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GSA Council Meeting Dates

GSA Council Meetings are held in Council Chambers, 2-100 University Hall on the following dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>20 April 2020</td>
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</table>

Meetings start promptly at 6:00 pm, beginning with attendance, and typically last 2 to 2.5 hours.
Meeting dates are subject to change; visit the GSA website for up-to-date information.
Introduction

The University of Alberta Graduate Students’ Association (GSA) is a not-for-profit body with the responsibility under the Post-Secondary Learning Act to represent graduate students, collectively, to the University and to government. **All graduate students are members of the GSA** (with the exception of some exchange students), and pay fees for their membership.

The GSA administers a budget of over $1 million, as well as close to $1 million in negotiated funds in grants, awards, and bursaries. The GSA negotiates numerous services including the GSA Health and Dental Plan, the Graduate Student Assistance Program, and the U-Pass. The GSA also negotiates the collective agreement governing academically-employed graduate students.

As a graduate student, you not only benefit from the advocacy, accountability, and accessibility of the GSA, but you can play an important role in its vision to enhance the graduate school experience by participating in GSA Council.

Your Role as a Councillor or Alternate

As Departmental Councillor (including the Indigenous Graduate Students’ Association Councillor) or Alternate, you are the representative of the graduate students in your program or group. As Councillor-at-Large, you are an at-large representative for all graduate students on campus. In both positions, your role is to be informed about the matters GSA Council is discussing and/or deciding on, representing the views of your constituents, bringing their feedback to GSA Council, and taking information resulting from conversations and decisions at GSA Council back to your constituents. You also play a role in elections that happen at GSA Council by reviewing information about candidates and participating in voting.

Attendance at Meetings

Any GSA member may attend a meeting, but it is the duty of Councillors to attend every meeting. The GSA has an attendance Policy for all members of GSA Council. Please visit [https://cloudfront.ualberta.ca/-/media/gsa/governing-documents/gsabylawandpolicy.pdf#page=14](https://cloudfront.ualberta.ca/-/media/gsa/governing-documents/gsabylawandpolicy.pdf#page=14) to view the Policy.

As an added bonus, some Councillors may be eligible for GSA Council remuneration as provided by the GSA for the benefit of the graduate students they represent. You can learn more about this in GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section C: GSA Council.

Attendance is always taken before the meeting starts. Should you need to leave GSA Council early, you are encouraged to note your departure time on a sheet made available where you pick up your placard. Be sure your attendance is noted and confirm this by checking the minutes of the previous meeting when you receive them.

Dinner

A light dinner is served beginning at 5:15 pm before the Speaker calls the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. This is an excellent time to talk with other GSA Council members! Please note any dietary allergies on the Councillor Information Form and we will try to accommodate your needs.

How to Prepare for GSA Council Meetings

The meeting Agenda, Minutes, and substantial items are circulated two Fridays in advance of GSA Council meetings. A second mailing, containing the reports of GSA Officers and GSA Standing Committees is circulated the Friday before meetings. As a Councillor you will be notified by email with a link to the material on the GSA website.

*Read the circulated material in advance!* Remember, you are representing other graduate students in GSA Council in decisions that can have an important impact on your fellow students’ graduate experience. Read the material in advance and discuss relevant issues with colleagues in advance of meetings. This will help you be prepared with questions you may want to have addressed at the meeting. If there are elections to standing committees or other
positions, reading the biographies of candidates will help increase your confidence in your voting decisions and your work representing your colleagues.

**Identification at Meetings**

The GSA uses coloured placards to distinguish between Councillors (white), Alternates (green), and Guests (yellow). When you arrive to GSA Council, please locate the white placard with your constituency name on it or the Councillor-at-Large placard with your name on it. If both the Departmental Councillor (including the Indigenous Graduate Students’ Association Councillor) and Alternate are attending, the Councillor uses a white placard and the Alternate uses a green placard. If the Alternate is attending in place of the Councillor, the Alternate should use the white placard to indicate that they are the representative voting at the meeting.

If you arrive late or need to leave early, please record your time of arrival/departure on the attendance sheets near the placards, as we keep an accurate record of who attended the meeting. Guests are asked to fill out a yellow placard upon arrival and they must sign the attendance sheet.

