



GRADUATE
STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

GSA SURVIVAL GUIDE

2022-23



WELCOME TO UCALGARY!

WE ARE THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION &
WE ARE HERE FOR YOU.

We represent the collective voice of graduate students of the University of Calgary. We advocate on your behalf and provide valuable services to help you succeed academically and socially.

Explore our programs and services in this guide.



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GSA CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: gsa.ucalgary.ca
Facebook: facebook.com/gsacalgary
Instagram: [@gsacalgary](https://instagram.com/gsacalgary)
Twitter: [@gsacalgary](https://twitter.com/gsacalgary)
Phone: 403-220-5997
Email: askgsa@ucalgary.ca
Mailing Address: 1030 ES, 844 Campus Place NW,
Calgary Alberta T2N 1N4



WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY!

On behalf of the University community and the Graduate Students' Association (GSA), we hope you are excited to join thousands of other graduate students participating in cutting edge research and advanced programs.

Whether you are joining our community from around the corner or from around the world, we are excited to have you as part of our graduate student body. We are committed to supporting you and helping to make your graduate school experience positive and memorable especially after the isolating COVID-19 period so please use this Survival Guide as a resource to help you succeed.

I encourage you to get involved and take advantage of all the excellent programs, resources, and activities the GSA and your new community hosts. As in most aspects of life, your experiences here will ultimately be up to you but our hope in the GSA is to help support your success in all areas of life while you are part of our community.

Enjoy the challenging and rewarding year ahead!



Saaka Sulemana Saaka
President
pres.gsa@ucalgary.ca

GSA IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2022-23

September 2 to September 23, 2022	Health and Dental Plan Change of Coverage Period for students starting their academic year in September
TBA	GSA Graduate Citizenship Award deadline
September 27	Annual General Meeting
October 15	Deadline for Operational Grants for DGAs and GSGs
TBA	GSA Bursary deadline
TBA	Professional Development Grant deadline
October 15	Quality Money deadline
January 6 to 27, 2023	Health and Dental Plan Change of Coverage Period for students starting their academic year in January
TBA	GSA Bursary deadline
January 15	Quality Money deadline
TBA	GSA Awards deadline
TBA	Professional Development Grant deadline

*Visit gsa.ucalgary.ca for the most updated list of deadlines and important dates.

OTHER UCALGARY RESOURCES

Faculty of Graduate Studies
SU Wellness Centre
MyGradSkills
GSA Graduate Student Cost of Living Calculator
Student Success Centre
International Student Services
MoneySmart



ABOUT US

The GSA is the official voice of UCalgary graduate students since 1967.

WE ADVOCATE ON YOUR BEHALF.

Together with the GSA team of staff, volunteers, and executives, we advocate on your behalf and ensure your voice is heard at the University of Calgary and at all levels of government.

We also advocate on behalf of UCalgary's academically employed graduate students through the Collective Agreement.

WE SUPPORT YOU ACADEMICALLY AND SOCIALLY.

The GSA supports you and other UCalgary graduate students to succeed academically and socially. Our programs and services include the extended Health and Dental Plan and financial support such as grants, bursaries, and awards. We organize fun social events, and sell discounted tickets to various attractions in and around Calgary.

WE HELP YOU IMPROVE YOUR LEADERSHIP SKILLS.

The GSA offers various leadership opportunities with our Departmental Graduate Associations, Graduate Student Groups, and Graduate Representative Council. You can volunteer for our Committees and Subcommittees, and act as the advisor to the Board of Directors by being a part of the GSA Senior Leadership Team. Every year, the GSA organizes a General Election for UCalgary Graduate Students to elect your student representatives that will sit on the Board of Directors to make decisions for the GSA.



OUR VISION AND MISSION

VISION

To be recognized as the leader in graduate student advocacy and service delivery by our members, stakeholders, and external organizations across Canada.

