



**GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
GRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, February 27, 2018, 6:15 PM
ST147**

Attendees:

Brit Paris, President
Negar Mohammadi, VP Academic
Willem Klumpenhauer, VP External
Taha Afyouni, VP Student Life
Christiana Manzocco, VP Finance and Services
Kyle McCallum, Speaker
Haley Vecchiarelli, Clerk

Quorum

Biochemistry and Molecular Biology DGA

Biological Sciences Graduate Students' Association

Biomedical Engineering GSA

Biomedical Technology Graduate Students Association

Cardiovascular Respiratory Students Association

Chemical and Petroleum Engineering Graduate Students' Association

Chemistry Graduate Student Association

Civil Engineering Graduate Society

Classics and Religion DGA

Communication Media and Film

Community Health Sciences Student Executive

Computer Science Graduate Society

Council of Foothills

Doctoral Association for Students of Haskayne (DASH)

Rhiannon Campbell

Lisa Deliu

Jeremy Morris

Haley Glass

Kara Vandenbroek

Alex Wyma

Liam Whalen-Browne

Nadia Maarouf

Dominic Omusi

Natasha Garner

Alejandra Enriquez Garcia

Thomas Welsh

Hiva Jalilzadeh

Dinu Attalage

Lauretta Pearse

Chee Wong

Gabriele Roccella

Monica di Rosa

Monica Henderson

Yangyang Fang

Rebecca Lang

Celina Boothby

Mehrdad Jafari Giv

Ali Poostindouz

Catherine Greene

Alya Heirali

Alyson House

Steven Granger

Economics Graduate Association	Abraham Saucedo Cepada Ghazaleh Maleki Tabrizi Mohammad Mansouri Habibabadi Patricia Groves Edmond Chih Paul Meunier Hong Nguyen-Sears Graham Allison Joy Olagoke Fernando Vicentini Kyle Plotsky Sarah St. Germain Ilyar Asl Sabbaghian Hokmabadi Eric Wang Rachel Williamson Alyssa Haggard
Electrical and Computer Engineering GSA	
English Graduate Student Association	
Environmental Design Student Association	
Gastrointestinal Sciences Graduate Program	
Geography Graduate Students' Association	
Geomatics Graduate Group	
Graduate Anthropology & Archaeology Student Association	
Graduate Association of Geology and Geophysics Students	
Graduate Engineering Students Consortium	
Graduate Programs in Education Students Association	
Graduate University of Calgary Mathematics Society (GUMS)	Chee Wong Laura Berlanda Jennifer MacDonald Glory Ovie Madelyn Worth Christopher Ostrowski Nuiok Dicaire Matthew Adams Allison Bailey Rachelle Davis Sabina Manz Jodi Nettleton Lindsay Hracs
History Graduate Students Union	
Immunology Graduate Association	
Kinesiology Graduate Students Association	
Linguistics Graduate Students' Association	
Masters of Public Policy Student Association	
MBA Society (Haskayne)	
Mechanical Engineering Graduate Students' Association	Jodie Scott Saeedeh Saghlataoun Alexandra Meikleham Alexandra Bohm Myra Chen Keith Chi-Kei Lau Alya Heirali Erik Fraunberger Kyle Mayr Cynthia Kahl Parivash Enghiad Aaron Thomas-Bolduc Ananya Chattoraj Anna Ordog Taylor Cameron
Medical Science Graduate Student Association	
Microbiology & Infections Diseases GSA	
Neuroscience Hotchkiss Brain Institute Trainee Organization	
Nursing GSA	
Philosophy GSA	
Physics & Astronomy Grad Students' Association	

Political Science Graduate Student Association

Psychology Graduate Students Association

School of Creative and Performing Arts
Sociology Graduate Students' Caucus

Strategic Studies Students' Consortium
Sustainable Energy Development Society
Veterinary Medicine Grad Students Association

Vox Condiscipulum (French, Italian, Spanish)

