

**2023-2024 Vice-President Academic
Report to GSA Council for 20 November 2023**

To: GSA Council
From: Rija Kamran
Date: 6 November 2023

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you are doing well and are staying warm. As I write this report, I am attending the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies conference in Victoria, BC. Looking forward to updating you on the advocacy and networking works we do this week. In the meantime, I have shared some highlights from the work I have been involved in since the last council meeting.

October 23, 2023- Graduate Program Support Team (GPST) Meeting

I attended the FGSR GPST meeting. We primarily discussed some course changes and minor program changes that are going to the GFC programs committee for approval. Course changes were in the faculty of ALES, Arts, Education, Engineering, Medicine, Nursing and Science. Minor program changes were in the faculty of Medicine and Computing Science. In addition to that we also discussed candidacy changes in Pharmacy, and some calendar changes in Nursing. We also revisited the item on course-based master's maintenance of registration, which clarifies the language around some existing policies around the requirement to maintain registration if a student has an outstanding grade.

October 23, 2023- GFC Exec GPO

The GFC Executive subcommittee on governance and procedural oversight reviews and updates the terms of references for the various GFC committees. The most important part of being involved in this process is to ensure that graduate student representation and interests are emphasized within the terms of references whenever possible. We are currently looking at a template that will be used to revise the terms of references for GFC committees on a 3–5-year cycle.

October 24, 2023- Meeting w/ R Epp, Interim Dean FGSR, GSA President, and VP Academic

We had our last meeting with Dr. Epp before his term as the interim FGSR dean concluded. We continued our discussion on the PhD guaranteed minimum funding. The implementation working group, composed of the major university representatives is still working on a plan for implementation and rollout. We also discuss other avenues of reducing financial strain on graduate students. Dr. Epp will continue leading the work on PhD minimum funding in a consultation capacity, as the new FGSR dean Dr. Tracy Ravio assumes office.

October 24, 2023-Meeting w/ Chancellor Garrity and GSA Execs

Along with other GSA execs, I met chancellor Peggy Garrity. We updated the chancellor on the advocacy work we have been involved in within our portfolios. We had a brief discussion around the new budget model which will calculate and change the allocation of budgets to different faculties. We also discussed the financial realities survey that GSA conducted. The Chancellor assured us of her support as we continue to advocate for an affordable and more inclusive campus.

October 26, 2023-In Person: Course-based Masters Initiatives at CNAS Meeting

GSA President B Aziz and I met Dr. Tracy Ravio and Emma Sheppard to discuss an initiative for new course-based masters programs in CNAS, one focusing on sustainability and the other on data science and applied AI. The team from CNAS walked us through their plan for these new programs and we had a discussion on how to make them more inclusive in terms of designated funding supports, application process and some unique challenges faced by international students when applying to these interdisciplinary programs.

October 27, 2023- Anti-Islamophobia Awareness Campaign

Along with other GSA Execs I attended the Islamophobia awareness campaign hosted by the Dean of Students office. This campaign featured photos of Muslim women from all walks of life. There were performances and panel discussions highlighting the aftermath of hate based Islamophobic attacks.

November 2, 2023- GFC COSA - Council on Student Affairs

I attend the GFC COSA. I co-presented the MSOL (moderate standards of living) report and updates with the University Registrar N Rodenburg and UASU President C Fotang. I also presented the GSA Financial realities survey to the committee and engaged. We continue to bring forward the financial strain on students as the discussions on tuition and other fees proceed through the governance bodies.

Please feel free to reach out to me at gsavpaca@ualberta.ca if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions. Thank you.

Rija Kamran, Vice-President Academic 2023-24

2023-2024 GSA VP Academic's Meetings Attended (Rija)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16 October to 20 November 2023 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

17 Oct	Tuition Budget Advisory Committee (TBAC) Meeting #2
23 Oct	Graduate Program Support Team (GPST) Meeting
23 Oct	GFC Exec GPO
23 Oct	ISA/GSA Regular Meetings
24 Oct	Meeting w/ R Epp, Interim Dean FGSR, GSA President, and VP Academic
24 Oct	Meeting w/ Chancellor Garritty and GSA Execs
25 Oct	In-Person Meeting - Board of Governors Chair
25 Oct	GFC Nominating Committee Meeting
25 Oct	GFC Committee on the Learning Environment
26 Oct	In Person: Course-based Masters Initiatives at CNAS Meeting
27 Oct	Islamophobia Awareness Campaign
30 Oct	GFC Executive Committee
1 Nov	GFC APC - Academic Planning Committee
2 Nov	GFC COSA - Council on Student Affairs
2 Nov	Forward Slash Event
3 Nov	MNIF Joint Oversight Committee Meeting #3
6-10 Nov	61st Annual CAGS Conference
14 Nov	Meeting w/ T Ravio, Vice-Provost and Dean, FGSR
17 Nov	GSA Executives & VPER Monthly Meeting