MISSION

The GSA serves all UCalgary graduate students through responsive programs and initiatives to support their success during and after their academic endeavours.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



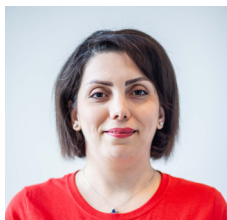
MEET YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Your Board of Directors/Executive team is here to represent you through your graduate school adventure. They are current graduate students that were elected in the GSA General Elections to oversee the operations and set the strategic directions for the GSA. Learn about your Board of Directors here:



**Saaka
Sulemana
Saaka**

President
pres.gsa@ucalgary.ca



**Masume
Akbari**

*Vice President
Student Life*
vpstl.gsa@ucalgary.ca



**James
Steele**

*Vice President
Academic*
vpac.gsa@ucalgary.ca



**Cameron
Armstrong**

*Vice President
Finance & Services*
vpfs.gsa@ucalgary.ca



**Alex Cameron/
AC**

*Vice President
External*
vpext.gsa@ucalgary.ca

BE THE NEXT GSA EXECUTIVES

Have you ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes to deliver programs and services for graduate students? Or do you like having opportunities to guide and shape the graduate student experience?

All of these are elements of Executive positions within the GSA. Being an Executive allows you to make a positive impact on your community here at UCalgary while you continue with your studies.

To learn more about the elections and Executive positions:

- contact GSA President pres.gsa@ucalgary.ca, or
- visit gsa.ucalgary.ca/elections



OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES



PROTECT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY WITH THE GSA HEALTH & DENTAL PLAN

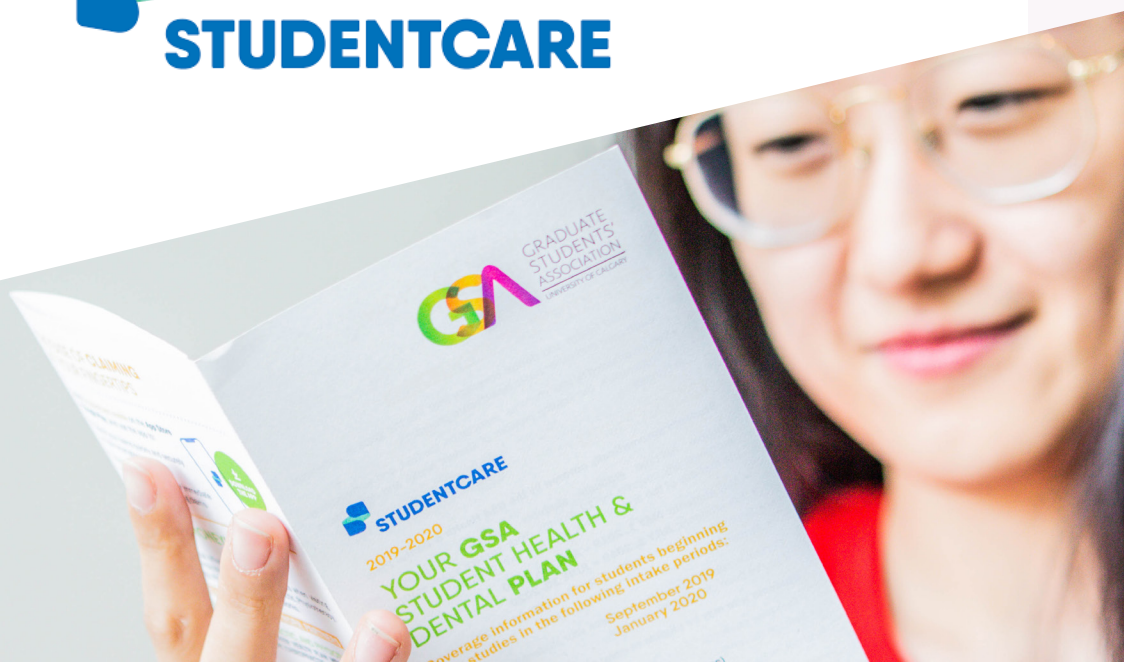
The GSA extended health and dental plan provides graduate students with a multitude of health benefits such as:

- Up to 80% off prescription drugs
- Up to 70% off basic dental services
- Vision benefits and coverage

Full-time students are automatically enrolled in the plan. Part-time, visiting, distance and Executive MBA students are able to self-enroll into the plan, and students are also able to add their spouse and family to their extended health and dental plan for a cost.

