingham (President) and Sridhar Parasharamatham (Vice-President Student Services) will present the item and introduce the guest.**  
**Guest:** Robyn Paches, Program Manager (Studentcare)

*Attachment:*

- i. Outline of Issue

**5.0 - 5.1**

### Elections

6. GSA Council Elections (*suggested time – to be determined*)  
**Radim Barta (GSA Nominating Committee Chair) will present the item.**

GSA Council-Elected Officer Positions

- a. GSA Councillor-at-Large (CAL) (1 vacancy)

*Attachment:*

- i. Nominee for GSA CAL (1 vacancy)

**6.0 - 6.2**

- b. GSA Senator

*Attachment:*

- i. Nominees for GSA Senator (1 vacancy)

**6.3 - 6.6**

## Reports (suggested time: 15 mins)

- 7. President (Marc Waddingham, President)**
- i. President's Report
    - a. 2019-2020 President 7.0 - 7.1
    - b. 2020-2021 President 7.2 - 7.3
  - ii. GSA Board Report 7.4 - 7.5
  - iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee Report (no written report at this time)
  - iv. GSA Governance Committee Report (no written report at this time)
- 8. Vice-President Academic (Sachiketha Reddy, Vice-President Academic)**
- i. Vice-President Academic's Report
    - a. 2019-2020 Report 8.0
    - b. 2020-2021 Report 8.1 - 8.2
- 9. Vice-President External (Anas Fassih, Vice-President External)**
- Vice-President External's Report
    - a. 2019-2020 Report 9.0
    - b. 2020-2021 Report 9.1 - 9.2
  - GSA Awards Selection Committee Report (no written report at this time)
- 10. Vice-President Labour (Umesh Nimmathi, Vice-President Labour)**
- i. Vice-President Labour's Report
    - a. 2019-2020 Report 10.0
    - b. 2020-2021 Report 10.1 - 10.2
  - ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee Report (no written report at this time)
- 11. Vice-President Student Services (Sridhar Parasharamatham, Vice-President Student Services)**
- i. Vice-President Student Services' Report
    - a. 2019-2020 Report 11.0 - 11.1
    - b. 2020-2021 Report 11.2 - 11.3
- 12. Senator (Alesha Reed, Senator)**
- i. Senator's Report (no written report at this time)
- 13. Speaker (Pranidhi Baddam, Speaker)**
- i. Speaker's Report (no written report at this time)
- 14. Chief Returning Officer (Amritha Prasad, Chief Returning Officer)**
- i. Chief Returning Officer's Report (no written report at this time)
- 15. GSA Nominating Committee (Radim Barta, GSA Nominating Committee Chair)**
- i. GSA Nominating Committee Report 15.0 - 15.1
- 16. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (Jennifer Bertrand, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair)**
- i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report (no written report at this time)
- 17. GSA Management (Courtney Thomas, Executive Director)**
- i. Executive Director's Report 17.0 - 17.5

## Question Period

**18. Written Questions (none at this time)**

**19. Oral Questions**

## Adjournment

**GSA Council Meeting MINUTES**  
Monday, 20 April 2020 at 6:00 pm  
Held Online via Zoom

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Fahed Elian (President)	Srujana Mekala (AFNS)	Md Monir Hossain (Electrical & Computer Engineering)	Valene Cheah (Occupational Therapy)
Dylan Ashley (VP Academic)	Kyla Cangiano (Anthropology)	Yina Liu (Elementary Education)	Braden Chow (Oncology)
Marc Waddingham (VP External)	Allan Yarahmady (Biochemistry)	Jessica Kennedy (Human Ecology)	Matthew Benson (Ophthalmology)
Shanawaz Mohammad (VP Labour)	Jessica Grenke (Biological Science)	Deanna Starr (Indigenous GSA)	Shubham Soni (Paediatrics)
Chantal Labonté (VP Student Services)	Ke Feng (Business PhD)	Muhammad Idrees Afzal (Internetworking)	Hamdah Al Nebaihi (Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Pranidhi Baddam (Speaker)	Calvin Chan (Cell Biology)	Farshid Mirzaalian (Kinesiology, Sport, & Recreation)	Paolo Verdini (Philosophy)
Priyanka Maripuri (Deputy Speaker)	Omnath Ekambaram (Chemical & Materials Engineering)	Julia Guy (Library & Information Studies)	Kimberly Dice (Physical Therapy)
Reza Azadi (Deputy Returning Officer)	Alvaro Omaña (Chemistry)	Scott Perry (Linguistics)	Clinton Potts (Physics)
Alesha Reed (Senator)	Moein Owhadi Kareshk (Computing Science)	Nishant Agrawal (Mathematical & Statistical Sciences)	Elise Sammons (Political Science)
Harleen Kaur Dhaliwal (Councillor-at-Large)	Julie Piche (Dentistry)	Shahed Taghian Dehaghani (Mechanical Engineering)	Lane Liddle (Psychology)
Braulio Marfil Garza (Councillor-at-Large)	Cate Peter (Digital Humanities)	Nicole Noel (Medical Genetics)	Carlee Wilson (Rehabilitation Science)
Claudia Holody (Councillor-at-Large)	Collette Slevinsky (Drama)	Cole Delyea (Medical Microbiology & Immunology)	Jared Fath (Renewable Resources)
Ronan Noble (Councillor-at-Large)	Qi Chen (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences)	Amber Peters (Modern Languages & Cultural Studies)	Yunxuan Chen (REES)
Armin Norouzi Yengeje (Councillor-at-Large)	Alexandra San Diego (East Asian Studies)	Britt Fedor; Charbel Baaklini (Neuroscience)	Robert Piazza (Secondary Education)
Konstantin Tebenev (Councillor-at-Large)	Jasen Aussant (Economics)	Sadie Deschenes (Nursing)	

Guests: Chris Bell (ab-GPAC Executive Director); Jasmine Gill (Vice-President External, Concordia University of Edmonton GSA and ab-GPAC Director); Radim Barta (Chair, GSA Nominating Committee); Paramita Chaudhuri Basu (Councillor-at-Large candidate; Business MBA); Nadia Daniel (Councillor-at-Large candidate; Medicine); Rakshith Reddy Gopu (Councillor-at-Large candidate; Electrical and Computer Engineering); Tejasai Kommanapalli (Councillor-at-Large candidate; Mechanical Engineering); Yashita Singh (Councillor-at-Large candidate; Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences); Muhammad Zubair (Councillor-at-Large candidate; Agricultural, Food, & Nutritional Science); Sachiketha Reddy (incoming GSA Vice-President Academic); Anas Fassih (incoming GSA Vice-President External); Umesh Nimatthi (incoming GSA Vice-President Labour); Sridhar Parasharamatham (incoming GSA Vice-President Student Services).

Speaker Pranidhi Baddam in the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm. Speaker acknowledged the Traditional Territory of Treaty Six.

**Approval of Agenda****1. Approval of the 20 April 2020 Consolidated Agenda**

Prepared by F Robertson and M Toghrai for GSA Council 20 April 2020

Members had before them the 20 April 2020 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 17 April 2020. F Elian **MOVED**; C Labonté **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes**

#### **2. Minutes from the 16 March 2020 GSA Council meeting**

Members had before them the 16 March 2020 GSA Council Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 9 April 2020. D Ashley **MOVED**; S Deschenes **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

### **Changes in GSA Council Membership**

#### **3. Changes in GSA Council Membership**

##### **i. Introduction of New GSA Council Members F Mirzaalian (Kinesiology, Sport, & Recreation)**

##### **ii. Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members**

This was the last meeting for a number of Councillors: J Fath (Renewable Resources); H Kaur Dhaliwal (Councillor-at-Large); B Marfil Garza (Councillor-at-Large); C Holody (Councillor-at-Large); R Noble (Councillor-at-Large); A Norouzi Yengeje (Councillor-at-Large); K Tebenev (Councillor-at-Large).

### **GSA Council Member Announcements**

#### **4. GSA Council Member Announcements**

M Waddingham noted that Statistics Canada was conducting a survey on post-secondary students and the effects of COVID-19. They will be collecting data from 19 April to 1 May 2020. The survey can be found on the Statistics Canada website.

### **Presentations**

#### **5. Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC)**

Marc Waddingham (Vice-President External) presented the item and introduced the guests, Chris Bell (ab-GPAC Executive Director) and Jasmine Gill (Vice-President External, Concordia University of Edmonton GSA and ab-GPAC Director).

C Bell and J Gill discussed ab-GPAC's role as a student-run advocacy group on behalf of all graduate students in the province to the Government of Alberta. The four member institutions are the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, Athabasca University, and Concordia University of Edmonton. C Bell provided highlights from the past year, including the completion of the organization's first five-year plan. Outreach included meetings with the Ministry of Advanced Education as well as other advocacy associations with aligned priorities, roundtables with member GSAs for shared learning, and government relations training for member GSAs, and the first Advocacy Week in December 2019. Goals for continued outreach included closer collaboration with the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) and other allied civil society groups, as well as increased in media engagement.

Policy research and development, communication strategies, and information sharing among the group's stakeholders were all discussed. It was noted that ab-GPAC set as priorities for their current work: permanent residency for international graduate students, scholarship support given changes to tuition models in Alberta, and professional development funding for graduate students. These priorities have been put on hold as ab-GPAC focuses solely on advocated for COVID-19 related supports, including emergency funding and increased eligibility for resources such as the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). M Waddingham and A Fassih (incoming Vice-President External) will serve on ab-GPAC for the upcoming year and E Wong, from the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association, will service as Chair. Moving forward, ab-GPAC hoped to resume work on their initial priorities and to research how changes to the Labour Relations Code in July 2022 will affect the role of GSAs in the province as labour unions.

GSA Council members posed a series of questions, including but not limited to: areas where progress has been made and areas where progress has been more difficult (the provincial government is interested in mental health funding and addressing campus sexual violence; they seem to think that post-secondary education in Alberta is inordinately expensive); and compliance with health and safety standards and discrimination and harassment policies (ab-GPAC does not have policies around labour matters at this time, due to the youth of the organization, but this is an area of concern and interest for the organization).

### **Action Items**

#### **6. Recommended Changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on GSA Officer Portfolios**

Fahed Elian (GSA President) presented the item.

**MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL:** That the GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Governance Committee and following the first reading by GSA Council, **APPROVE** recommended changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Bylaw, GSA Officers, as shown in track changes in the attached document and effective upon approval.

F Elian explained that this is the second reading of this motion in Council, as required for GSA Bylaw. The changes, previously presented, are aimed at aligning GSA policy with current practice with respect to GSA Officer portfolios. There was no further discussion.