**During GSA Council Meetings**

**GSA Policy**

The rules by which GSA Council operates are set out in GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section C: GSA Council and as a Councillor you should review and understand these rules. They are outlined below and are available on the GSA website. They are also included on pages 5-8 of this handbook.

Meetings are led by the Speaker, and follow specific procedures with respect to the agenda, minutes, discussion, Motions (notices of Motion, referring and deferring, tabling, adjournment), and voting.

The **Speaker** is responsible for presiding over GSA Council meetings and regulating the flow of discussion using the following ground rules based on GSA Bylaw and Policy and GSA Council practice:

- Quorum (30 voting members) must be present to do business (this prevents an unreasonably small subset of GSA Council from making decisions),
- Majority rules when voting (in most instances),
- Keeping a speaker’s list,
- Moderating the time for which Councillors may have the floor,
- Only one topic at a time is addressed (brief, on-point follow-up questions are often permitted when time allows),
- Only one person at a time may speak,
- Once a question is decided, raising the same or similar question at the same meeting is out of order, and
- Personal remarks are out of order.

**Motions**

Before items reach GSA Council they have been carefully developed, reviewed, and recommended by the GSA Board and/or GSA Standing Committees.

**Motions brought before GSA Council are considered in the following manner:**

- The suggested Motion appears on the Outline of Issue,
- The Speaker will ask for the Motion to be “moved” in order to bring the issue to the floor,
- The Speaker will then ask for someone to “second” the Motion,
- Items are presented to GSA Council along with background information,
- Any discussion or debate of the issue takes place next. Councillors are encouraged to actively participate,
- Following discussion/debate, the Motion goes to a vote, and
- A majority vote is needed for a Motion to pass; in the event of a tie a Motion is considered to have failed.
Conduct

As a general rule, if you do not know what is going on, you cannot adequately hear the discussion, there is another issue with the room (eg, temperature), or you feel your rights as a Councillor have been violated, you may raise your placard to make a Point of Information, a Point of Order, or a Point of Personal Privilege (please see page 8 for definitions of these terms). The Speaker will immediately advise on next steps.

Unless otherwise indicated (as above), to speak in GSA Council first raise your placard to seek the attention of the Speaker, who will acknowledge you and add you to the Speaker’s list. The Speaker will let you know - “give you the floor” - when it is your turn to speak. Please note your department along with your name prior to speaking.

In debate, address the Speaker and refer to other people using the title of their position; eg, “the Councillor for (department name)” or “the Vice-President Labour.” Nothing that happens in GSA Council is personal, and your remarks must reflect this.

Voting

Directly-Elected Officers and Councillors are voting members of GSA Council. Council-Elected Officers, GSA Directors, and Alternates are non-voting members of GSA Council. Voting members have one vote; Alternates may only vote when they are attending in place of the Councillor.

Guests at GSA Council

Any member of the public is welcome to attend GSA Council meetings. They may neither vote nor ask questions, unless questions are raised via their Councillor or GSA Council agrees to extend them privilege to speak. Also, at times, GSA Council must go into closed session to discuss sensitive or confidential matters. During such times, any guests will be asked to leave the room until the session is re-opened.

Your Responsibilities After GSA Council Meetings

A summary of the meeting is distributed to Councillors shortly after each meeting. This is a convenient way for Departmental Councillors (including the Indigenous Graduate Students’ Association Councillor) to share information with their constituents. After they add a few words of introduction (where necessary) they may either send the summary as written or with additions of specific interest to their constituents. It is important to know that this is a summary, and full details will be available in the Minutes for the meeting which are circulated with the next meeting’s first mailing. Departmental Councillors are asked to please let the GSA staff know if you do not have access to an email circulation list for graduate students in your department and we will work with you to gain access.
# Mission, Vision, and Strategic Work Plan of the GSA

The GSA respectfully acknowledges that it is located on Treaty 6 territory and Métis homelands.

**What is the Graduate Students’ Association?**
The Graduate Students’ Association (GSA), as mandated by the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, represents graduate students at the University of Alberta. The GSA, as a separate corporation, is both *a part* of the University of Alberta and *apart* from the institution. The GSA Board believes that a healthy organization is nurtured through effective relationships with all stakeholders. To sustain the organization’s long-term health and excellent reputation, the GSA fosters a culture of respect and professionalism among staff and graduate student leaders, engages in regular review of governance processes, and ensures an annual transition process that facilitates the on-going education of elected graduate student leaders.