Brett Goodwin

Erica Kunitomo

Michelle Flynn

Devon Currie

Sarah Bannister

Alicia Clifford

Courtney Petruik

Persephone Greco Otto

Aruna Amarasinghe

Alfred Mulinda

GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Began 6:18

Roll Call – Quorum Achieved 6:21

Territorial Acknowledgement 6:21

Approval of Agenda 6:22

Motioned/seconded

Opposed:0

Abstained:0

CARRIED

Approval of January 2018 Minutes 6:22

Motioned/seconded

Opposed:0

Abstained:0

CARRIED

ab-GPAC (ED ab-GPAC, Nicole Van Kuppeveld) 6:23

- What is [ab-GPAC](#)?
 - Advocacy group to province and other stakeholder for the 22,000 graduate students at the 4 CARI (Comprehensive Academic and Research Institutions)
 - Incorporated March 2015
 - Aim
 - Improve quality of postsecondary graduate education and experiences of graduate students

- 4 Member Institutes
 - UofC, UofA, UofL, Athabasca U
 - 12/4/2/1
 - 12 Directors (3/school)
 - 4 Executive Officers
 - 2 *ad-hoc* committees
 - 1 Executive Director
- What we care about:
 - Baseline Funding
 - Mental Health on Campus
 - Student Issues, Input and Data
 - International Students
 - Regulated international fees
 - Fees should not be used to balance budget
 - Streamlined immigration
 - Attract and retain
- Strategic Highlights
 - [Advocacy](#)
 - Government consultations
 - Labour
 - Roles and Mandate Review
 - Mental Health
 - Proposed Funding Models
 - Every 3 months meet with student representatives
 - Budget
 - [Open Letter re: Tuition Freezes](#)
 - Relationships
 - Council of Alberta University Students
 - Ministry of Economic Development of Trade, Alnnovates, Ministry of Health, Alberta Student Awards
 - Operations
 - Retreat
 - Reputation
 - Increase visibility with students and external stakeholders
 - Branding
- Executive Director
 - Follows strategic plan priorities
- Adocacy Road Map
 - Enhancing relationships with stakeholders
- One Voice: The Power of Our Association
 - 4 member institutions, 22k member strong

- More power to advocate
- Follow
 - @abGPAC
 - Facebook: abGPAC
 - www.abgpac.net
 - abgpac.ed@gmail.com

Q: AI graduate fellowships happening this year? Is this occurring?

A (Nicole): No news or confirmations.

Q: UofL intending to leave ab-GPAC?

A (Willem): UofL will be a member until Dec 2018. They gave a letter of reasoning, some speculation: 1. Cited that they were not being represented specifically, and their specific needs were not being met. Counterpoint is that they have contributed and have had opportunities to contribute; 2. Their GSA is very different, 3 executives, less staff (1), budget and governance has been through several significant changes over last few years. Pays \$4/student (as do all members), and want to look at budget and want to roll back spending. GRC Council is 12 people. 682 students compared to UofC at approximately 7k.

Q: abg-GPAC communicating with fed government?

A (Willem): None so far, focusing on working with provincial partners. We are looking into partnering with CASA (Canadian Alliance of Student Associations), both UofC GSA and ab-GPAC, and are going to their AGM this year.

Q: Advocating for international students, especially regarding immigration, any update?

A (Willem): Wish I could give you an update, we've been consistent, we are one voice, and government will do what they want on their timeline.

Q: So how do you talk with government around this issues.

A (Willem): Send a document about budget and priorities. We want streamlined immigration process and reasoning. It is mentioned in meetings. AB government wants to look at it.

A (Brit): Partnering with CASA (federal body).

2018-2019 GSA Fees (VPFS, Christiana Manzocco) (see PowerPoint presentation) 6:43

- GSA Fee Update
 - Executive Board (EB) and Finance Standing Committee (FSC) looked at budget
 - Proposing 0 % fee increase
 - No fee increase!