**MOTION:** That the GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Governance Committee and following the first reading by GSA Council, **APPROVE** recommended changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Bylaw, GSA Officers, as shown in track changes in the attached document and effective upon approval. F Elian **MOVED**; B Marfil Garza **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously

#### 7. Recommended Changes to GSA Policy on GSA Grant and Bursary Application Policy and Information.

Fahed Elian (GSA President) presented the item.

**MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL:** That the GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, **APPROVE** recommended changes to GSA Policy, Section P: GSA Grant and Bursary Application Policy and Information, as shown in the attached document in track changes and effective upon approval.

F Elian explained that processing applications for GSA Academic Travel Grants for total costs of less than \$50 took time and resources from an operational standpoint and implementing this would ease that burden and eliminate applications submitted for negligible amounts.

**MOTION:** That the GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, **APPROVE** recommended changes to GSA Policy, Section P: GSA Grant and Bursary Application Policy and Information, as shown in the attached document in track changes and effective upon approval. C Labonté **MOVED**; R Piazza **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously

#### For Discussion

#### 8. GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (SWP): Update to GSA Council

F Elian (President) presented the item. Members raised the following points, among others, in the ensuing discussion:

F Elian expressed his excitement and satisfaction that most of the priorities outlined in the SWP were accomplished or significant milestones were achieved towards their completion. He noted that the year involved a number of unexpected matters which warranted significant attention, including most prominently the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent University closure. The GSA website now hosted a COVID supports and roundup page (found [here](#)), and F Elian was personally involved in daily situation update calls with A Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities & Operations) lead of the University's Crisis Management Team. F Elian and D Ashley were also featured in a vodcast issued by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) to address pressing questions and concerns on the part of graduate students. The GSA increased its budget for GSA Emergency Bursaries by approximately \$200,000, and advocated for the suspension of Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs) such as the Athletics and Recreation fees, the Spring U-Pass fee, and the PAW Centre fee.

On the topic of student-supervisor relationships, F Elian highlighted extensive advocacy to various levels of University administration, such as the Board of Governors (BoG), General Faculties Council (GFC) and associated subcommittees, and FGSR Council. This work was represented in the upcoming pilot phase of two regulatory tools: a Student-Supervisor Guideline and a Student Program Report Form (scheduled to launch in July) with the full-scale implementation slated for January 2021. D Ashley echoed F Elian's excitement and noted that FGSR is putting forth a proposal for a supervisory college, membership in which grants faculty members supervisory privileges. D Ashley had the opportunity to speak on the importance of productive and positive student-supervisor relationships at the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) conference earlier in the academic year, as well as the more recent Student Advisors Conference alongside C Labonté.

With regards to tuition fee increases, F Elian stressed that working within the framework of collegial governance had been the priority and that he participated in many meetings with President Turpin, as well as with other senior University administrators. The details of tuition increases, including figures, can be found in the written materials associated with the item.

S Mohammad highlighted his work on the 2018-2020 Collective Agreement, which was ratified by Academically-Employed Graduate Students (AEGSS) in October 2019. He also dedicated significant time to matters relating to health and safety, including, in particular, his work alongside C Labonté on psychological health and safety legislation under which the University is expected to operate as of July 2020. In closing, he noted that the work of negotiating the next Collective Agreement was underway and would be spearheaded by in-coming Vice-President Labour U Nimmathi.

C Labonté highlighted, among others matters, the Health and Dental plan agreement renegotiation process, as well as ongoing advocacy work in support of students who parent which resulted in, among other initiatives, the GSA child and infant feeding room in Triffo Hall.

F Elian brought attention to the Charter of Students Rights and Responsibilities, which received endorsement from GFC earlier on 20 April 2020. He noted that the majority of the document applies to both undergraduate and graduate students, with specific additions addressing the unique status of graduate students as researchers and staff. In closing, F Elian brought attention to the following issues, among others: the flight PS 752 tragedy, the impact of which is still felt by the student body; support for Indigenous graduate students and the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association (IGSA), specifically with reference to successful advocacy to the University to establish the Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE) program on campus; ongoing provincial advocacy work; and ongoing advocacy concerning international students' immigration paths.

## **Elections**

### **9. GSA Council Elections**

Radim Barta (GSA Nominating Committee Chair) presented the items.

- a. **GSA Councillors-at-Large (7 vacancies):**  
 Paramita Chaudhuri Basu (Business MBA)  
 Nadia Daniel (Medicine)  
 Rakshith Reddy Gopu (Electrical and Computer Engineering)  
 Tejasai Kommanapalli (Mechanical Engineering)  
 Yashita Singh (Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences)  
 Muhammad Zubair (Agricultural, Food, & Nutritional Science)

R Barta asked the nominees the following question: "Taking 45 seconds, please tell us why you would like to serve as a GSA Councillor-at-Large". The nominees were present and given the opportunity to respond in front of GSA Council members.

## **Reports**

### **10. President**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 April 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, F Elian noted that that the year had been full of challenges and unforeseen circumstances, but it was a great honour to be elected to represent graduate students and a great honour to work with GSA Council, as well as his team of fellow Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) and the GSA office staff. He also brought particular attention to the section of his report dedicated to the GSA President's Citations recipients, and expressed his regrets that the GSA Awards Night, originally scheduled to take place in March 2020, had to be cancelled.

#### **ii. GSA Board**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 April 2020. The report stood as submitted.

#### **iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee**

No written report at this time.

#### **iv. GSA Governance Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 April 2020. The report stood as submitted.

### **11. Vice-President Academic**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 April 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, D Ashley expressed his gratitude to F Elian and to his fellow DEOs, as well as to R Barta who served as his

delegate on a number of GFC committees. In closing, he expressed his appreciation towards everyone and noted that the year had been a phenomenal experience for him.

## **12. Vice-President External**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 April 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, M Waddingham stated that he shared the sentiment expressed by D Ashley and looked forward to continuing working President in the 2020-2021 year. In particular, he made note of new outreach initiatives he hoped to initiate.

### **ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee's Report**

No written report at this time.

### **iii. Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Report**

No written report at this time.

## **13. Vice-President Labour**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 April 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, S Mohammad stated that the year had been a great experience and he greatly enjoyed working as part of the GSA and alongside the University. He introduced to GSA Council the 2020-2021 Vice-President Labour, U Nimmathi. In closing, he expressed his gratitude to F Elian for his leadership and support.

### **ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 April 2020. The report stood as submitted.

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

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 April 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, C Labonté expressed her gratitude to GSA Council members, who are instrumental in the GSA's success, and wished them luck. She also thanked her fellow elected officials and expressed appreciation for their collaboration and thanked the GSA staff for their support. C Labonté also shared with GSA Council members recent efforts to support graduate students amidst the COVID-19 pandemic: \$100,000 was added to the GSA Emergency Bursary fund to provide additional financial support; all virtual health appointments will be covered by the GSA Health and Dental Plan; the GSA continued to work closely with the Campus Food Bank to provide support as they assist those in need (they remain open and are working to move to a delivery service model); work continued with the Office of the Dean of Students to continue to provide some on-campus services, particularly the University Health Clinic, as well as an increase in funding to the Safe House program for those facing housing insecurity; Virtual Tea Times are still being offered so students can connect. C Labonté encouraged GSA Council members to use these services and share this information with their peers.

## **15. Senator**

### **i. Senator's Report**

No written report at this time.

## **16. Speaker**

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

No written report at this time.

## **17. Chief Returning Officer**

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

No written report at this time.

## **18. GSA Nominating Committee**

### **i. GSA Nominating Committee Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 April 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, R Barta expressed his gratitude to the outgoing directly elected officers and commended them on the work they accomplished this year, in spite of significant challenges and tragedies. R Barta also explained that the business of the

GSA Nominating Committee continued remotely and that engagement remained critical and could be very exciting while providing a sense of ownership in the student experience. Serving as a GSA Council member was the first step and he encouraged members to look closely at other committee vacancies. One such vacancy was currently open on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and no nominations were received. Additionally, while 6 nominees were voted on earlier in this meeting for Councillor-at-Large positions, there was a seventh vacancy as well. Members were encouraged to serve.

#### **19. 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 April 2020. 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 17 April 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, C Thomas expressed her gratitude toward the outgoing team on behalf of the entire GSA staff. She also noted that, over the past month, the GSA had worked to transition operations to a remote environment and were closely monitoring any impacts this may have on the GSA's budget. As C Labonté noted, funds had been redirected into GSA Emergency Bursaries and to University Supplementary Bursaries, and graduate students were encouraged students to apply even if they were unsure of their eligibility.

#### **Question Period**

##### **21. Written Questions**

##### **22. Oral Questions**

Speaker expressed her thanks to the outgoing DEOs, both as Speaker and as a graduate student. Speaker also welcomed the incoming DEOs.

M Waddingham then introduced the incoming Vice-Presidents: A Fassih, the incoming Vice-President External from Political Science; S Reddy, the incoming Vice-President Academic from Electrical and Computer Engineering; S Parasharamatham, the incoming Vice-President Student Services from Electrical and Computer Engineering; and U Nimmathi, the incoming Vice-President Labour from Electrical and Computer Engineering.

#### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.



### Outline of Issue

#### Changes to Coverage Under the GSA Health and Dental Plan

#### Suggested Motion for GSA Council:

**MOTION:** That GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, that coverage under the GSA Health and Dental Plan be amended as noted below, beginning 1 September 2020 and with the fee associated with the Plan to remain at \$500.36 per Plan member for 2020-2021:

- Coverage for major restorative dental services to be increased from 0% to 30% per Plan member per policy year
- Coverage for vision care to be increased from \$150 to \$200 per Plan member per every two (2) policy years
- An annual drug maximum of \$10,000 for drugs covered under the Alberta Health formulary, and \$3,000 for drugs which require the Special Authorization or Drug Exception process, to be implemented
- Eligibility for claims under the Psychology/Counselling benefit to be increased to include additional designations of Master's in Social Work and/or Registered Clinical Social Worker

**NOTE:** Given that the current pandemic and resulting physical distancing measures may impact the provision of certain health or dental services, the GSA Board (GSAB) and GSA Council may need to consider reducing or rescinding these benefit changes (and perhaps other coverage elements) as new information becomes available and if it is determined that such coverage cannot be reasonably accessed by Plan members for a significant portion of the 2020-2021 policy year.

#### Background:

This changes to coverage as noted above will cost approximately \$28.50 per Plan member per policy year. As approved at the 16 March 2020 GSA Council meeting, the 2020-2021 Plan fee will remain at \$500.36 per Plan member and this would have still allowed for approximately \$30.00 per Plan member to be deposited into the GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF) or for coverage under the Plan to be expanded. As the HDPRF currently sits at a very healthy level, it was noted at the 16 March 2020 GSA Council meeting that the GSAB would consider increasing Plan coverage and bring forward a proposal to GSA Council.