If you have alternative health and dental coverage, you can opt-out of the plan by visiting the opt-out page on the StudentCare website: studentcare.ca/CalgaryGSA.

For more information about your extended health and dental plan, visit studentcare.ca/CalgaryGSA.



APPLY FOR THE GSA AWARDS, GRANTS & BURSARIES

As a graduate student you can apply for a range of Awards, Bursaries, and Grants including:

- Professional Development Grant
- Emergency Bursary
- GSA Bursary

Please visit gsa.ucalgary.ca/financial for our funding descriptions, terms of reference, and deadlines.

Contact our Awards Committee Chair for more information at awards.gsa@ucalgary.ca.

Do you know an excellent supervisor, graduate student, or administrator? Nominate them for the GSA Excellence Awards! Visit gsa.ucalgary.ca/financial/awards for details.

FUND YOUR STUDENT PROJECTS WITH GSA QUALITY MONEY

The GSA is committed to providing a strong foundation for our members and community by offering valued services and programs that support and empower graduate students during and after their academic endeavours. Quality Money is one way that the GSA invests in the graduate student community.

Through Quality Money, the GSA funds proposals that positively impact graduate students, promote multidisciplinary interactions, align with the UCalgary's Eyes High strategy and GSA's strategic plan and integrate sustainable initiatives.

To learn more about this program, contact governance.gsa@ucalgary.ca or visit gsa.ucalgary.ca/financial.



PARTICIPATE IN GSA EVENTS

There is a lot more to being a graduate student than just academics. The GSA hosts many events and activities for graduate students to relax, get to know each other and have fun!

For a list of all GSA events and discounted tickets, visit gsa.ucalgary.ca/events and gsa.ucalgary.ca/events/discounted-tickets.



GET INVOLVED WITH DEPARTMENTAL GRADUATE ASSOCIATIONS AND GRADUATE STUDENT GROUPS

Departmental Graduate Associations (DGAs) are smaller graduate student associations that are run by students in a specific department.

Each DGA provides a number of opportunities and resources for our members such as:

- Networking opportunities
- Funding from the GSA
- The inside scoop on GSA initiatives
- An opportunity to have your voice heard at the Graduate Representative Council
- And much more!

Graduate Student Groups (GSGs) are student groups recognized by the GSA that focus on research, cultural, and special interests. By registering your GSG, you are eligible to receive funding and event support from the GSA.

If you are interested in joining a DGA or GSG or would like more information, visit gsa.ucalgary.ca/get-involved, or contact governance.gsa@ucalgary.ca.

GRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

Graduate Representative Council (GRC) is the GSA's policy-making body, comprised of graduate student representatives from all departments with active Departmental Graduate Associations. It provides direction to the GSA Board of Directors on the political, financial, and operational matters of the GSA. For more details, visit gsa.ucalgary.ca/grc.



VOLUNTEER WITH GSA COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES

The GSA has 8 committees and 4 subcommittees that work hard and diligently to carry out initiatives and host events to improve the graduate student experience at the University of Calgary.

- Awards Committee
- Academic Support Committee
- Finance Standing Committee
- Governance Standing Committee
- Sustainability Committee
- Labour Relations Committee
- Student Experience and Events Committee
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

The Student Experience and Events Committee (SEEC) oversees 4 subcommittees which include the *Gender and Sexuality Alliance [GSA]^2*; *Newcomers and International Students*; *Mental Health and Wellness*; and *Events Subcommittees*.