BIRT the Graduate Representative Council approves the proposed GSA membership fee change of 0% for the 2018-2019 academic year.

Motioned/seconded
Opposed:0
Abstained:0
CARRIED

2018-2019 Health and Dental Fees (Executive Director, Jason Unsworth) (see PowerPoint presentation) 6:45

- GSA Health and Dental Cost Structure
 - Projected claims
 - Loss ratio
 - Student usage of plan is up
 - Inflation
 - 5% / year
 - versus employee plans are 15 % / year
 - Admin expenses
 - External
 - StudentCare—broker between GSA and insurer and independent advisor to GSA
 - Brought us out of debt, now we have a Health and Dental reserve fund
 - Great partner
 - Internal
 - Salaries of GSA's in-house plan administrator
 - Renewal Rate Formula
 - Projected Claims (90 %) + Inflation Trend (5-8 %) + Admin Expenses (fixed value 10 %) = Plan Cost
- Background
 - 2017-2018 fees were increased 12%
 - Plan costs \$570.27, we are currently charging \$566.67, reserve depletion of \$3.60/person
 - Want a health reserve
 - Do not want to overcharge, but need to keep a healthy reserve
 - Based on usage and keeping benefits the same, plan would be \$627, which equates to a 10% increase
 - This is on track, and was previously forecasted
 - If we keep cost structure and service levels the same, GSA reserve fund will be depleted in 2 years
 - Best practice is to keep a reserve at 20%
 - Cannot predict future, so this is best practice
- Strategy
 - VPFS struck a working group

- 14 students from across faculties
- Compared plans across Canada
- Working with StudentCare, developed 2 options:
 - Option A (Compromise)
 - Augmenting services to keep price inline with inflation expectations
 - Increase
 - 6 % from \$566.67 to \$600.67
 - Small contribution to reserve fund
 - Dental
 - Reducing annual maximum (\$900 to \$800)
 - Still #1 in country
 - Reducing basic services coverage (70 % to 60 %)
 - Still in middle of the country, just below top tier (B+ grade)
 - Impact on plan savings is strong
 - Outcomes:
 - No longer necessary to offset student fees with reserve money
 - Encourage students to use the Health & Dental networks
 - [StudentCare networks](#)
 - Option B
 - Retain all services as is
 - Increase
 - 11 % from \$566.67 to \$629.00
 - Do not contribute or deplete the reserve fund
 - IF not A or B (worst case scenario)
 - Do not increase cost
 - Outcomes
 - Services will be greatly reduced in order to avoid completely depleting reserves

Christiana: Not just options provided by the board, but 14 graduate students over 3 meetings, looked through all data thought that Option A is the fairest solution for all graduate students.

Q: Do you have an idea of how many students max out their dental coverage?

A (StudentCare): \$700-800 most users.

A (Christiana): At 800 still number 1 in the country. What is the purpose of the plan? Student plan, all students have to be enrolled in, whether they want to or not, so with services, we want to keep as fair and broad as possible. Purpose of plan is not meant to be a premium plan, it is a basic plan.

A (Jason): Looked at impact, how many people is this going to impact? Minimal impact possible with maximal impact on price. Look at Blue Cross, paying way more money for less services. We are going to look at a lot of different options moving forward.

Q: Elaborate more on worst case scenario.

A (Jason): If both A and B fail, will keep same price but will be a drastic reduction in services.

Q: Background, what were the past two years' changes. Are we to expect this change every year? How does this look in 5 years?

A (Jason): When you look at 5-8 % increase for year, expectation is that insurance will go up; but we do not know. Will depend on a lot of external factors, including usage, changes in fees by province. StudentCare advocates on our behalf. Last year went up, but before was locked in a few years before that.

A (StudentCare): For example, external factors impact price of plan. There will be provincial changes (e.g. dental) that may allow this to change in the upcoming year, so hard to predict.

Q: Vote on A or B?

A (Kyle, Speaker): No, vote on A, then if A fails, voting on B.