Accordingly, the GSAB met with representatives from Studentcare to consider expansions in Plan coverage that could be achieved without increasing the fee paid by graduate students (it is important to note, however, that this might result in an increase in the cost of the Plan in future years as the cost is driven by both the volume and amount of claims and expanding coverage may result in an increase in claims) by utilizing the approximately \$30 per Plan member that was projected to be transferred into the HDPRF. The above-noted expansions of coverage will still allow for approximately \$1.50-\$2.00 per Plan member to be deposited in the GSA HDPRF in 2020-2021.

Additional information can be found in the below charts compiled by Studentcare:

Benefit Changes	Quoted Premium (Fall 2019)	Cost of Benefit Change	Proposed Premium
Implement Annual Drug Maximum at <b>\$10,000</b> for drugs covered under the Alberta Health formulary, and <b>\$3,000</b> for drugs which require the Special Authorization or Drug Exception process	\$272.90	None	\$272.90
Increase eligibility for claims under the Psychology / Counselling benefit to include additional designations of <b>Master's in Social Work</b> and/or <b>Registered Clinical Social Worker (R.C.S.W.)</b>	\$272.90	None	\$272.90
Increase coverage for Vision Care from \$150 per visit to \$200	\$272.90	\$12.50	\$285.40
Add coverage for Major Restorative at 30%	\$196.85	\$16.00	\$212.85

	Quoted Premium	Proposed Premium
Health	\$ 272.90	\$ 285.40
Dental	\$ 196.85	\$ 212.85
Total	\$ 469.75	\$ 498.25
Fee	\$ 500.36	\$ 500.36
Contribution to Reserve Fund	\$ 30.61	\$ 2.11

**Jurisdiction:**

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section M: GSA Health and Dental, GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section M.POL.9.1:

*"The GSA Board (GSAB) is mandated to oversee the implementation, administration, and performance of the GSA Health and Dental Plan, reporting regularly to GSA Council regarding the Plan, and to make recommendations to GSA Council concerning the coverage and fees associated with the Plan."*

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section M: GSA Health and Dental, GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section M.POL.10.2:

*"GSA Council, on the recommendation of the GSAB, approves modification of Plan coverage."*

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section M: GSA Health and Dental, GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section M.POL.11.1.b:

*"All surpluses from Plan fees must be transferred into the GSA HDPRF at the end of the fiscal year."*

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)  
**GSA COUNCILLOR-AT-LARGE (GSA CAL) (ONE (1) POSITION FOR A GSA MEMBER): ONE (1) NOMINEE**

Information regarding the position of one (1) GSA Councillor-at-Large for a GSA member was circulated via the GSA newsletter on 1, 8, and 15 May 2020 with a nomination deadline of 20 May 2020. One (1) nomination was received.

GSA Council is the highest governing body of the GSA and is composed of the GSA President and Vice-Presidents, other elected officials of the GSA, one representative for each unit with a graduate program, and ten (10) GSA Councillors-at-Large. As noted in GSA Bylaw and Policy, "the mandate of the GSA Council is to fulfill all responsibilities listed in Section 95 of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*" (Section C: GSA Council, GSA Bylaw, GSA Council, Section C.BYL.1.1).

**There will be an electronic vote held at the 25 May 2020 GSA Council meeting.**

*If you and your alternate are unable to attend the Monday 25 May 2020 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Elections Coordinator ([gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca)) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday 25 May 2020 in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.*

**Nominees for this position are listed in alphabetical order by last name and will be presented in *reverse alphabetical* order on the ballot. 'None of the Candidates' will also be considered a nominee.**

- 1. Neslihan Akpinar (Political Science)**

**Jurisdiction:**

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section I: Elections, GSA Policy, Elections, Section I.POL.15.3

*"In the event that any CAL positions are not filled by the end of the GSA General Election, or a CAL position is vacated, GSA Council will be responsible for electing any remaining CALs prior to 1 December (or the next working day). When electing any remaining CALs, GSA Council will aim to elect GSA members from as broad a range of disciplines as possible. The GSA NoC will decide on procedures and then provide one (1) or more names to GSA Council for consideration, except that the GSA NoC may not waive advertising. Note that the legislated GSA NoC process specifies that all vacancies will be advertised at least twice in advance of the nomination deadline noted in the advertisement."*

**The name and biography received for the nominee is BELOW on pages 6.1 and 6.2.**

**The biography and resume is presented as received (ie not edited).**

**Nomination for GSA COUNCILLOR-AT-LARGE (GSA CAL)  
(ONE (1) VACANCEY FOR A GSA MEMBER)  
One (1) Nominee**

**1. Neslihan Akpinar**

<b>Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)</b>	
<b>Statement of Interest:</b> I sincerely believe that I am a good fit relevant to serve in the Graduate Student Association (GSA) Council. First of all, it is worth mentioning that I studied sociology and I am currently pursuing my PhD in political science. My educational background gives me a high capability of addressing social and policy problems both individual and institutional levels. Second, my student assistantship position during my undergraduate years contributed to my communication and organization skills. I provided valuable connections between the department staff and the students. Most significantly, I have been working for almost more than three years as a research and teaching assistant. This means that I have hitherto five years of professional experience at the university institution. Therefore, I am more aware of academic habitus regarding possible opportunities and challenges. I also developed project development and management, teamwork, and communication skills through working as an education project coordinator in an NGO. Finally, I will definitely bring a gender lens to the council. One of my specializations is gender and politics. I also did my internship in a leading women NGO and worked as a teaching assistant on the subject. To sum up, I am very passionate to serve on the GSA council and look forward to getting this chance.	
<b>Bio:</b> I was born and raised in Istanbul, Turkey. My native language is Turkish, so I am fluent in both Turkish and English. I completed both of my Bachelor's (Sociology) and Master's degrees (Political Studies) in my home country. I have always been an ambitious person throughout my academic journey by participating in many volunteer projects, and then being a professional worker. Thanks to my academic success, prior to my postgraduate studies, I was awarded the Turkish Government Full Scholarship. I was also taught at Uppsala University, Sweden as an exchange student during my undergraduate degree. After graduation from my Master's degree, I also worked at the Munzur University in Turkey as a full-time research assistant before moving to Canada. I ranked first in my field in the Ph.D. Scholarship of the Turkish Ministry of National Education for studying abroad. I decided to pursue my Ph.D. in the Department of Political Science, at the University of Alberta. Except for academic life, I am doing yoga and meditation, and some outdoor activities.	
<b>Summary Resume:</b> I am now a second-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Political Science, at the University of Alberta. First of all, my personal and academic graduate student challenges as an international student encouraged me to serve in the GSA council. I would like to bring and assess many issues on the table. As I have mentioned before, I have hitherto five	

years of professional experience at the university institution. I worked as an education project coordinator in an NGO. I also volunteered in the department events several times at the U of A. Currently, I am engaged with the International Student Council and Political Science Graduate Student Association at the university. I have enough passion and time to serve as a GSA Councillor-at Large.

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)  
**GSA SENATOR (ONE (1) POSITION FOR A GSA MEMBER): TWO (2) NOMINEES**

Information regarding the vacancy for one (1) Senator position was circulated via the GSA newsletter on 3, 9, 17, 24 April, and 1 May 2020 with a nomination deadline of 6 May 2020. Two (2) nominations were received.

**Duties**

“The Senator is the GSA’s representative to the University of Alberta Senate” (Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Policy, GSA Officers, Section D.BYL.3.3.b)

“All GSA Council-Elected Officers and Deputies are non-voting members of GSA Council” (Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Policy, GSA Officers, Section D.BYL.3.3.e)

“The Senator is a non-voting member of the GSA Board (Section F: GSA Standing Committees, GSA Policy, GSA Standing Committees, Section F.POL.3.1.d)

**Qualifications**

“The Senator should have prior experience acting as a representative for the GSA and/or as a liaison with bodies external to the University” (Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Policy, GSA Officers, Section D.POL.11.2.a)

**There will be an electronic vote held at the 25 May 2020 GSA Council meeting.**

*If you and your alternate are unable to attend the Monday 25 May 2020 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Elections Coordinator ([gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca)) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday 25 May 2020 in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.*

**Nominees for this position are listed in alphabetical order by last name and will be presented in *reverse alphabetical* order on the ballot. ‘None of the Candidates’ will also be considered a nominee.**

- 1. Kyle Shanebeck (Biological)**
- 2. Marla Palakkamanil (Public Health)**

**Jurisdiction:**

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section D: GSA Officers, Council-Elected Officers, Election of Senator, Section D.BYL.3.2.b

*“Nominations for Senator will open on or about 1 April of every year. The nomination period will normally be one (1) month.”*

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section D: GSA Officers, Council-Elected Officers, Election of Senator, Section D.BYL.3.2.c

*“The GSA NoC will follow its legislated process in forwarding one (1) or more nominations to GSA Council, except that the GSA NoC may not waive advertising. Note that the legislated GSA NoC process specifies that all vacancies will be advertised at least twice in advance of the nomination deadline.”*

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section D: GSA Officers, Council-Elected Officers, Election of Senator, Section D.BYL.3.2.d

*“The Senator will be elected by a simple majority vote of GSA Council, for a term lasting from 1 June to 31 May of the following year.”*

