

GSG Handbook

gsa.ucalgary.ca/dgas



Hello and Welcome



At the GSA, we provide 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 endeavors. We create an environment built on fiscal sustainability, social engagement, and effective representation.

The GSA is here to enhance the experience of all grad students, and one of the ways in which we do this is by encouraging engagement by facilitating Graduate Student Groups (GSGs). We encourage you to start your own group based on research, cultural, or special interests.

The GSA is pleased to support this exciting initiative with ongoing financial support for all GSGs. If there is a GSG that aligns with your interests, we encourage you to join it. If you would like to create a new GSG, we hope this handbook will assist you in doing so.

Although GSGs receive support, financial and otherwise, from the GSA, GSGs operate autonomously and function independently of the GSA according to each organization's own governing documents.

If you have any questions in regards to your GSGs or to create a new GSG, don't hesitate to reach out!

Best wishes for a rewarding year with your GSG,

Masume Akbari
VP Student Life

Departmental Graduate Association (DGA)

A DGA is the official representation of a department at the GSA.
A DGA is comprised of all graduate students in a department.

VS

Graduate Student Group (GSG)

A graduate student organization is composed of Active Members linked by a common academic or other interest.

Have questions? We are here to help!



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VP Student Life

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General and policy questions



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Event Grants and Support



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Change of Information
Operational Bursary



GSA Office

1030ES

10th floor, Earth Sciences

Important Dates

Change of Information	October 15
FAnnual Report	April 30



Forms

GSG Creation Form

(Use this form to register a new Graduate Student Group)

GSG Change of

Information/Operational Bursary Form

(Use this form to update the GSA about your new Executives, updated banking agreement, and Bylaws, and to receive operational and Event Grant)

<https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/graduatestudentgroups/>

Event Submission Form

(Please use this form to request equipment rental, insurance information and promotional items)

After Event Report Form

(Please use this form to submit receipts for your event(s) in which you've used GSA Event Grant funding.)



Creation of a new GSG

Creation Process

Congratulations on your creation of a new Graduate Student Group!

The first step in registering your GSG is to fill out the GSG Creation Form with the following items:

- Executives' contact information;
- GSG Bylaws;
- List of members; and
- Minutes from the Annual General Meeting/meeting where the Bylaws were approved by members for approval by the Board.

The Executive Coordinator shall then submit the creation request to the Board within five (5) business days of receiving the request for official ratification. The final decision shall be emailed to the GSG within fifteen (15) business days of submitting request. Once approved, the GSG must provide documents proving the GSG holds a bank account with a minimum of two signing authorities.

Bank Accounts and Financials

GSGs should have an independently-operated bank account in order to receive GSA funding or if you plan on applying for outside funding.

Your GSG's financial records must be both accurate and transparent. Any member of your GSG should be able to review your financial documents after giving reasonable notice. Two signing authorities are strongly recommended for each account in order to ensure that accountability and integrity are maintained at all times. To ensure the accuracy and transparency of your GSG's finances, keep a spreadsheet noting all revenues, expenditures, their sources, and the reasons for each item.

The University of Calgary, including the GSA, will not be held responsible for any liability related to the collection, use or dispersal of GSG's own bank account or funds, nor will the University or GSA provide insurance or safe-keeping for such funds.



GSG List and contact information on the GSA web site
The GSA will keep a list of GSGs, and their contact information on the GSA website for easier access to GSGs by graduate students and by other GSGs.

Visit the list here: gsa.ucalgary.ca/graduatestudentgroups

Annual Tasks

Change of Information Form



October 15

[Access the form here](#)

By October 15 of every year, or as soon as possible, all GSGs need to complete the Change of Information form to update the GSA about:

- New executives' contact information;
- Current list of GSG members;
- Signed copy of the GSG Agreement by an Executive;
- Banking agreement clearly stating the name of the bank account, and bank signing authorities (those are authorized to sign cheques on behalf of the GSG); and
- GSG governing documents (either Bylaws or Constitution)

GSG Agreement > Appendix A

The GSG Agreement outlines the responsibilities of the GSGs expected by the GSA, outlined by the GSA Bylaws, and GSG Policy. Every year, a GSG executive has to confirm its agreement with the terms and conditions in the GSG Agreement. A signed copy of this agreement **MUST** be submitted with the GSG Change of Information form.