**What is a graduate student?**
A graduate student is a junior colleague who contributes to their field of study in pursuit of an advanced degree through collaborative work with the professoriate in research, teaching, and the development of University learning environments. These contributions may be accomplished through: extensive coursework, for which graduate students pay tuition; academic employment, for which graduate students are paid; the co-creation and writing of scholarly work; the securing of academic funding; presentations, conferences, and community engagement; and capstone projects, theses, or dissertations. This multi-faceted position takes place in an environment of mutual respect and fairness aimed at developing skills and knowledge for future careers and is one that provides appropriate remuneration for labour in service of the enhancement of the institution.

**What is the GSA Board’s Strategic Work Plan?**
The GSA Board’s Strategic Work Plan is the document that steers and prioritizes the work and initiatives of the GSA. The GSA sees this as a living document, shifting directions as needed as the provincial, federal, and University landscapes change. It is developed annually with reference to the Strategic Work Plans of previous GSA Boards, and provides a planning document for this and future years.

**Our Vision and Mission:**
To advocate for all graduate students to the University of Alberta and the Alberta Government for a safe, supportive, respectful, accessible, and inclusive community that fosters the multi-faceted roles played by graduate students.

The GSA Board’s Strategic Work Plan is available at: [http://gsa.ualberta.ca/SWP.aspx](http://gsa.ualberta.ca/SWP.aspx)
Rules Governing GSA Council

Authority of GSA Council, Post-Secondary Learning Act:

95(2)d: “The council of a student organization may make bylaws governing ... the calling of meetings of the council and the quorum and conduct of business at those meetings.”

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section C: GSA Council:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C.POL.3 GSA Council Composition</th>
<th>C.POL.3.1</th>
<th>GSA Council is comprised of:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.POL.3.1.a</td>
<td>All Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) as voting members,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>C.POL.3.1.b</td>
<td>All GSA Council-Elected Officers and Deputies as non-voting members,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>C.POL.3.1.c</td>
<td>One (1) graduate student elected from each department, faculty, or extra-departmental unit at the University that offers a graduate program (Departmental Councillors) as voting members,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.POL.3.1.d</td>
<td>One (1) Councillor elected by the Indigenous Graduate Students’ Association (IGSA) as a voting member,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>C.POL.3.1.e</td>
<td>Ten (10) Councillors-at-Large (CALs) as voting members, and</td>
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<td>C.POL.3.1.f</td>
<td>The GSA Directors as non-voting members.</td>
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</table>

C.POL.3.2 Departmental Councillors and the IGSA Councillor, and their alternates, will be elected (or, in the case of alternates, appointed) annually for a one (1) year term by graduate students from their department (‘constituents’) or from the membership of the IGSA according to their own procedures or their group Constitution.

C.POL.3.2.a The duties of Departmental Councillors and the IGSA Councillor will be:

C.POL.3.2.a.i To act as the primary liaison between the GSA and their constituents, including sending their constituents a brief report on GSA Council meetings and soliciting feedback,

C.POL.3.2.a.ii To attend all meetings of GSA Council or, if they are unable to attend, to ensure their alternate can attend in their place, and

C.POL.3.2.a.iii To ensure that the Speaker and GSA office are kept up to date with their names, departmental addresses, and contact information.

C.POL.3.2.b For the benefit of graduate students in each department, faculty, or extra-departmental unit at the University, as represented by their Departmental Councillors or alternates that meet the attendance requirements, GSA Council remuneration will be provided, as specified in GSA Policy, GSA Council Attendance.

C.POL.3.2.b.i The IGSA will be provided with GSA Council remuneration, as specified in GSA Policy, GSA Council Attendance.

C.POL.3.3 CALs will be members of the GSA, excluding associate members, elected annually, with their terms to run from 1 May until 30
April of the following year.

C.POL.3.3.a In the case of CALs, ‘constituents’ will refer to all GSA members.

C.POL.3.3.b The duties of CALs will be:
  - C.POL.3.3.b.i To attend all meetings of GSA Council,
  - C.POL.3.3.b.ii To ensure that the Speaker and GSA office are kept up to date with their names, departmental addresses, and contact information, and
  - C.POL.3.3.b.iii To provide additional voices on GSA Council from those offered by DEOs, Departmental Councillors, and the IGS A Councillor.