**The names and biographies received from the nominees are BELOW on pages 6.4-6.6.**

### 1. Kyle Shanebeck (Ecology)

<p><b>Statement of Interest:</b></p> <p>I have worked in a variety of professional settings related to the sciences, including as an outdoor educator, field biologist, at an environmental consulting firm, as a zookeeper, and at aquariums and marine research centers. At the University of Alberta I have served with the GSA as the representative to the Science Faculty Council, and for the Biological graduate Student Association as Co-President this past year. I helped found the Science Graduate Student Association Council, an interdepartmental council for the student associations in the Faculty of Science. I currently chair the workshop committee of the BGSA, which plans and puts on training and professional development workshops for the graduate students in the Biology Department.</p> <p>I am an international student (from the US) and completed my Masters in Ecology in Germany. I think my experiences studying in completely different academic settings will bring new ideas and help break up the norms here. I am passionate about education as a former teacher for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students; and have worked in course development for the Biology Department (Biol 108). I am also dedicated to EDI, and equal opportunity for minorities and wish to make sure that is reflected in academia. I have a long history volunteering and have worked in various areas including substance abuse and LGBT+ issues. All these things I think make me uniquely qualified to represent the GSA to the University of Alberta Senate.</p>
<p><b>Bio:</b></p> <p>I was born in California and got my BSc in Biological Sciences (2010) from Biola University in Los Angeles county, and my MSc in Ecology (2018) from the University of Bremen, Germany. I grew up in a very religious household and as a result spent most of my life volunteering in one charity or another. As a member of the LGBT+ community, growing up in a traditionally conservative family and environment was not easy.</p> <p>I have volunteered all my life, but most significant to me has been my work with LGBT+ issues, specifically in the church where discrimination is a real problem. I have also helped facilitate 12 step programs for substance abuse, and always thought that was one of the most important things I have ever done. I have been a zookeeper, field biologist, bartender, teacher, and more. I have had a very interesting life, that is hard to summarize here, but suffice to say it has been unique and not always an easy life experience. But I have made it through; and I continue to strive to better myself and the lives of others around me the best I can.</p>
<p><b>Summary Resume:</b></p> <p>I am ending my second year of my PhD studies co-supervised by Dr. Clement Lagrue and Dr. Stephanie Green, in the Biological Sciences department (focus ecology). I study intestinal parasites of Sea Otters. Between my undergraduate and MSc degree, I worked for the University of California, Santa Cruz, as a field biologist studying otters. In Los Angeles I worked for an environmental consulting agency, working as an onsite biologist for major construction projects. I was a zookeeper at the Happy Hollow Park and Zoo in San Jose, CA. I also taught outdoor education for two years (fifth and sixth grade) for the YMCA, before moving to Germany for my masters. Through that I have experience developing lesson plans and teaching goals and had the opportunity to get a lot of professional development training through the YMCA. In my Undergrad I worked in student government for the Associated Student body for two years, and was Executive Director of a campus wide Conference that invited international speakers and was attended by over a thousand people. In my Master's program I was a student representative, and developed a Socratic seminar concerning the ethics of conservation, putting together the course with my advisor. For the past year I half have been volunteering on campus with the U School program, which brings elementary schools from underrepresented groups, to the UofA to learn about various topics and expose them to higher education. I was also on the leadership team of the Local Organizing Committee for the 2020 Canadian Society of Ecology and Evolution Conference. I was Lead of the Volunteer sub-committee. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 the conference has been cancelled and all our hard work was for naught.</p> <p>As co-president of the BGSA, I have initiated the founding of two standing committees: the Workshop and EDI committees. I currently chair the workshop committee and have doubled the BGSA's yearly workshops, covering new important topics like: New Student FAQs, Publication Writing in the Sciences, Student-Supervisor Relationships, Harassment and Campus Resources for Grad Students, and more. I have a flexible schedule this coming year and would be easily able to accommodate a busy council schedule.</p>

### 1. Marla Palakkamanil

#### Statement of Interest:

As a clinical consultant pharmacist, I was responsible for the medication management of over 464 patients across five continuing care facilities. On a daily basis, I collaborated with other healthcare professionals to optimize patient care. When there have been instances of differing opinions, objectives, and in some cases, friction between staff, I took the lead to build consensus and ensured all parties were correctly understood and a resolution achieved. I learned to curb potential conflicts by gaining trust, actively listening, and dealing with issues head-on.

My experiences have taught me that overcoming situations of adversity is achievable when every member remains committed to the common goal - in this case, the best interests of the patient. I learned that while it is not always possible for everyone to get along, it is how those differences in opinions are handled that truly matters. Group dynamics can be strengthened by fostering team spirit and breaking down barriers. During conflict, I observed the importance of approaching the person privately with possible solutions to the issue at hand in order to dispel misunderstandings and increase collegiality. Respecting perspectives and building mutual trust are critical to achieving the shared goal of patient care.

My experience as a dance instructor has taught me to be mindful of holding a positive disposition and outlook on life. As a leader, I believe it is important to elicit feedback and input from my own dance teacher, students, and their parents. In doing so, I am able to understand and incorporate new perspectives within my role as an instructor.

As a Distress Line Volunteer, my role is to provide “psychological first aid” to individuals in crisis. My overarching goal is to empower callers to identify with a sense of self-efficacy and support them as they utilize coping strategies to problem-solve. My interactions spanning cultural and generational groups has strengthened my ability to interpret cues and adapt communication by finding a rhythm and resonance with every caller. Having an invaluable impact on my daily life, I have learned to step outside of myself and interpret situations from another person’s perspective, enabling me to relate to others on a human level. It has also taught me that validating and normalizing feelings can help others feel heard and understood.

#### Bio:

By profession, I am a clinical pharmacist with a Master’s in Epidemiology. I have taken a special interest in Canada’s opioid crisis, a complex health and social issue that requires evidence-based research to inform policymakers about opioid drug use and its impacts. My desire to effect change led me to pursue my doctoral degree in public health, specializing in epidemiology.

I am also a professional dancer driven by the passion of showcasing the rich tapestry of the classical Indian dance form, Kathak, to a Canadian and global audience. As a born and raised Edmontonian, I am proud to be contributing to the diversity of Canada’s ever evolving cultural arts mosaic and especially to be a part of Canada’s next generation of artists. Dance has been an integral part of my life since childhood. I began this endeavour at the tender age of three with Usha Gupta of Usha Kala Niketan School of Dance in Edmonton. For over 25 years, I have had rigorous training in the classical Indian art forms of Kathak and Bharatanatyam. This rigor and regularity of practice has enabled me to train with highly renowned artists of India including Padma Vibhushan Pandit Birju Maharaj, Sandhya Desai, Maulik Shah, Nirupama and Rajendra, Sudeshna Maulik, Anuj Mishra, and Uma Dogra. In addition, I have had the rare opportunity as a young Canadian artist to perform in various cities across Canada, United States and India.



**Summary Resume:**

Having just completed my Master of Science in Epidemiology, I am looking forward to commencing my doctoral studies in September. I will have a flexible schedule, and will be able to accommodate sitting on a busy committee.

Prior to returning to graduate school, I worked as a clinical consultant pharmacist with Medical Pharmacies Group Limited. In this role, I was responsible for caring for over 464 patients across five continuing care facilities in Edmonton, Ponoka, Drayton Valley, and Wetaskiwin. I would regularly review patients' medications and provide recommendations to physicians to optimize the service of care provided. In collaboration with the physician, I would lead a team of other healthcare professionals (nurses, occupational therapists, social workers) through patient care rounds each week to discuss patients' concerns, and review lab values, appropriate use of antipsychotics, behavioral changes, and recommend modifications to their medications, when appropriate.

Currently, I volunteer as a literacy and numeracy intern at the iHuman Youth Society. Beginning in March 2019, I have been providing literacy and numeracy support to traumatized and marginalized youth who live high-risk lifestyles. I work with youth from the ages of 12 to 24 and tutor them in various subjects, including mathematics, chemistry, and biology. I am also heavily involved in the development of a 'Virtual Reality Biking Program for Seniors' at the Good Samaritan Southgate Care Centre. The goal is to increase visual engagement, mental stimulation, and social re-engagement among participating seniors during their exercise routine. These seniors are in the early stages of dementia. I have been involved in writing and applying for grants to raise funds for virtual reality equipment, so that this program can gain more traction. Additionally, I serve as a board member of the Graduate Students' Association Appeals and Complaints Board. In my position, I am responsible for hearing and deciding appeals of decisions and complaints as allowed by Section 94(3) of the Post-Secondary Learning Act.

**2019-2020 President  
Report to GSA Council for the 25 May 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Fahed Elian  
Date: 22 May 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

Let me start my report by respectfully acknowledging that we are on Treaty 6 territory, the traditional lands of First Nations and Métis people.

My term is officially up. I want to thank everyone who supported me from the beginning of my advocacy journey with the GSA, I mean all the way back when I started as a GSA councillor in 2015 until I finished my GSA presidency term in 2020. I would also like to thank my family for their endless support emotionally and financially and for believing in me and encouraging me every day to be myself and do the things I like to do. I want to thank my friends Andre and Vanessa for always being there to give an advice, support, and for reminding me that I can do my best and hope for the best and not to take it personal or hard on myself. Finally, special thank you to my mentor, advisor, supervisor and friend, Dr. Michael Walter. Without his support none of this could've happened. I remember when I was hesitant to run for the GSA presidency, worried about my research timelines, Mike had a meeting with me and said; "Fahed, you have what it takes to lead the GSA, I want you to lead, I know what you are capable of, and I know what you could do to help your peers, so go for it buddy" and he added "oh yeah regarding your research, I know you're probably thinking to keep your PhD research as full time alongside your GSA work, which means you'll probably work on weekends, late at night and that'll burn you out, and I don't want this to happen because I care about you and your mental health and wellness, so your PhD would be on hold or part time, and your GSA work would be a full time job for you. I want you and your team to lead and leave a legacy, I want your accomplishments to speak on your behalf, and I know you could do it, so let me help and I start now by saying don't worry much about your PhD progress, you'll be fine, you got this" and the rest is history.

**Find below, some highlights of my work over the last month:**

**Charter of Student Rights**

- Akanksha Bhatnagar, the SU former President; Catherine Swindlehurst, the Interim VP University Relations; and I are designing a plaque to celebrate the Charter of Student Rights endorsement. Three plaques will be designed and placed in SAB, SUB, and Triffo Hall.

**Board of Governors**

- I have advocated to ensure that Marc, the current GSA President, has seats on Bord of Governors (BoG) subcommittees and make sure that graduate students voices and concerns are heard and addressed at the BoG levels. As a result, Marc is a member of Board of Finance and Property committee (BFPC), Board of Learning, Student Experience and Research committee (BLRSEC), and Board Governance Committee (BGC).

I won't be attending this Council meeting, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns or questions. You can reach me at [elian@ualberta.ca](mailto:elian@ualberta.ca) also feel free to connect with me on social media platforms [Linkedin](#) and [twitter](#).

Warmly,  
Fahed Elian, President 2019-2020

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 20 April 2020 and 30 April 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

21-30 April	Daily COVID-19 Regular Update Call
21 April	Meeting with A Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities and Operations)
21 April	Board Finance and Property Committee (BFPC)
22 April	Board Governance Committee (BGC)
22 April	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council
23 April	Monthly Meeting with A Costopoulos, Dean of Student
23 April	Presidential Transition Committee Meeting
24 April	UAlberta Associations Presidents' Call
24 April	Meeting with D Turpin, President
24 April	Meeting with D Nicolaides, Minister of Advanced Education
28 April	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Dean
28 April	Graduate Students of Canada Weekly Phone Call
28 April	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Government Relations Training
29 April	Meeting re the Charter of Student Rights and Responsibilities
30 April	COVID-19 Infrastructure and Planning Working Group

**2020-2021 GSA President  
Report to GSA Council for the 25 May 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Marc Waddingham  
Date: 22 May 2020

To my colleagues in Council,

While the circumstances for our first meeting of the year are not ideal, I am glad to welcome you all to the GSA 2020-2021 annual program. I hope you are all doing as well as possible, are staying safe, and most importantly, taking care of yourselves and loved ones. With the acute phase of the pandemic in the Edmonton region drawing to a close for the meantime, the University of Alberta is now faced with the residual effects of major disruptions to global travel, continuing health and safety measures, as well as severely impacted revenues.