Annual Report



April 30

All GSGs must submit an annual report to the Executive Coordinator at the close of each academic year. Annual Reports are due by April 30 (or the next business day) of each year.

The annual report should be approximately 2-4 pages in length and must include the following items:

- Executive names and e-mail addresses for the outgoing executives;
- Executive names and e-mail addresses for the incoming executives (if known);
- Total number of members;
- List of activities/events, brief descriptions of each activity/event, and total number of activities/events;
- Financial statements (income statement, cash balances, and outstanding items); and
- Issues or concerns (if applicable).



GSG Governance



GSG Policy

The GSG Policy outlines the policy and procedures for proper governance of GSGs.

It is the responsibility of GSG Executives to ensure they are aware of and adherent to this policy document. Further, the Policy is meant to mitigate the Association's liability connected with the activities of GSGs.

Read the GSG Policy here: gsa.ucalgary.ca/graduatestudentgroups

Executive Elections

All GSGs must hold annual elections for their Executive positions. If no students are interested in running for the GSG Executive positions, the positions may be appointed.

A minimum of three (3) GSG Executive positions are required, and be occupied by Active Members, to form a GSG. At minimum, these positions must be:

- President;
- Vice President; and
- Treasurer.



Visit gsa.ucalgary.ca/elections to view documents regarding the GSA election process. If you would like to know how the GSA governs its association in a given situation, please contact the GSA Executive Coordinator at governance.gsa@ucalgary.ca.

Executive Transitions

Depending on the bylaws of your GSG and how you choose to govern it, the Executives of your GSG will most likely change from year to year. To make this transition smooth, we have a few recommendations for you:

- Use general email addresses with an email provider such as Gmail so they can easily be passed on when an executive position changes;
- Use an online filing system such as Dropbox for your GSG documents so all your members can easily access them;
- When new executives are transitioning in, make sure they are aware of all important documents, contacts, and procedures; and
- Encourage each executive of your GSG to write an Annual Report of completed and ongoing initiatives, events, etc.
- Please contact the Executive Coordinator if you have any questions about transitions.



The GSA offers funding to support the creation and operation of GSGs, as well as funding for events that promote GSG activity between graduate faculties, departments and students. This is a competitive process, awarded on a first-come-first-served basis, and funding is not guaranteed. The GSA retains the ultimate authority as to the disbursement of all GSA funding.

Please note that funding is awarded on the basis that the GSG is in good standing (i.e., submitting their annual report before the deadline, and submitting the GSG Change of Information/ Operational Bursary Form).

Start-Up Grant (\$300)

- ▶ Purpose: Initial funding for newly formed GSGs.
- ▶ Eligibility: One-time grant upon creation of a new GSG, provided that the application and all appropriate documentation have been received and approved.
- ▶ Deadlines & Details: Must apply within 3 months of the GSG startup date. GSG must register online no later than April 15 of each year.

Operational Bursary (\$300 + Additional Funding)

- ▶ Purpose: Annual continued funding for pre-existing GSGs.
- ▶ Amount: \$300 + Additional Funding based on membership number as follows:
- ▶ Additional Funding:
 - 1-25 members: \$250
 - 26-100 members: \$350
 - 101-200 members: \$450
 - 201-500 members: \$550
 - 500+ members: \$650
- ▶ Eligibility: GSGs can apply for one \$300 Operational Bursary per year (April 1 - March 31) after their first year of operation.
- ▶ Deadlines & Details: Must submit Annual Report by April 30 each year. The online Change of Information form must be completed and submitted no later than October 15 each year

Event Grant

- ▶ Purpose: Offset cost of DGA events.
- ▶ Amount: Receipt amount up to \$300 per year
- ▶ Eligibility: Eligible expenses include food, beverages (non-alcoholic beverages, wine, and/or beer only), advertising and other event-related costs. Beverages should not cover more than 25% of the total bill.

How to apply:

- ▶ STEP 1: Submit your Change of Information Form
- ▶ STEP 2: Submit your Events via the Event Submission Form throughout the year
- ▶ Deadlines: Change of Information form due on October 15.