C.POL.3.4 Members of the public are required to sign in with the Speaker and will be given a placard. They may not vote and do not have speaking privileges unless extended them by GSA Council following a vote on the matter.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>C.POL.4 GSA Council Meetings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C.POL.4.1 The Speaker sets GSA Council meeting dates annually. If lacking sufficient agenda items, up to two (2) meetings may be cancelled at the discretion of the Speaker and President, but never two (2) sequential meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.POL.4.2 Quorum for any GSA Council meeting will consist of thirty (30) voting members of GSA Council.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C.POL.4.3 Agendas for GSA Council meetings will normally include time for: receiving the names of new GSA Council members, presentations, announcements from GSA Council members, action items, elections, reports from DEOs, GSA Standing Committees, and Management, and question period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.POL.4.3.a Agenda items normally come to GSA Council from the GSA Board (GSAB) or other GSA Standing Committees. Members of GSA Council who wish to place an item on the agenda should contact the Speaker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.POL.4.3.b Substantive agenda items are circulated to GSA Council members at least one (1) week prior to the date of the meeting on instruction of the Speaker. Substantive items received after this will be added to the agenda at the discretion of the Speaker. Reports for information are circulated the Friday (or Thursday, in the event of a holiday related closure of the GSA office) before a Monday meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.POL.4.3.c Changes to the agenda made at meetings require a two-thirds majority vote.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C.POL.4.4 Special Meetings of GSA Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.POL.4.4.a Special meetings of GSA Council will have specific and limited agendas and may be called when important matters arise for decision either between regular meetings or at a time when pressure of business would not allow them to be adequately disposed of at a scheduled meeting. Procedures governing scheduled meetings will apply to special meetings.</td>
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</table>
| C.POL.4.4.b With reasonable notice (when possible five (5) working days), special meetings will be called by the Speaker following
Questions about GSA Council can be addressed to the GSA Speaker at gsa.speaker@ualberta.ca
Questions about the GSA can be addressed to the GSA at gsa.frontdesk@ualberta.ca

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C.POL.5 Procedure at GSA Council Meetings</th>
<th>C.POL.5.1 The duties of the Speaker are outlined in Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Policy, GSA Officer Portfolios.</th>
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<tr>
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<td>C.POL.5.1.a If the Speaker is unable to perform any of his/her duties, the Deputy Speaker will act. If neither is available, the President and the Executive Director (ED) (or delegate) will consult on the action(s) to be taken.</td>
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<td>C.POL.5.2 Motions (formal proposals that GSA Council take certain actions), are normally accompanied by a Notice of Motion (advance written notice that a Motion will be presented and debated at an upcoming meeting of GSA Council). Notices of Motion must be presented in time to be circulated with the first mailing of the GSA Council material, as described above.</td>
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<td>C.POL.5.2.a To move a Motion, voting members of GSA Council must first be recognized by the Speaker. A Motion must be seconded; a second simply indicates that the seconder agrees that the Motion should be debated and not that the seconder necessarily favours the Motion.</td>
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<td>C.POL.5.2.b During discussion and debate, voting members of GSA Council may:</td>
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<td>C.POL.5.2.b.i Move an amendment to a Motion. Amendments to a Motion must be germane; that is, they must be closely related to the subject of the Motion,</td>
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<td>C.POL.5.2.b.ii Move a Motion to Defer, which enables the discussion of a substantive issue to be put off to a later, specified time.</td>
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<td>C.POL.5.2.b.iii Move a Motion to Table, which allows GSA Council to lay aside a Motion until some future time. This Motion is not debatable, except with respect to when the Motion will return to GSA Council.</td>
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<td>C.POL.5.2.c Following discussion and debate, a Motion goes to a vote.</td>
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<td>C.POL.5.2.c.i A majority vote is needed for a Motion to pass; in the event of a tie a Motion is considered to have failed.</td>
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<td>C.POL.5.2.d Voting members of GSA Council may also:</td>
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<td>C.POL.5.2.d.i Move a Motion to Refer, which allows GSA Council to refer an issue to another body, usually a GSA Standing Committee.</td>
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<td>C.POL.5.2.d.ii Move a Motion to Rescind, which allows GSA Council to receipt of any of the following:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.POL.4.4.b.i A Motion of GSA Council at any GSA Council meeting,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.POL.4.4.b.ii A Motion of the GSAB, or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.POL.4.4.b.iii A request to the GSAB made by ten (10) or more members of GSA Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.POL.4.4.c Any request for a special meeting of GSA Council as noted above will specify the intended purpose of that meeting, and all business at the meeting must, unless otherwise mandated, be restricted to the specified purpose of the meeting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
cancel or stop an entire Motion that had already been adopted.