The University's Board of Governors (BoG) has begun the first rounds of its governance cycle for the new academic year, and I am pleased to announce that I represent graduate students on three subcommittees as well as the BoG proper: Board Governance Committee; Board Learning, Research and Student Experience Committee; and Board Finance and Property Committee. I would like to thank former GSA President Fahed Elian for his dutiful lobbying which secured these seats for our association, which I look forward to utilizing to their fullest potential.

On the subject of Fall Term 2020 planning and beyond, the GSA has been afforded key seats by which to communicate the needs of graduate students during this period of transition. These include a graduate-specific working group under the Academic Impacts Subcommittee, and the Facilities & Operations (F&O) Fall 2020 Planning Subcommittee, both of which operate under designated authority from the UA Public Health Response Team lead by VP F&O Andrew Sharman. Thus far, we have been able to communicate key messages and inquiries from our membership, which can then be brought for consideration up the administrative chain as final decisions are being made. The inherent qualities of graduate education, including explicit experiential learning components and smaller class sizes, should allow for accommodations to be made in the fall. Indeed, research activities are already re-starting across campus contingent on administrative approval.

Aside from the post-pandemic transition process, the University continues to contend with the latest provincial government budget cuts, which have already resulted in hundreds of layoffs, in addition to a reduction in student support services. In response to these budgetary pressures, and due to historical factors, the university will be initiating an academic restructuring process. I am not at liberty to go into much detail at this early stage, however I would recommend that our members attend upcoming consultation sessions presented by University President-Elect Bill Flanagan, who will be spearheading the project. If you would like to be involved early-on in the process, I would encourage you to attend your Faculty and/or Departmental council meetings as these will be primary venues for this information to be distributed.

Another great way to get involved as a Council member is to join one of our standing committees, as we have vacancies that need to be filled that will be advertised at the end of this council meeting. Not only are these committees essential to the operation of the GSA, they are great ways to engage with the executive and contribute to our robust accountability structure. To this point, we also have a notable vacancy on our Board; if you are interested in high-level discussions about everything taking place at the university, and have experience that can contribute to the diversity of the Board, we would be glad to have you aboard.

I have one last ask of the Council for this month: as the 2020-21 DEO team begin the process of establishing our Strategic Work Plan for the upcoming year, we would be highly appreciative of input and perspectives from our membership. If each Council member were to help by sharing our [SWP 2020-21 survey](#) with their graduate student

colleagues in their Department/Faculty, it would greatly amplify our reach and ensure we are receiving responses from a representative cross section of our campus community. To this point, if every Council member were to fill out this survey, it would significantly boost our participation rate from previous years; a bit of effort would go a long way to ensure our members' diverse opinions, challenges, and thoughts are adequately captured in our planning process.

These constitute my major updates for the May 2020 Council meeting; I look forward to any questions you may have.

Kind regards,  
Marc Waddingham, President 2020-2021

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 1 May 2020 and 25 May 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

1-25 May	Daily COVID-19 Regular Update Call
5 May	Tuition Budget Advisory Committee (TBAC)
5 May	Board of Governors
6 May	General Faculties Council (GFC) Town Hall
6 May	General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC)
7 May	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Advocacy and Outreach Chair Meeting
8 May	Board of Governors (BoG)
11 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Seminar
11 May	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Meeting
12 May	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Dean
13 May	Meeting with D Nicolaidis, Minister of Advanced Education
13 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Workshop
14 May	Meeting with C Bell, Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director
18 May	Meeting with Students' Union (SU) re: U-Pass
19 May	Meeting with a Graduate Student
20 May	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Special Board Meeting
20 May	General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC)
22 May	Meeting with Students' Union (SU) re: U-Pass
22 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Town Hall
25 May	Board of Governors (BoG)

**GSA Board  
Report to GSA Council for the 25 May 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Courtney Thomas, Executive Director; Erika Heiberg, Associate Director

The GSA Board (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. GSA Council members are always able to ask questions about items that were discussed in closed session. 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 17 (Executive Director's Report to GSA Council) on pages 17.1 - 17.5.

**22 April 2020 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

Changes to Coverage Under the GSA Health and Dental Plan; GSA Annual Report; COVID-19 Update; and Meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements:

**MOTION:** That the GSA Board **RECOMMEND TO GSA COUNCIL** that coverage under the GSA Health and Dental Plan be amended as noted below, beginning 1 September 2020 and with the fee associated with the Plan to remain at \$500.36 per Plan member for 2020-2021:

- Coverage for major restorative dental services to be increased from 0% to 30% per Plan member per policy year
- Coverage for vision care to be increased from \$150 to \$200 per Plan member per every two (2) policy years
- An annual drug maximum of \$10,000 for drugs covered under the Alberta Health formulary, and \$3,000 for drugs which require the Special Authorization or Drug Exception process, to be implemented
- Eligibility for claims under the Psychology/Counselling benefit to be increased to include additional designations of Master's in Social Work and/or Registered Clinical Social Worker

CL **MOVED**. MW Seconded. **CARRIED**.

**29 April 2020 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

COVID-19 Update; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

**Board Members AGREED** to move into **CLOSED SESSION**.

**Board Members** discussed the **Board Finance and Property Committee (BFPC)**.

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

**6 May 2020 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

Line of Succession for Chair of the GSA Board; Designation of Executive Vice-Presidents and Line of Succession for Acting President; COVID-19 Update; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

**MOTION:** That the GSA Board **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the line of succession for Chair of the GSA Board as follows: 1) Vice-President External, 2) Vice-President Student Services, and 3) Vice-President Labour. SP **MOVED**. SR Seconded. **CARRIED**.

**MOTION:** That the GSA Board **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the designation of Executive Vice-President and the line of succession for Acting President as follows: 1) GSA Vice-President External, as Executive Vice-President, and 2) GSA Vice-President Labour. SR **MOVED**. AF Seconded. **CARRIED**.

**13 May 2020 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

Meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements:

None to report.

**20 May 2020 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

International Students' Association: Request for a Councillor from the GSA; GSA Social Media: Academic Success Centre 2019-2020  
Summary Report on Use of GSA's Subsidy; and Meeting Reports

Motions and Agreements:

Members **AGREED** that AF would serve as the GSA delegate to the ISA, with UM as a back up.

Members **AGREED** to brainstorm social media strategies offline and return with suggestions.

**MOTION:** That the GSA Board **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the attached summary report, as submitted by the Academic Success Centre.

SR **MOVED.** AF Seconded. **CARRIED.**

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

Members discussed the **Board of Governors (BoG)** meeting.

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

**2019-2020 Vice-President Academic  
Report to GSA Council for the 25 May 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Dylan Ashley  
Date: 22 May 2020

Hi Fellow Grads,

This is my last report. It's a very odd sensation leaving my term, but I had ample chance to speak at our last meeting about what the GSA means to me. I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to keep serving graduate students as a Councillor-at-Large.

Some key things that happened in the last few days of my term are of particular relevance for you all:

- At FGSR Council, they presented the enrollment report. The report provided a lot of interesting details regarding the composition of our members. In general, the trends shown in the report are good. I was particularly happy to see solid growth in the number of indigenous students. This growth is expected to increase further after the Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE) program is fully implemented.
- As you are hopefully all aware of by now, the federal government has introduced monetary relief for post-secondary students suffering from the effects of COVID-19. You can find more details here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/04/support-for-students-and-recent-graduates-impacted-by-covid-19.html>
- FGSR has communicated that there won't be any tuition waivers related to COVID-19. They're currently encouraging any students that need it to take a leave of absence. As it stands, they have statistics showing that only around 10% of graduate students cannot proceed with their work due to the effects of COVID-19.

I want to finish by thanking everyone for all their work over the past year. I spoke about how significant this past year has been for me and the GSA. None of what has happened would have happened without the great work of countless people.

If you have any questions, I will direct them to your new Vice-President Academic, Sachiketha Reddy ([gsa.vpacademic@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.vpacademic@ualberta.ca)).

Sincerely,

Dylan Ashley, Vice-President Academic 2019-2020

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 20 April 2020 and 30 April 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

22 April	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council
24 April	University Research Policy Committee (URPC)
28 April	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Dean
29 April	Non-Credit Credential Framework (N-CCF) Task Force



**2020-2021 Vice-President Academic  
Report to GSA Council for the 25 May 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Sachiketha Reddy Paspula  
Date: 22 May 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope that you all are doing great and enjoying the warm and sunny days. I am delighted to start my position as Vice President Academic for the GSA. I feel this is a great opportunity to serve my fellow graduate students by advocating for greater transparency around the expectations and outcomes for graduate students. I am looking forward to work with you all over the coming year.

As a part of job shadowing, I attended some meetings with the outgoing VP Academic, and I would like to thank Dylan and the GSA staff for their guidance in learning about the ongoing issues during the transition period.

After I officially started my term on May 1, I have attended several meetings and here are few highlights from those meetings.

- I had my first meeting of the General Faculties Council Executive Committee (GFC EXEC), which was an open discussion session about the fall term planning. The limitations regarding students who registered for the fall semester and the physical distancing outside the classrooms were discussed and they are trying to figure out the best ways to accommodate international students located remotely. Meanwhile, I had a meeting with David Draper, Vice-President Academic for the Students' Union. We had a healthy conversation about the issues faced by graduate and undergraduate students, and committed to support each other on the various committees to advocate for the issues of our fellow students. There was a second GFC EXEC meeting and a GFC town hall, where the floor was open for the suggestions regarding the fall semester planning. There were some concerns raised against online assessments, as they might compromise academic integrity and GFC is trying to find the best ways to assess students for the Fall. The Chief Medical Officer of Health for Alberta advised on the mode of delivery. Given some of the challenges of online delivery, it is possible that some graduate students may take leaves of absence, defer program start dates, etc.
- I attended the Non-Credit Credential Framework Task Force (N-CCF) meeting, where we discussed the conditions for some certificate and diploma courses. These courses cannot be used as a ladder into credit courses, but departments can to accept these courses for credit based on the normal transfer credit procedures.
- I attended the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Policy Review Committee (FGSR PRC) meeting, where an alternate path of admission into the MBA program was discussed, with alternatives to providing the IELTS English Language test score, and they are planning to conduct supplemental exams for the students who did not meet the GPA requirement.
- In the GSA's Strategic Work Plan Workshop, we tabulated the advocacy priorities of each Directly-Elected Officer to serve graduate students in the upcoming year.

If you have any concerns about this report or concerns regarding any academic related issue, feel free to reach me at [gsavpaca@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsavpaca@ualberta.ca). I will be more than happy to answer your questions.