Event Support

The GSA provides event support to all GSGs. The Event Organizer of the GSG must fill out the Event Submission Form and obtain a formal written approval from the GSA in order to request event support including GSA/LDL promotional items, equipment rentals, event grant, etc.

Event Submission Form > gsa.ucalgary.ca/eventforms

This form is intended for any GSA Student Groups (DGAs, GSGs, consortium, or GSA committees) to request event support including:

- Equipment rental;
- GSA promotional items for prizes;

Please submit the form at least 3 weeks prior to the event date. The GSA shall follow up with the request 2-5 business days with further instructions.

Events Handbook > gsa.ucalgary.ca/eventforms

Find in the Events Handbook:

- General steps of event planning including risk management, promotions, execution, and evaluation;
- Details of available event support;
- Advice and requirements for special events including off-campus events, with alcohol consumption, field trips, pet therapy, etc; and
- Resources for venue booking, transportation, and booking equipment.

Commercial Liability Insurance > **Appendix B**

The Co-operators General Insurance Company has partnered with The Graduate Students' Association of University of Calgary to create a custom insurance solution for the various student groups under the Association. This policy provides an individual liability limit for each group to protect its members and volunteers in the event of occurrences where responsibility for Bodily Injury or Property Damage is alleged. Regular meetings of GSA members/student groups at coffee shops, workshops, classrooms, and other on-campus facilities would be covered.

In some scenarios, additional liability coverage will need to be purchased, in order to supplement the existing Commercial General Liability policy. This additional liability may be "written-in" to the base policy, or a "standalone" supplemental policy may be required. If your event requires additional coverage, insurance must be obtained before receiving any event support from the GSA (i.e., swag, equipment rental, event grant) and room bookings from the university.

Please see Appendix B to help determine if additional coverage is required for your planned event/activity.

Proper documentation & receipts are required when applying for the post-event grant. Complete the Event Submission Form for further details and assistance.

Hosting Your Events

✓ Classrooms, Tables and Green Space Booking

GSGs are now able to book classrooms, green space, and tables directly through UCalgary's Accommodations and Events (UCAE) for your meetings and events for free. Please view the Agreement between UCAE and the GSA for more details on the GSA web site. All bookings need to be completed through the UCAE website. There is no limit on how many classroom bookings a GSG can request per month.

[UCalgary Classroom Booking Page](#)

DGAs can also book other locations using their individual booking pages including, but not limited to:

- Vitruvian Space
- Nickle Libraries
- Community Hub
- Gyms at Kinesiology Block

✓ Catering for On-Campus Events

Please note that if a GSG is hosting an on-campus event, not in a licensee or private residence, at which liquor and food will be served, you must use University of Calgary Food Services.

This ensures the event and persons attending are covered by the University of Calgary's liquor license, and are covered by and comply with the University's insurance regulations.

All food that is to be catered on campus for GSG events (excluding at the Last Defence Lounge, The Den or the Black Lounge) must be ordered through University of Calgary Food Services. Some exceptions apply.

[University of Calgary Food Services](#)

Phone: (403) 220-2242

✓ Waiver and waiver administration

It is the GSG's responsibility to prepare appropriate waivers for events to avoid potential claims resulted from body injury to event participants or third parties. The GSGs may seek waiver templates and guidance UCalgary's Risk Management website HERE: ucalgary.ca/risk/risk-management-insurance/services/waivers

✓ Raffles

If your GSG is planning on hosting a raffle, a provincial licence is required. Please visit the AGLC website for more information on how to plan your raffle: aglc.ca/gaming/licences/raffle-20000-and-less

✓ Streaming

Streaming of live sporting events in university classrooms is prohibited. Streaming of movies/documentaries/shows requires a license. Contact UCalgary Copyright Office for details.