C.POL.5.2.d.iii Move a Motion to Reconsider, which allows GSA Council to return to a Motion that has been voted on at the meeting, in an instance where new information emerges or the situation changes, allowing GSA Council to consider and vote anew, as if GSA Council had not previously voted on the Motion.

C.POL.5.2.e GSA Council may choose to close meetings by a simple majority vote, in which case only GSA Council members and GSA staff may attend; others wishing to attend must have permission extended by GSA Council following a vote.

C.POL.5.2.e.i Open session minutes of GSA Council will be posted on the GSA website. Closed session minutes are confidential.

C.POL.5.3 Prerogatives of GSA Council Members

C.POL.5.3.a After being recognized by the Speaker, any member of GSA Council may:

C.POL.5.3.a.i Ask a question for information,

C.POL.5.3.a.ii Provide a Point of Information (request or provide information),

C.POL.5.3.a.iii Provide a Point of Order (ask that the Speaker enforce procedures governing GSA Council),

C.POL.5.3.a.iv Provide a Point of Personal Privilege (protest a personal remark),

C.POL.5.3.a.v Call the Question (call for a vote on an associated Motion if it is felt that there has been a fulsome discussion and it is time to move to a vote), or

C.POL.5.3.a.vi Motion for adjournment (separate from the adjournment as listed on the meeting agenda); this Motion must be moved and seconded by voting members, is not debatable, and requires a majority vote to pass.

C.POL.5.4 If a member of GSA Council considers that a ruling made by the Speaker is not in order, they may appeal the Speaker’s ruling. If this happens, the Speaker will give a brief explanation of their ruling. After questions and debate, the Speaker then asks voting members to vote on whether their ruling is upheld. If the ruling of the Speaker is overturned, the Speaker is bound to take the necessary remedial action to correct the situation.

Additional Information Based on GSA Council Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You may raise your placard to interrupt to do the following:</th>
<th>What you say:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Request or provide information</td>
<td>“Point of Information”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforce the rules</td>
<td>“Point of Order”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protest a personal remark</td>
<td>“Point of Personal Privilege”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call the question (if you feel there has been a fulsome discussion and it is time to move on)</td>
<td>“Call the Question”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The GSA: An Overview

**Governance**

As a Member of GSA Council, you will have a good understanding of GSA governance, which will help you answer questions you may receive from your fellow graduate students or identify issues within your department with which the GSA may be able to assist.

GSA Bylaw and Policy outline the composition, activities, responsibilities, and authority of the GSA. These documents are available online, so no need to memorize them, but seeing what they include is helpful.

For more information, visit [https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association/governance/governing-documents](https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association/governance/governing-documents).

**GSA Info Sessions**

All graduate students are invited to participate in our GSA info sessions on governance and other matters, but GSA Councillors will find these particularly helpful in understanding and participating in discussions about the GSA Health and Dental Plan, the GSA budget, and other matters. We strongly recommend these sessions as a means to improve your confidence when you need to vote on items!

**Who is on GSA Council?**

GSA Council is made up of: Directly-Elected Officers, Council-Elected Officers as non-voting members, one Councillor (and their alternate(s)) from each department, faculty, or extra-departmental unit at the University that offers a graduate program; ten Councillors-at-Large; and the GSA Directors as non-voting members.

**Who are the Directly-Elected Officers?**

Directly-Elected Officers are elected by their fellow graduate students during the annual GSA General Elections. Their duties are outlined in GSA Bylaw and Policy, and profiles for each Officer are available on the GSA website at [www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association](http://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association).