Regards,  
Sachiketha Reddy Paspula, Vice-President Academic 2020-2021

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 1 May 2020 and 25 May 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

4 May	Meeting with D Draper, Students' Union (SU) VP Academic
4 May	General Faculties Council Executive Committee (GFC EXEC) Special Meeting
5 May	Tuition Budget Advisory Committee (TBAC)
6 May	General Faculties Council (GFC) Town Hall
11 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Seminar
11 May	General Faculties Council Executive Committee (GFC EXEC)
12 May	Tuition Budget Advisory Committee (TBAC)
12 May	Meeting with R Barta, General Faculties Council (GFC) Standing Committees Delegate
13 May	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Policy Review Committee (FGSR PRC)
13 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Workshop
14 May	Non-Credit Credential Framework (N-CCF) Task Force
21 May	GSA General Faculties Council (GFC) Caucus
22 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Town Hall
25 May	GSA Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council Caucus
25 May	General Faculties Council (GFC)

**2019-2020 Vice-President External  
Report to GSA Council for the 25 May 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Marc Waddingham  
Date: 22 May 2020

To the GSA Council,

Here are the final updates from my term as Vice-President External:

- The Edmonton Student Alliance held a virtual annual general meeting and elected the new Chair and Vice-Chair for the upcoming year, and is now fully re-established as a standing student advocacy group handling student advocacy issues at the municipal level.
- Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director Chris Bell ran the organization's first Governmental Relations training, a highly engaging program that offers a crash-course political history of Alberta, main governmental structures, key players, and ab-GPAC's suite of approaches in lobbying the government. The Governmental Relations process has already been subject to improvements and additions, and has quickly become a staple of the organization's training regimen.
- I had been attending a weekly Zoom call with Graduate Student of Canada, a grassroots activist organization seeking to better organize graduate students, especially international students, mainly around seeking equity in government supports in light of COVID. While the activities fall out of scope for the GSA, we are glad to offer support and advice, in addition to relaying key points to further advocacy priorities.

These constitute the main updates in my final weeks as VPX; a more fulsome update can be seen in my Presidential report.

Kind regards,  
Marc Waddingham, Vice-President External 2019-2020

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 20 April 2020 and 30 April 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing*

21 April	Graduate Students of Canada Weekly Meeting
21 April	Meeting with C Bell, Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director
22 April	Alumni Council Meeting
22 April	Update re: COVID-19 Residence Response
22 April	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Special Board Meeting
23 April	Monthly Meeting with A Costopoulos, Dean of Student
23 April	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Incoming Directors Meeting
24 April	Edmonton Students Alliance (ESA) Transition Meeting
27 April	Michener Park Transition Advisory Committee (MPTAC)
28 April	Graduate Students of Canada Weekly Phone Call
28 April	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Government Relations Training
28 April	Meeting with C Bell, Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director
29 April	Update re: COVID-19 Residence Response

**2020-2021 Vice-President External  
Report to GSA Council for the 25 May 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Anas Fassih  
Date: 22 May 2020

This is my first term serving as GSA VP External. I wish to thank everyone for their vote and assure you that I will strive to represent the best interests of my fellow graduate students in my external advocacy. Privileged and honoured to be elected, I will persevere to honour graduate students' trust and fulfill my fiduciary duties and responsibilities.

This is my first month in office and it has been challenging to undertake all the transition meetings and training online, but gradually I am getting a feel for the process. The following are the meetings I've attended since the start of my term:

**Public Interest Alberta Post-Secondary Education Task Force**

I attended the Public Interest Alberta meeting on 11 May. The meeting was attended by Prachi Mishra and Elizabeth Johannson (Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) for the UofA), Anna Beukes (Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculties Association), Brendan Bruce (Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations), Emmanuel Barker (Alberta Students' Executive Council), Christopher Bell (Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council, and myself (UAlberta GSA). The discussion revolved around an open letter to the Minister of Advanced Education concerning post-secondary education. All members agreed to sign the letter. There was also discussion about publishing the letter in the Edmonton Journal. Some members proposed that we publish it as it is, whereas others argued that it would be better to develop it to a traditional op-ed in which we adopt a position and send it out. The majority agreed on publishing the letter as it is and trying to subsequently publish a traditional op-ed later in the same paper or other venues.

**Michener Park Transition**

The Michener Park (MP) transition process is ongoing. As part of my portfolio, I continue the implementation of Marc's initiative in his term as VP External, namely the Michener Park Transition Advisory Committee (MPTAC). My first meeting with MPTAC took place on 4 May. The discussion centred on move-out support for current residents. The major update was that there are 115 residents still in the building and the committee introduced a door-to-door check-in process. They also mentioned that they developed a questionnaire to see what everyone needs in terms of support for moving out, underscoring they are adopting a case-by-case approach to dealing with residents. One thing that I raised in the meeting and that I will continue to advocate for is providing some alternative lodging for MP residents at a discount. This is something I raised with Katherine Huising, Associate Vice President, Ancillary Services, in my transition meeting and I look forward to raising the same question with her again in our next meeting.

Furthermore, on 8 May, I received an email from K Huising saying that they are allowing residents to cancel their renewal contract for fall 2020 by 31 July without any penalty. This was because the University was not sure yet what fall classes might look like.

**Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC)**

As GSA VP External, I also serve as a director with ab-GPAC. In our COVID-19 update meetings on 5, 12, 20 May, the discussion centred on the update about what the Fall 2020 semester would look like for the 4 member associations: U of A, Athabasca, Concordia, and University of Calgary. In terms of the measures to cope with the COVID-19 crisis, they are similar among the 4 institutions as they all follow advice from the Health Ministry in the

province. During these meetings, we also discussed our priorities for provincial advocacy, including a nomination program for immigration, academic funding, and affordable student housing, among other key priority areas. Regarding advocacy for affordable housing outside campus, I joined the Advocacy Outreach Committee with ab-GPAC, which will allow me to interact directly with key stakeholders at the municipal level. This was a subject of discussion in my meeting with Chris Bell, Executive Director of ab-GPAC, on 14 May.

On 20 May, we had a special board meeting in which we discussed key advocacy priorities for ab-GPAC at the provincial level. The priorities are funding, immigration programs, housing, and advocating for support for students who parent in this difficult time, among others. As well, we voted for the approval of committee memberships and I am officially part of the Outreach committee.

### **GSA Board Strategic Work Plan**

We are still in the process of drafting our strategic work plan. However, in our planning meetings, I presented some key themes of my external advocacy priorities for this year. That includes the completion of Marc's work regarding transition for Michener Park residents, immigration programs for international students, and affordable housing outside campus. As I proceed this year, I will remain flexible in responding to the need of my fellow graduate students in external advocacy and representation. I'd welcome suggestions on my portfolio from the GSA Council. Please feel free to share what the key priority areas for external advocacy might be for you.

Thank you,

Anas Fassih, Vice-President External 2020-2021

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 1 May 2020 and 25 May 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

4 May	Michener Park Transition Advisory Committee (MPTAC)
5 May	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) COVID-19 Update
5 May	Graduate Students of Canada Weekly Phone Call
6 May	General Faculties Council (GFC) Town Hall
11 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Seminar
11 May	Public Interest Alberta (PIA) Post-Secondary Education Task force
12 May	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) COVID-19 Update
12 May	Alberta Student Leaders Meeting re COVID-19
13 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Workshop
14 May	Meeting with C Bell, Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director
20 May	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Special Board Meeting
21 May	General Faculties Council Facilities Development Committee (GFC FDC)
22 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Town Hall

**2019-2020 GSA Vice-President Labour  
Report to GSA Council for the 25 May 2020 Meeting**

No report was submitted.

*Please find below a list of meetings attended between 20 April 2020 and 30 April 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

22 April	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council
23 April	Monthly Meeting with A Costopoulos, Dean of Student
30 April	Preliminary Collective Agreement Negotiations Meeting with B Pearson, Faculty and Staff Relations

**2020-2021 Vice-President Labour  
Report to GSA Council for the 25 May 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Umesh Nimmathi  
Date: 22 May 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you and your family are staying safe and healthy especially in this uncertain time. I'm the new Vice President Labour (VPL) and excited to work in this position. Firstly, I want to thank graduate students who voted for me for this position. I also want to thank the GSA staff and outgoing Directly Elected Officers (DEOs) for their continuous support throughout my transition process.

**Job Shadowing:**

During my job shadowing, I have attended several training meetings, including a Labour and Collective Agreement 101 session. I have listed them below:

2 April	GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC)
7 April	GSA 101
9 April	Governing Documents 101
16 April	Governance 101
27 April	Labour and Collective Agreement 101
28 April	Budget 101
30 April	GSA Collective Agreement Negotiations

**GSA Labour Relations Committee:**

I have also attended meetings with the GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC) and former Vice President Labour, Shanawaz Mohammad. I want to thank the GSA LRC members and Shanawaz Mohammad for drafting a strong bargaining mandate for upcoming Collective Agreement negotiations. This mandate was ratified by Academically-Employed Graduate students (AEGSs) last month.

**Preliminary Collective Agreement Negotiations Meeting:**

This was a short introductory meeting with B Pearson and S Buchsdruecker from Faculty and Staff Relations about the members of the respective negotiation teams and a tentative timeline for the negotiations. We will be having another meeting in June where they will give us their opening position proposal. As in the Collective Agreement, Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) and Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs), have their award component of the stipend tied to tuition, this component of the stipend can increase in accordance with tuition changes separate from the negotiation process. This means that an increase in award will occur for the Fall regardless of where we are in the process of negotiating.

**Employment and COVID-19:**

Also, I received an update from L Ahmad, International Student Specialist with University of Alberta International (UAI) that students who were getting paid through Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs) and Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) may be eligible to apply for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). As a reminder, bursary funding and other financial supports are also available from the University and the GSA.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to email me at [gsavplab@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsavplab@ualberta.ca). As always, if you are encountering a labour issue, please reach out to me as well.

Best Regards

Umesh Nimmathi, Vice-President Labour 2020-2021

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 1 May 2020 and 25 May 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

11 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Seminar
13 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Workshop
20 May	Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee (JWHSC)
22 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Town Hall
25 May	GSA Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council Caucus



**2019-2020 Vice-President Student Services  
Report to GSA Council for 25 May 2020**

To: GSA Council  
From: Chantal Labonté  
Date: 22 May 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

I would like to welcome Sridhar Parasharamatham to the role of VP Student Services. Over the month of April, I was able to help him transition to the role. From what I observed during this time, I have no doubts that Sridhar will bring continued advocacy and innovation to the student services portfolio. Congratulations to Sridhar and the new Directly-Elected Officer (DEO) team. I hope that their first few weeks on the job have gone well.

I am pleased to provide you with highlights and updates on some of the areas and initiatives of focus during the final weeks of my term. Please find a full list of the meetings I have attended attached to this report.