We welcome volunteers in all of our committees and subcommittees and we establish working groups for big initiatives and events. To learn more, visit gsa.ucalgary.ca/committees or contact vpsl.gsa@ucalgary.ca for details.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Chairs and Vice Chairs of the GSA's committees and subcommittees together with the Board of Directors, Chief Returning Officer, GRC Speaker, GRC Clerk, AVP Labour, and GSA Executive Director make up the Senior Leadership Team which acts as an advisory body for the GSA Board of Directors.



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITH THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

Through the Collective Agreement, the GSA is the exclusive authority to negotiate on behalf of academically employed graduate students regarding their employment and benefits. This includes:

- Negotiation on Graduate Assistantship (teaching, non-teaching, and research),
- Duties such as hours of work and responsibilities
- Remuneration and benefits
- Medical leave, parental leave, and other special leaves
- Health and safety

To access the latest Collective Agreement and learn more about your rights as a Graduate Assistant, visit gsa.ucalgary.ca/collective-agreement-information or contact the Labour Relations Committee at lrc.gsa@ucalgary.ca.

MAKE SURE YOUR VOICE IS HEARD THROUGH GSA ADVOCACY EFFORTS

As your graduate student representatives, the GSA Board of Directors and the Research and Advocacy Analyst work on many advocacy priorities in the best interest of UCalgary graduate students. Each year, the GSA determines our priority areas based on the issues that affect students. This is informed by the GSA Strategic Plan, and the priority areas highlighted at the provincial and federal advocacy levels.

The GSA amplifies our advocacy efforts through larger advocacy associations that the GSA is an active member of including the Calgary Student Caucus, Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC), and Canadian Alliance of Students Association (CASA).

For more information and updates on the GSA advocacy efforts, please visit gsa.ucalgary.ca/advocacy.



SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER WITH THE GSA

Volunteers are integral to the success of the GSA. We offer UCalgary graduate students internal and external volunteering opportunities that match your skills and passions.

Volunteering with the GSA will bring many great benefits for you including:

- Expand your resume
- Learn new skills
- Fulfill your interests
- Enrich your student experience
- Help shape your community
- Contribute to improve our society
- Make friends and have fun

For a current list of our volunteer opportunities or to sign up for our Volunteer Recruitment Program, visit

gsa.ucalgary.ca/volunteer.



VOLUNTEER
RECRUITMENT
PROGRAM



PLANNER TEMPLATES



YEAR:

YEARLY PLANNER

January	February	March
April	May	June
July	August	September
October	November	December



MONTH:

MONTHLY PLANNER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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Goals		To do	Notes
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WEEK:

WEEKLY PLANNER

Appointments

Calls

SUNDAY	
MONDAY	
TUESDAY	
WEDNESDAY	
THURSDAY	
FRIDAY	
SATURDAY	

To do

Tracker

Notes



DAILY PLANNER

SCHEDULE

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Appointments

[illegible]

To do



Water

Circumstance	Percentage of respondents (%)
(a) self-defense	95
(b) defense of others	90
(c) defense of property	85
(d) defense of a business	80
(e) defense of a country	65



DAILY PLANNER

SCHEDULE

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Appointments

To do

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Water

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GOAL PLANNER

GOAL	Deadline
Action Steps	
Tracker	
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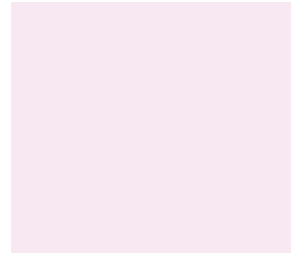
GOAL	Deadline
Action Steps	
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TO DO LIST