Other Benefits

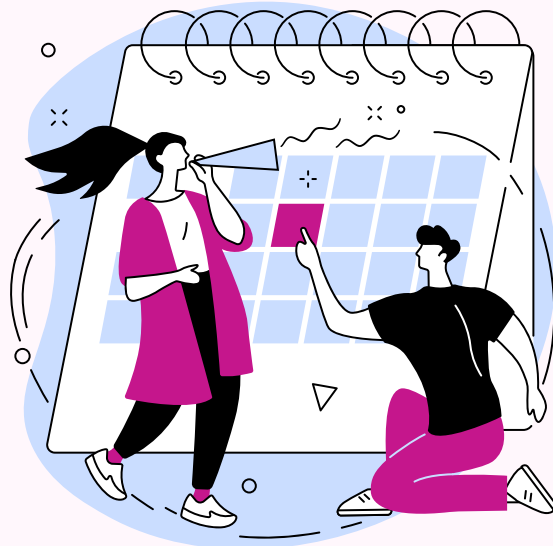
✓ GSA Promotional Items

GSGs are able to request GSA/LDL promotional items to use as giveaways at their events. All GSGs can apply for GSA promotional items to give away as prizes at their event(s). Prizes are granted on a first-come-first-serve basis and are not guaranteed. GSG limit is two (2) requests per year. Prize type and availability based on current stock levels and at the discretion of GSA staff.

✓ Equipment Rental

The GSA has a projector, Popcorn Machine, Cotton Candy machine, Arcade Sticks and a portable Bluetooth speaker for rental. GSGs can request rentals of these equipment through the Event Submission Form. GSGs are asked to follow procedures and sign rental agreement to access these equipment for events.

Rentals dependent on availability and functionality of equipment. Please contact GSA staff for more information.



Engagement and Conduct

The GSA would like to encourage students to involve themselves in GSG activities throughout the year. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will not discredit himself or herself, the University of Calgary, or the Graduate Students' Association. The GSA prohibits acts which seriously interfere with the basic purposes, necessities and processes of the academic community or the greater community as a whole, or which deny the essential rights of other members of any community. GSGs need to abide by the non-academic misconduct policy as per the rules and regulations of the University. For reference, please visit: ucalgary.ca/conduct/policy/non-academic-misconduct-policy.



Diversity and Discrimination

The GSA is committed to providing a safe, proactive, and socially diverse environment for all aspects of the graduate student experience on campus. Discrimination, harassment, and intolerance are prohibited under Canadian law; any kind of behaviour that threatens GSG members' worth, self-esteem or sense of value is strictly prohibited.

Discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, is unfair, differential treatment of individuals and groups based on prejudice, stereotypes, ignorance, and fear, for which there is no bona fide or reasonable justification and which imposes burdens, obligations, or disadvantages on individuals or groups as defined under the Alberta Human Rights Act (Act). The Act prohibits discrimination on the following grounds: race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, family status, ancestry, place of origin, source of income, sexual orientation or political beliefs.

The University of Calgary is governed by the Act. Harassment is a form of discrimination that involves unsolicited and unwelcome attention from a person who knows or reasonably ought to know such behaviour is unwelcome. Such unwelcome comment or conduct is intimidating, threatening, demeaning, or abusive and may be accompanied by direct or implied threats to grades, status, or job. Harassment has the impact or effect of creating a hostile or poisoned work or study environment and limits individuals in their pursuit of education, research, or work goals. Harassment can be discriminatory, sexual, or personal in nature. Discriminatory harassment takes the form of unwelcome behavior directed toward another person or group of persons based a prohibited ground of discrimination. Racial and religious harassment are examples of discriminatory harassment. Sexual harassment is a particular form of discrimination based on gender and is specifically defined in the University's Harassment Policy.

Appendix A: GSG Agreement



As the authorized Representative of a Graduate Student Group (GSG) of the Graduate Students' Association (GSA), I confirm I have fully read and understand the GSA's GSG Handbook and the corresponding Policy and Procedures in their entirety. In accordance with these policies and procedures, our GSG agrees to:

- Maintain a minimum of three (3) executives including President, Vice President, and Treasurer that are Active Members at all times (as defined in the GSA Bylaws);
- Operate according to the ratified governing document (Bylaws or Constitution) as submitted to the GSA;
- Submit a current version of the GSG governing document within two (2) weeks of any amendments;
- Abide by the GSA policies and procedures at all times, including but not limited to: GSG Policy, GSG Handbook, and Events Policy and Procedures;
- Submit the Change of Information Form annually before October 15 of each academic year, or as soon as our GSG is able, to update the GSA with new executives' information, governing documents, and bank signing authorities;
- Ensure funds are spent appropriately to meet the mandate of our GSG;
- Submit an Annual Report to the GSA by April 30 outlining the activities of the previous academic year;
- Ensure events are safe and healthy for members by properly assessing risks, administering waivers, and seeking additional necessary insurance for special events as outlined in GSA Events Handbook and required by the GSA;
- Submit an Event Submission Form in a timely manner as required by the GSA for event approval from the GSA. All events that have not been approved in advance will not be supported by the GSA;
- Submit an After Event Report Form with all event receipts to be eligible for a GSG Event Grant;
- Take responsibility for any repairs or replacement of the UCalgary property if damage has occurred during a GSG event; and
- Fulfill transition requirements when new executives are elected as outlined in the GSG Handbook, and report this to the GSA within a reasonable timeframe.

Failure to comply with these terms may result in the suspension of GSG funding, services, and other benefits as provided by the GSA up to and including de-ratification. Further, our GSG understands and agrees that any funding and/or services made available to GSGs are subject to availability of funds, equipment, and/or space allocation.

Signature

Name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B: Liability Insurance

What is it? What do you have? When do you need more?

Commercial General Liability - Master Certificate Program:

The Co-operators General Insurance Company has partnered with The Graduate Students' Association of University of Calgary to create a custom insurance solution for the various student groups under the Association. This policy provides an individual liability limit for each group to protect its members and volunteers in the event of occurrences where responsibility for Bodily Injury or Property Damage is alleged.

In some scenarios, additional liability coverage will need to be purchased, in order to supplement the existing Commercial General Liability policy. This additional liability may be "written-in" to the base policy, or a "standalone" supplemental policy may be required. These supplemental policies can come in various forms, including the following:

- Party Alcohol Liability
- Exhibitor Liability
- Liquor Liability
- Server Liability
- Special Events Liability
- Event Cancellation

When is additional coverage required?

Does your group need extra coverage for your planned activities? Ask yourself the following questions:

- Will there be alcohol?
- Length of the event/activity? Cost for admission?
- Will there be live entertainment?
- How many people are attending?
- Is the event/activity organized and hosted solely by members of the Graduate Students' Association of University of Calgary, or are there other groups involved in the planning and hosting?
- Is the activity within the Graduate Students' Association of University of Calgary's Guiding Principles?

The Guiding Principles being the GSA is charged with the social, academic and practical well-being and growth of graduate students on campus. The GSA oversees and promotes workshops, special events, the provision of financial aid and support as well as the facilitation of career-based growth and development for graduate students as they progress through their university programs.

If alcohol is involved: Liquor Liability Only needs to be obtained as a standalone policy.

If live entertainment is involved: Special Events Liability needs to be obtained as a standalone policy. The exception would be if the live entertainment is hosted by and at the Last Defence Lounge, operated by the Graduate Students' Association.

If the event is a paid admission event, and/or takes place over more than one day: Special Events Liability needs to be obtained.

Appendix B: Liability Insurance

LIABILITY INSURANCE

If members of the GSA are not the sole organizers/host of the event: Special Event Liability covering all planning/hosting groups needs to be obtained.

If the event will be attended by a larger number of attendees (50+): Additional coverage may or may not be required, depending on the particulars of the activity. Please contact your GSA representative to work with The Co-operators to review and arrange coverage as required.

If the event is off-campus: Additional coverage may or may not be required, depending on the particulars of the activity. Please contact your GSA representative to work with The Co-operators to review and arrange coverage as required.

If the event is not related to the purpose of the GSA: Special Event Liability is required.

Examples:

Regular meetings of GSA members/student groups at coffee shops, workshops, classrooms, and other on-campus facilities would be covered.

A GSA/student group planned BBQ may need additional coverage to cover liquor liability and live entertainment.

How do you obtain additional coverage?

In circumstances where it's indicated that "additional coverage may or may not be required", please contact your GSA representative to discuss the event, and confer with The Co-operators whether we will be able to extend coverage from the base insurance.

In circumstances where it's indicated that you will need "Special Event Liability, Liquor Liability, etc.", you may contact The Co-operators to obtain this coverage on your group's behalf.

Contact Information for Additional Liability

Truman Insurance Agency Inc.

(403) 221-7257

Truman_Insurance@cooperators.ca