**The 2019-2020 Directly-Elected Officers are:**

**GSA President:** Fahed Elian  
   Email: [gsa.president@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.president@ualberta.ca)

**GSA VP Academic:** Dylan Ashley  
   Email: [gsa.vpacademic@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.vpacademic@ualberta.ca)

**GSA VP External:** Marc Waddingham  
   Email: [gsa.vpexternal@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.vpexternal@ualberta.ca)

**GSA VP Labour:** Shanawaz Mohammad  
   Email: [gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca)

**GSA VP Student Services:** Chantal Labonté  
   Email: [gsa.vpstudentservices@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.vpstudentservices@ualberta.ca)
**Who are the Council-Elected Officers?**

Council-Elected Officers are elected by GSA Council to hold the offices of Speaker and Deputy Speaker, Chief Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer, and Senator. Their duties are outlined in GSA Bylaw and Policy, and profiles for each Officer are available on the GSA website at www.gsa.ualberta.ca.

**The 2018-2019 Council-Elected Officers are** *(2019-2020 Officers to be elected in May and June):*

**Speaker:** Pranidhi Baddam  
Email: gsa.speaker@ualberta.ca

**Chief Returning Officer:** Vahid Ayan  
Email: gsa.elections@ualberta.ca

**Senator:** Ahsan Ahmed  
Email: gsa.senator@ualberta.ca

**Deputy Speaker:** Raji Chokkalingam  
Email: gsa.speaker@ualberta.ca (shared with the Speaker)

**Deputy Returning Officer:** Amritha Prasad  
Email: gsadro@ualberta.ca

**Who are the GSA Directors?**

The GSA Directors who work to support the Directly-Elected Officers and the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan.

**Executive Director:** Courtney Thomas  
Email: gsaed@ualberta.ca

**Associate Director:** Julie Tanguay  
Email: gsa.associatedirector@ualberta.ca

**Assistant Director:** Lisa Hareuther  
Email: gsaassist@ualberta.ca

**GSA Board (GSAB)**

The GSA Board is the senior administrative authority of the GSA, a power that has been delegated to it by GSA Council. The GSA Board membership consists of: the Directly-Elected Officers as the voting members; the Senator, Speaker, and Chief Returning Officer; three members of GSA Council elected by GSA Council; and the GSA Directors.

**GSA Standing Committees**

The work of the GSA is supported by the efforts of GSA Standing Committees. Each GSA Standing Committee has its own mandate, carried out by GSA members elected by GSA Council.
You can get involved! Service on GSA Standing Committees or representing graduate students on University bodies offers great opportunities to meet other students, expand your knowledge of relevant issues, and play an active role in shaping the experience of graduate students. Current opportunities are circulated in the GSA Newsletter and posted on the GSA website.

Details about GSA Standing Committees, including mandates and compositions, are available in GSA Policy. Please visit https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association/governance/gsa-standing-committees to view a register of GSA Standing Committees and their current memberships.

**Services, Benefits, and Supports**

As a Member of GSA Council, you will have a good understanding of GSA services and supports, and can assist your fellow students with this information. Ensuring your fellow graduate students are aware of these services and events can help them make the most of their graduate school experience. Posters and other materials regarding services are distributed at GSA Council meetings for you to take back to your department.

The GSA Newsletter contains updates about resources, services, upcoming events, and other opportunities, and is circulated to all graduate students. We also encourage graduate students to follow us on our Twitter and Facebook accounts.

**GSA Services and negotiated/subsidized programs include:**

- GSA Health and Dental Plan,
- Graduate Student Assistance Program,
- U-Pass,
- Dedicated lounge space and meeting rooms,
- Career Centre (UofA),
- Writing Resources (UofA), and
- Group-rate home and auto insurance through TDIMM.

Information on all of these services and programs is available at https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association/services.

**GSA Funding**

Finances are often a concern for graduate students, and the GSA offers a number of possible funding sources, open to all GSA members who are eligible:

- **Child Care Grants** (income-based program to help offset financial demands of child care),
- **Academic Travel Grants** (funding to assist students in attending events that are directly related to their academic program),
- **Graduate Student Group Grants** (funding to assist graduate student groups with costs of seminars, guest lecturers, colloquia, and other academic events), and
- **Emergency Bursaries** (funding for students who need help due to an unforeseen emergency).

You can find the specific criteria, deadlines, and application procedures for each of these at https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association/funding.