Important Tasks





Other Tasks





HABIT TRACKER

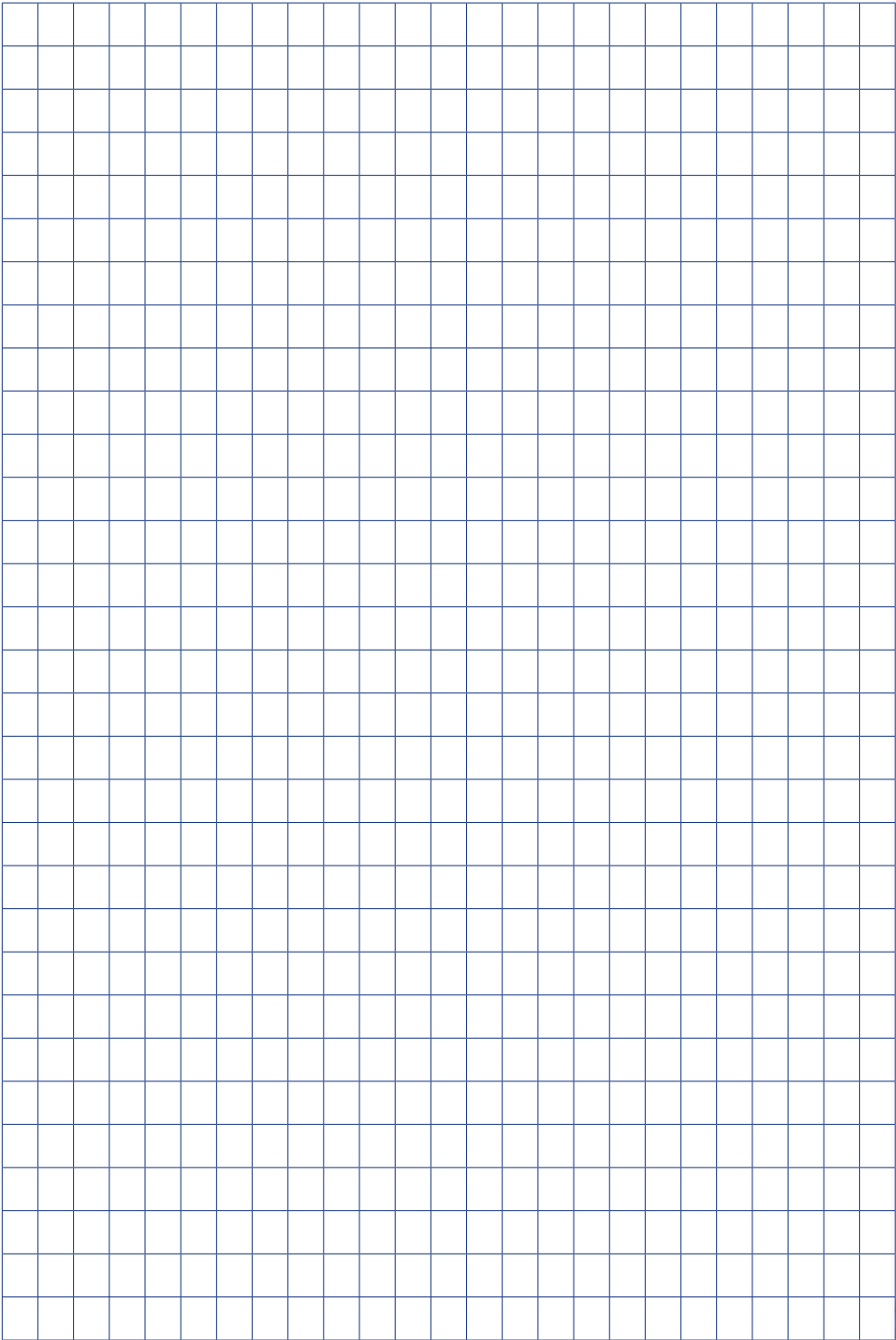
Daily Tracker

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Monthly Tracker

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DISCOUNTS FROM LOCAL BUSINESSES

For a current list of discounts available to graduate students, visit gsa.ucalgary.ca/discount



DREAM SCENTS CANDLE COMPANY



**30%
off**
pick-up order

HAND-CRAFTED IN CANADA



EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNT FOR UCALGARY GRADUATE STUDENTS

Use promo code **GSA2021** to claim the discount at checkout.
owlsnestbooks.com | 815a 49 Ave SW Calgary AB



10% off
any of your
ONB purchases