Q: Dependents?

A (Jason): Coming up after this one

Q: We are not stuck with A forever?

A (Brit): Any changes to dental fees have to bring to GRC for approval.

BIRT the Graduate Representative Council approves the fee increase to the Graduate Health and Dental Plan by 6% to \$600.67 with the Health and Dental Committee recommended augmentation of services

Motioned/seconded

Discussion:

Q: When does this change come into effect?

A (StudentCare): May students and then registrations going forward.

Q: Putting into context, how much are we savings in plan and in relation to loss of service? Total dollars amount?

A (Christiana): Hard to say, because depends on usage of plan, because not every student uses maximum.

Q: Basically how does cost of A compare to B?

A: \$30 difference in fees to students.

Q: If we do not vote for A or B, how much will change be going forward?

A (Jason): Cannot predict.

A (Christiana): Services will be more expensive, but not because we lost them, just because the costs of services will likely go up.

A (Brit): We have to keep in mind, that we are voting for the entire graduate student body. We tried to strike a balance between not a huge fee increase and reducing services a bit. We are still top in terms of coverage. Use your network!

Q: Total coverage, price for dental care to coverage, but costs in other provinces are lower, so how can compare?

A (StudentCare): UofA was a close comparison, because of high costs of dental provincially.

Q: So not national?

A (StudentCare): Weighted UofA higher in decision making.

A (Christiana): Only way to combat that is for the fee to be that much higher. Not much we can do about differences in cost between provinces.

A (Jason): Tried to compare apple to apples, but were comparing apples to oranges in some cases.

Q: Emergency dental issue traveling abroad?

A (StudentCare): Dental accidents are under separate category, falls under the health category, and can include external blow to mouth.

Q: If we kept as is, what decrease in services could we expect?

A (Jason): Will be significant. We do not want to go there.

A (Christiana): Not pleasant. Not a good deal to pay more money and get less services.

Q: Inflation will continue, at what point will costs be way too expensive for costs of plan.

A (Brit): Compare across the country. Board and council will have to discuss. Alignment within province and across country.

A (Jason): StudentCare does a detailed survey, and info that comes back, we are in the high 90s satisfaction with plan usage. This is how insurance works.

Q: Coverage groups that offer 30% discount. Where are they?

A (Brit): Around campus, and around.

A (Jason): StudentCare website. Looking to expand

Opposed:27

Abstained:0

CARRIED

Christiana: We will be striking and health and dental plan committee early in may and encourage you to join. Thank you.

- Couples and Families (will change wording going forward)
 - Will decide at March GRC
 - Historically (did not make a ton of sense)
 - \$618.58 for couples

- \$618.60 for families
- What is looks like normally
 - Singles pay “X”
 - Couples pay 2*X
 - Families pay 3*X
- Currently
 - Couples are paying more (\$618.58 instead of \$566.67)
 - Single + 1 – paying way more than should
 - Families are paying less (\$830.46 instead of \$1,133.34)
 - Single +2+ - paying less
 - We did not want to increase this cost very much
 - Wanted to be conscious of this
 - We want ot eventually get in line, but did not want to do this all at once
- Dependents (for discussion)
 - 2018-2019 1 dependent
 - Keep rate of \$618.58
 - 2018-2019 2 or more dependents
 - increase by 10 % to \$913.51
 - OR, keep current fee structure as is and use reserve fund to offset
 - Aligns with 3-year plan outlined in 2017 to align the fee structure according to common practices

Q: No requirement?

A (Jason): No. Enroll directly with StudentCare. Important, allows for students, especially international students to be covered.

Q: Option A contributes a bit to reserve?

A (Jason): Yes, a bit. Allows us to keep cost increase lower because of reserve

Q: What are clear options?

A (Jason): No increase to 1 dependents. Increase 2 or more dependents or keep at current fee structure.