**Health and Dental Plan**

In the final weeks of my term, I worked with the GSA Board and our Studentcare brokers on a number of changes to coverage for the health and dental plan. These coverage changes will be presented at the May Council meeting for approval. The changes will not impact the cost of the plan for this upcoming year. As you may recall, the cost of the plan was set at our March GSA Council meeting. The proposed changes to include restorative dental care represents a significant addition that will improve the lives of many graduate students who require significant dental procedures. The change to include clinical social workers to the mental health coverage is also significant as it will increase accessibility for students seeking psychotherapy and maintains the spirit of the plan's mental health support. These changes, along with an increase to vision coverage, have been thoughtfully considered to ensure the sustainability of the cost of the health and dental plan over time. As a result, a cap to prescription drug coverage is proposed. This cap should help to keep costs stable over time. Sridhar and the rest of the DEOs, along with the office team, will continue to receive reports from Studentcare on usage and costs as the plan moves forward.

**Graduate Collective Teatime**

Prior to the end of my term, I was able to finalize the planning of graduate collective tea times for the Spring and Summer months which will take place virtually. We have seen great interest and attendance from our past collective tea times and students who have attended have shared that their participation allowed for a greater sense of connection to peers and resources, and a feeling of support. I look forward to seeing the partnership between the GSA, the Community Social Work Team and the Alumni Association continue to grow over the coming year. I know that Sridhar is invested in continuing to provide graduate students with avenues for social support and formal clinical services.

I wish Sridhar the very best in the VP Student Services role. Any questions related to the topics included in this report can be directed to him.

Thank you,

Chantal Labonté, Vice-President Student Services 2019-2020

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 20 April 2020 and 30 April 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

21 April	Transition Meeting with Studentcare
21 April	Meeting re Graduate Collective Tea Time
21 April	U-Pass Advisory Committee Meeting
22 April	Days of Action Review
23 April	Monthly Meeting with A Costopoulos, Dean of Student
24 April	Joint University/Student Mandatory Non-Instructional Fee (MNIF) Oversight Committee
28 April	Meeting with K Friese, Associate Dean of Students

**2020-2021 Vice-President Student Services  
Report to GSA Council for the 25 May 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council

From: Sridhar Parasharamatham

Date: 22 May 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

It's nice to meet you all! I am the new Vice-President Student Services (VPSS) and I feel privileged to meet you all in my first GSA Council meeting. I feel honoured to advocate for graduate students at this level. Firstly, I would like to thank all the graduate students for giving me this opportunity to serve them. Secondly, I am thankful to Chantal Labonté, the former VPSS, for her tremendous guidance during the transition period and for her outstanding work during her term.

I attended several meetings after the start of my term on May 1, 2020, and I hereby present some of the key points from them. My first meeting was with Peter Loughheed Leadership College (PLLC) Academic Oversight Committee. This team met had not met for a long time, and we had a very good discussion covering the past year's successes and the future of PLLC. Also, the impact of COVID and the budget cuts on the functioning of PLLC was put in front of the forum. It was good to hear that the available funds would serve the operations until next year. There are two leadership development programs being offered to graduate students through the PLLC - DIVE and WADE. It was mentioned that a total of 30 students enrolled in the programs and received professional development credit for this through FGSR. Topical and thematic workshops on public speaking and communication are being designed for the 2020-2021 academic year for graduate students. I suggested that we would like to see more graduate students enrolled into these programs to enhance their overall skills.

I also attended the COVID-19 Infrastructure and Planning Working Group where we discussed the updates received from the Planning Oversight Committee for the University. This group consists of the following sub committees: Campus Recreation and Athletics, Residences, and Retail Services. A workplan was developed considering the different scenarios of delivery for the Fall semester. It will be put into action once it is approved by the group. I attended a Campus Food Bank Board meeting. As the campus is closed, the food bank started delivering food hampers to students using a Direct to Home delivery model and they were happy to share that it is going successfully and at full capacity. Also, the WECAN food basket program is being scheduled with 40 orders. Digital cooking programs were conducted to improve interaction with students. A new volunteer co-ordinator was hired with 50% funding from CSJ. The year end financial report was presented to the board. GSA provides a grant of approximately \$20,000 every year to the Campus Food Bank.

Also, I attended the U-Pass Advisory meeting organised by ETS among all transit providers and all post-secondary institutions in the Edmonton area. The smart fare setup, which was supposed to be implemented in fall 2020, is now postponed to winter 2021. The proposal for the next four years (2021-2025) contract negotiations have just started. The GSA, in collaboration with the Students' Union, discussed the primary areas of negotiation to be put forward. Some information, such as the closing McKernan LRT station till July 3, and closures on the north side of the river from 97 to 100 Street were mentioned.

The final meeting was with the e-scooters on campus group. As Alberta Health Services has cleared e-scooters to return to the streets, the team is rushing to prepare areas on campus for use as hubs. There was a discussion to determine content for signage and regarding whether the designated area should be physically marked with barricades, paint, or another means. Finally, it was concluded that this pilot project would start as soon as possible.

Feel free to reach me out for any comments/concerns regarding this report or any other specific issue you want to discuss regarding services to students at [gsavpsse@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsavpsse@ualberta.ca).

Regards,

Sridhar Parasharamatham, Vice-President Student Services 2020-2021

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 1 May 2020 and 25 May 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

5 May	Peter Lougheed Leadership College Academic Oversight Committee (PLLC AOC)
7 May	COVID-19 Infrastructure and Planning Working Group
11 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Seminar
13 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Workshop
14 May	COVID -19 Infrastructure and Operations Planning Team
14 May	Research Data Management (RDM) Institutional Group Meeting
14 May	Campus Food Bank Board Meeting
18 May	Meeting with Students' Union (SU) Re: U-Pass
19 May	U-Pass Advisory Committee
20 May	E-Scooters on Campus Meeting
21 May	U-Pass Administrative Committee
21 May	COVID-19 Infrastructure and Planning Working Group
22 May	Meeting with Students' Union (SU) re: U-Pass
22 May	GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (GSAB SWP) Town Hall
22 May	Graduate Student-Specific Collective Tea Time

**GSA Nominating Committee**  
**Report to GSA Council for the 25 May 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Radim Barta  
Date: 22 May 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

The report from the GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC) this month is a summary of discussions/decisions the committee 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

**Memorandum to GSA Councillors**

**There are a number of vacancies, both currently being advertised and which will be advertised in the coming weeks, on GSA Standing Committees for GSA Councillors (Departmental Councillors and Councillors-at-Large).**

These positions play a pivotal role in the GSA's ongoing efforts to keep its processes transparent and itself accountable, since GSA Councillors on these committees help maintain clear and consistent connection between GSA Council and GSA Standing Committees. Long-term vacancies adversely impact these efforts and so GSA Council members are encouraged to consider serving on these committees when vacancies are advertised to you.

It is important to note that the time commitment for each of these committees varies greatly. While some meet regularly throughout the year (usually every two (2) to three (3) months), others meet less frequently and some do most of their work over email. New members are provided with as much training as they require in addition to the ongoing support provided by GSA management and staff to the GSA Standing Committees and their members. **These service opportunities are also a great opportunity to add to your CV/resume.**

On behalf of the GSA NoC, GSA NoC Chair Radim Barta strongly encourages GSA Councillors to consider the next round of vacancies, which will be circulated to GSA Council electronically. Questions can be directed to GSA NoC Chair Radim Barta at [radim@ualberta.ca](mailto:radim@ualberta.ca) or GSA Elections Coordinator Monica Brzak at [gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca).

### GSA Standing Committees

**1) GSA Appeals and Complaints Committee (GSA ACB) (One (1) GSA Councillor Position and One (1) GSA Member Position)**

Information regarding this position for one (1) GSA Councillor was circulated via email to GSA Council on 1, 8, and 15 May 2020 with a nomination deadline of 19 May 2020. Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Member was circulated via the GSA newsletter on 1, 8, and 15 May 2020 with a nomination deadline of 19 May 2020. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

**2) GSA Board and GSA Nominating Committee (GSAB/GSA NoC) (One (1) GSA Councillor Position)**

Information regarding this joint position for one (1) GSA Councillor was circulated via email to GSA Council on 1, 8, and 15 May 2020 with a nomination deadline of 20 May 2020. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

### GSA Officers

**1) GSA Councillor-at-Large (CAL) (One (1) Position for a GSA Member)**

Information regarding this position for one (1) GSA Member was circulated via the GSA newsletter on 1, 8, and 15 May 2020 with a nomination deadline of 19 May 2020. **One (1) nomination was received; there will be an electronic vote (see Item 6 – Nominees for CAL).**

**2) Senator (One (1) Position for a GSA Member)**

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Member was circulated via the GSA newsletter on 3, 9, 17, 24 April, and 1 May 2020 with a nomination deadline of 6 May 2020. **Two (2) nominations were received; there will be an electronic vote (see Item 6 – Nominees for Senator).**

**GSA Executive Director**  
**Report to GSA Council for the 25 May 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Courtney Thomas  
Date: 22 May 2020

Dear GSA Council Members,

Alongside all regular work, the office staff's main focus since the last meeting of GSA Council has revolved around exploring online means to deliver the GSA's fall orientation programming (both our large-scale orientation event and the approximately 40 departmental orientation presentations that we provide each fall). We are exploring several different platforms at this stage and will move forward with this work over the coming months.

Likewise, as the GSA's fiscal year ended on 31 March 2020, we are now in the process of our annual audit. The audit, as well the preparation of the first term's budget and expenditure financial report of our new fiscal year, is expected to be completed in June. Following their review by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and the GSA Board, both of these items will come forward to GSA Council at the July meeting. The GSA's audited financial statements will then proceed onward to the University Board of Governors, as per the requirements of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*. Additionally, while the GSA remains in a solid financial shape, projected decreased enrollment as a result of COVID-19 prevention measures, as well as other related factors (including low investment interest rates), can be expected to make an impact on the organization. We are, accordingly, exploring the likelihood that we may need to draw on our financial stabilization fund over the coming year to ensure there are no disruptions to GSA services.

Finally, as you have likely seen from the survey being circulated in the GSA newsletter, the new team of Directly-Elected Officers is engaged in the process of developing the annual GSA Board Strategic Work Plan, which will also come before GSA Council in the coming months. If you have not yet had a chance to do so, please take a few moments to fill out the online survey and share the link with your colleagues and friends – it helps greatly with identifying advocacy priorities for the coming year and conveying the importance of them to University administration and government.

My weekly reports to the GSA Board are attached (pages 17.1-17.5) and, as always, I am happy to answer any questions. As I noted last month, I hope that you are all managing as best as possible in this difficult time.