**GSA Recognition Awards**

Each year the GSA confers awards on GSA members who have distinguished themselves in the areas of research, teaching, academic achievement, leadership, and service to the University and to the wider community. The GSA also recognizes University faculty and staff members for their outstanding contribution to graduate education and acknowledges those alumni and benefactors who continue to support and champion graduate students at the University.
For a listing of the individual awards, many of which are self-nominated, as well as eligibility criteria and application information, visit https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association/funding/recognition-awards.

**GSA Events**

The GSA hosts events for graduate students at various times of the year, and GSA Councillors are always welcome to attend and to volunteer to help at events such as:

- Social engagement events,
- Candidates’ forum near the time of the General Election,
- Orientations at the start of Fall and Winter term, and
- Awards Night (each Spring).
### Abbreviations Commonly Used at GSA Council Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AASUA</td>
<td>Association of Academic Staff: University of Alberta</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ab-GPAC</td>
<td>Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACB</td>
<td>Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA)</td>
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<td>AEGS</td>
<td>Academically-Employed Graduate Student</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASC</td>
<td>Awards Selection Committee (GSA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATG</td>
<td>Academic Travel Grant (GSA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BFC</td>
<td>Budget and Finance Committee (GSA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BoG</td>
<td>Board of Governors</td>
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<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement</td>
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<td>CAGS</td>
<td>Canadian Association for Graduate Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAL</td>
<td>Councillor-at-Large (GSA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CASA</td>
<td>Canadian Alliance of Student Associations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAUS</td>
<td>Council of Alberta University Students</td>
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<td>CCG</td>
<td>Child Care Grant (GSA)</td>
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<td>CFB</td>
<td>Campus Food Bank</td>
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<td>COSB</td>
<td>Code of Student Behaviour</td>
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<td>CPI</td>
<td>Consumer Price Index</td>
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<td>CRO</td>
<td>Chief Returning Officer (GSA)</td>
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<td>DEO</td>
<td>Directly-Elected Officer (GSA)</td>
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<td>DoS</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
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<td>DRO</td>
<td>Deputy Returning Officer (GSA)</td>
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<td>EB</td>
<td>Emergency Bursary (GSA)</td>
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<td>ED</td>
<td>Executive Director (GSA)</td>
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<td>ERC</td>
<td>Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA)</td>
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<td>ETS</td>
<td>Edmonton Transit Service</td>
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<td>FGSR</td>
<td>Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOIPP</td>
<td>Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>GFC</td>
<td>General Faculties Council</td>
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<td>GC</td>
<td>Governance Committee (GSA)</td>
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<td>GPAC</td>
<td>Graduate Program Administrators Committee</td>
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<td>GRA</td>
<td>Graduate Research Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRAF</td>
<td>Graduate Research Assistant Fellowship</td>
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<td>GSAB</td>
<td>Graduate Students’ Association Board (GSA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSAP</td>
<td>Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSA)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| GSGG | Graduate Student Group Grant (GSA) |
| GSSF | Graduate Student Support Fund |
| GTA | Graduate Teaching Assistant |
| HIAR | Helping Individuals at Risk |
| IGS | Indigenous Graduate Students’ Association |
| MOA | Memorandum of Agreement |
| MOS | Memorandum of Settlement |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NASA | Non-Academic Staff Association |
| NoC | Nominating Committee (GSA) |
| NT | Negotiating Team (GSA) |
| PAW | Physical Activity and Wellness Centre |
| PGME | Post-Graduate Medical Education |
| PI | Principal Instructor |
| PIPA | Personal Information Protection Act |
| PSLA | Post-Secondary Learning Act |
| SFS | Student Financial Services |
| SGS | Student Group Services |
| SU | Students’ Union |
| SUB | Students’ Union Building |
| TDIMM | TD Insurance Meloche Monnex (GSA) |
| UAPPOL | University of Alberta Policies and Procedures On-Line |
| UHC | University Health Centre |
| U-PASS | Universal bus/transit pass |
| VPA | Vice-President Academic (GSA) |
| VPE | Vice-President External (GSA) |
| VPL | Vice-President Labour (GSA) |
| VPSS | Vice-President Student Services (GSA) |

Board of Governors Standing Committees: [http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/BoardofGovernors.aspx](http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/BoardofGovernors.aspx)