Best,

Courtney Thomas, Executive Director

## Management Report to the GSA Board, 22 April 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 15 April 2020:

### Strategic

- Assessing potential implications for the GSA's budget in relation to COVID-19 prevention measures (enrollment is expected to be down).
- Working on the first GSA annual report.
- Discussing how to spread awareness about GSA Emergency Bursaries.
- Action associated with the April meeting of GSA Council.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes (working with the GSA Negotiating Team to develop the GSA's opening position (based on feedback supplied by academically-employed graduate students and voted on by academically-employed graduate students) and planning to research best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, growth, and utilization (have received no responses from possible consultants so now reassessing how best to move forward – project temporarily on hold as the upcoming cycle of bargaining is being prepared for).

### Operations

- Assessing alternate means to deliver fall orientation.
- Hosting various online training sessions for incoming Directly-Elected Officers by portfolio.
- Reviewing various process guides being developed to aid in support for the GSA Nominating Committee.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (preparing for an upcoming meeting) and the GSA Nominating Committee (vacancies on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (1 GSA Councillor), the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (1 GSA Councillor and 1 graduate student – to be advertised in May), and Councillors-at-Large (1 vacancy for a graduate student), filling 1 position on the Vargo Cup adjudication committee, and preparing for the replenishment of the Senator (currently being advertised), Speaker, Chief Returning Officer, Deputy Speaker, and Deputy Chief Returning Officer).
- Facebook = 1,437 likes (up 1 from 15 April) and 1,531 followers (up 1 from 15 April); Facebook posts reached 343 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 29. Twitter = 1,026 followers (up 3 from 15 April); our tweets earned "866 impressions" over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 April (not accepting applications for travel, online costs still accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 April and closed 6 April (\$151,000 disbursed); GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 April. Next funding periods opens 1 July 2020.



### Management Report to the GSA Board, 29 April 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 22 April 2020:

#### Strategic

- Assessing potential implications for the GSA's budget in relation to COVID-19 prevention measures (enrollment is expected to be down).
- Working on the first GSA annual report – will be sent out on Wednesday as a special bulletin.
- Discussing how to spread awareness about GSA Emergency Bursaries and reviewing messaging with Student Financial Support to ensure clarity and ease of access.
- Thinking about how to connect remotely with newly admitted students who won't be on campus in fall, and may not even be in Edmonton – major rehaul of orientation materials, need to communicate remote access to GSA services, etc.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes (working with the GSA Negotiating Team to develop the GSA's opening position (based on feedback supplied by academically-employed graduate students and voted on by academically-employed graduate students) and submitting it to the University, and planning to research best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, growth, and utilization (have received no responses from possible consultants so now reassessing how best to move forward – project temporarily on hold as the upcoming cycle of bargaining is being prepared for).

#### Operations

- Assessing alternate means to deliver fall orientation, see above.
- Follow up from the April meeting of GSA Council (preparing minutes, etc).
- Thinking about the format of the GSA handbook this year (limited print run for January onwards? Online delivery?).
- Hosting various online training sessions for incoming Directly-Elected Officers by portfolio.
- Reviewing various process guides being developed to aid in support for the GSA Nominating Committee.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee (vacancies on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (1 GSA Councillor – to be advertised in September), the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (1 GSA Councillor and 1 graduate student – to be advertised in May), the GSA Board and the GSA Nominating Committee (1 GSA Councillor – to be advertised in May), and for a Councillor-at-Large (1 vacancy for a graduate student – to be advertised in May) and the Senator (1 vacancy for a graduate student – currently being advertised), and preparing for the replenishment of the Senator (currently being advertised), Speaker, Chief Returning Officer, Deputy Speaker, and Deputy Chief Returning Officer – to be advertised in May).
- Facebook = 1,4341 likes (up 4 from 22April) and 1,535 followers (up 4 from 22 April); Facebook posts reached 771 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 125. Twitter = 1,030 followers (up 4 from 22 April); our tweets earned "1,400 impressions" over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 April (not accepting applications for travel, online costs still accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 April and closed 6 April (\$151,000 disbursed); GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 April. Next funding periods opens 1 July 2020. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is.

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 6 May 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 29 April 2020:

#### Strategic

- Assessing potential implications for the GSA's budget in relation to COVID-19 prevention measures (enrollment is expected to be down).
- Planning communications and updates concerning bargaining for academically-employed graduate students.
- Renegotiation of the NASA collective agreement governing the GSA staff.
- Thinking about how to connect remotely with newly admitted students who won't be on campus in fall, and may not even be in Edmonton – major rehaul of orientation materials, need to communicate remote access to GSA services, etc.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes (submission of the GSA's opening position to the University, planning upcoming bargaining sessions (scheduled to begin in mid-June), and planning to research best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, growth, and utilization (have received no responses from possible consultants so now reassessing how best to move forward – project temporarily on hold as the upcoming cycle of bargaining is being prepared for).

#### Operations

- Assessing alternate means to deliver fall orientation, see above.
- Preparing for the May meeting of GSA Council (preparing materials, etc).
- Thinking about the format of the GSA handbook this year (limited print run for January onwards? Online delivery?).
- Hosting various online training sessions for incoming Directly-Elected Officers by portfolio and hosting orientation sessions for newly elected CALs.
- Ongoing work with First Peoples' House concerning the creation of a recognition award for an Indigenous graduate student.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee (vacancies on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (1 GSA Councillor – to be advertised in September), the GSA Governance Committee (2 GSA Councillors – to be advertised in September), the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (1 GSA Councillor and 1 graduate student – currently being advertised), the GSA Board and the GSA Nominating Committee (1 GSA Councillor – currently being advertised), for a Councillor-at-Large (1 vacancy for a graduate student – currently being advertised), and for the Senator (1 vacancy for a graduate student – currently being advertised), and preparing for the replenishment of the Speaker, Chief Returning Officer, Deputy Speaker, and Deputy Chief Returning Officer – to be advertised in May).
- Facebook = 1,441 likes (up 0 from 29 April) and 1,536 followers (up 1 from 29 April); Facebook posts reached 506 users last week and our “post engagement” count was 132. Twitter = 1,034 followers (up 4 from 29 April); our tweets earned 1,600 “impressions” over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 April (not accepting applications for travel, online costs still accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 April and closed 6 April (\$151,000 disbursed); GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 April. Next funding periods opens 1 July 2020. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is.

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 13 May 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 6 May 2020:

#### Strategic

- Assessing potential implications for the GSA's budget in relation to COVID-19 prevention measures (enrollment is expected to be down).
- Planning for a U-Pass referendum in 2021 and preparing for negotiations with the University for the Graduate Student Support Fund and the Graduate Student Assistance Program (and a possible referendum concerning the cost of the Graduate Student Assistance Program).
- Thinking about how to connect remotely with newly admitted students who won't be on campus in fall, and may not even be in Edmonton – major re-haul of orientation materials, need to communicate remote access to GSA services, etc.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes (submission of the GSA's opening position to the University, planning upcoming bargaining sessions (scheduled to begin in mid-June), and planning to research best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, growth, and utilization (have received no responses from possible consultants so now reassessing how best to move forward – project temporarily on hold as the upcoming cycle of bargaining is being prepared for).

#### Operations

- Preparing for the annual audit and meetings of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, as well as refining processes associated with the GSA's electronic banking.
- Assessing alternate means to deliver fall orientation and departmental orientations, see above.
- Thinking about the format of the GSA handbook this year (limited print run for January onwards? Online delivery?).
- Hosting orientation sessions for newly elected CALs and a newly elected member of the GSA Labour Relations Committee.
- Ongoing work with First Peoples' House concerning the creation of a recognition award for an Indigenous graduate student.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee (vacancies on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (1 GSA Councillor – to be advertised in September), the GSA Governance Committee (2 GSA Councillors – to be advertised in September), the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (1 GSA Councillor and 1 graduate student – currently being advertised), the GSA Board and the GSA Nominating Committee (1 GSA Councillor – currently being advertised), for a Councillor-at-Large (1 vacancy for a graduate student – currently being advertised), and for the Senator (1 vacancy for a graduate student – currently being advertised), and preparing for the replenishment of the Speaker, Chief Returning Officer, Deputy Speaker, and Deputy Chief Returning Officer – currently being advertised).
- Facebook = 1,444 likes (up 3 from 6 May) and 1,539 followers (up 3 from 6 May); Facebook posts reached 401 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 46. Twitter = 1,036 followers (up 2 from 6 May) our tweets earned 998 "impressions" over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 April (not accepting applications for travel, online costs still accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 April and closed 6 April (\$151,000 disbursed); GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 April. Next funding periods opens 1 July 2020. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is.

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 20 May 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 13 May 2020:

#### Strategic

- Assessing potential implications for the GSA's budget in relation to COVID-19 prevention measures (enrollment is expected to be down and the GSA has seen decreases in the value of our investments).
- Preparing for the annual audit and meetings of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and refining processes associated with the GSA's electronic banking.
- Planning for a U-Pass referendum in 2021 and preparing for negotiations with the University for the Graduate Student Support Fund and the Graduate Student Assistance Program (and a possible referendum concerning the cost of the Graduate Student Assistance Program).
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes (planning upcoming bargaining sessions (scheduled to begin in mid-June), and planning to research best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, growth, and utilization (have received no responses from possible consultants so now reassessing how best to move forward – project temporarily on hold as the upcoming cycle of bargaining is being prepared for).

#### Operations

- Assessing alternate means to deliver fall orientation and departmental orientations and thinking about the format of the GSA handbook this year (limited print run for January onwards? Online delivery?).
- Hosting orientation sessions for newly elected CALs, updating the GSA's database of GSA Council member confidentiality forms, and working on the annual GSA Council remuneration process.
- Ongoing work with First Peoples' House concerning the creation of a recognition award for an Indigenous graduate student.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee (vacancies on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (1 GSA Councillor – to be advertised in September), the GSA Governance Committee (2 GSA Councillors – to be advertised in July), the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (1 GSA Councillor and 1 graduate student – currently being advertised), the GSA Board and the GSA Nominating Committee (1 GSA Councillor – currently being advertised), for a Councillor-at-Large (1 vacancy for a graduate student – currently being advertised), for the Senator (1 vacancy for a graduate student – currently being advertised), and for the replenishment of the Speaker, Chief Returning Officer, Deputy Speaker, and Deputy Chief Returning Officer – currently being advertised).
- Facebook = 1,447 likes (up 3 from 13 May) and 1,543 followers (up 4 from 13 May); Facebook posts reached 53 users last week and our “post engagement” count was 6. Twitter = 1,038 followers (up 2 from 13 May); our tweets earned 542 “impressions” over the past week. Instagram = 428 followers (up 6 from 13 May); our posts earned 120 “impressions” over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 April (not accepting applications for travel, online costs still accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 April and closed 6 April (\$151,000 disbursed); GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 April. Next funding periods opens 1 July 2020. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is.