Q: What are the ratios of 1 dependent to 2 or more dependents

A (StudentCare): UofC more families than 1 dependent. 115 students with 2+ dependents enrolled and 75 with 1 dependent. These numbers vary by a handful every year. Not a huge impact in terms of total graduate students.

Q: Why not increase all?

A (Jason): Already increased 1 dependent previously. So are bringing up 2+ dependents to align with common practices.

A (Chrstiana): Already decided that we wanted to bring these prices to align with common practices. Wrong framework. Our school is unique, because we have this strange configuration of how much 2+ dependents should be. Short of just saying to these families that the price of the plan is going up a lot in one year, so we are just increasing incrementally over a number of years.

2018-2019 Draft Budget (VPFS, Christiana Manzocco) (see PowerPoint presentation) 7:20

- Highlights
 - Revenue changes
 - Re-investing interest income (best practice)
 - Budget based on no change in enrollment
 - Could have an increase in enrollment, but to be conservative, we ran numbers with no change in enrollment
 - Beverage pouring rights (allotted 35k)
 - New Coke agreement!
 - Fee increase of 0 %
 - Expenditure Changes
 - Less LDL budgeted loss (down to \$50k from \$67k)
 - Possible that will be less than that in year ahead
 - Three years ago, loss was \$200k
 - Reducing costs of goods and expenses
 - Minimum wage is going up
 - Impacting expenses, so being conservative with budget
 - Added permanent part-time researcher position
 - Decreased amortization and depreciation expense (down to \$35k from \$120k)
 - As moved building were able to write off a lot of capital
 - Increased volunteer appreciation budget
 - New award
 - Increased cyber insurance (on recommendation from auditor) to \$11k
 - Increased membership and subscriptions (e.g. strategic and work planning software) by \$6k
 - Budgeted donation expense (Campus Food Bank) \$8k
 - New line item for donations year after year

Q: Mac Hall? SU? Does this affect LDL?

A (Brit): SU was suing UofC for ownership of Mac Hall. Solved outside of court. Came up with a user's right agreement. Started charging consumables for rent, treated like

everything else. In this new agreement, we are treated as a user with rights. For life of building, we can only be charged for consumables. Recommendation from both SU and UofC. Working hard to repair relationships with SU.

President's Report (Brit Paris) (see PowerPoint presentation) 7:37

- Details in packages, read them!
- CA Negotiations
- Annual Survey
 - Stay tuned!
- Graduate Student Groups
 - Register now to be eligible for start-up grants!

Vice-President (Academic) Report (Negar Mohammadi) (see PowerPoint presentation) 7:37

- Upcoming Awards
 - IDEA
- Open Education Week

Vice-President (External) Report (Willem Klumpenhower) (see PowerPoint presentation) 7:38

- ab-GPAC
 - AGM held February 5
- Labour Relations
 - CA negotiations started
 - Labour relations committee have served the University notice regarding collective agreement
 - Clarification, CA does not cover tuition or fees, just labour contracts
 - Bylaw changes sent to Labour Relations Board
 - Labour Relations Pilot Committee's work continues
 - Union at end of April

Vice-President (Student Life) Report (Taha Afyouni) (see PowerPoint presentation) 7:39

- Volunteer Appreciate Party
- Volleyball Tournament
- FGS/GSA Photo Competition

Vice-President (Finance & Services) Report (Christiana Manzocco) (see Power Point presentation) 7:39

- Campus as Learning Lab (LDL)
 - SUST 401 – presentations delivered
- QM Approvals sent out—Congrats!
- Hope you applied for the GSA Sustainability Award!

Question Period 7:39

Q: Last year, mentioned that wanted to get GRC more engaged, how have you done this, what has changed?

A (Brit): Make GRC a lot less anonymous. Evaluating this kind of process is difficult. Increased buzz in the room. Counting number of people at LDL, but have not had the past few months, so going forward? There has been more discussion around motions. Good job! Role is as representatives, so represent your DGA and all students.

A (Taha): Last month (Jan) highest turnout of GRC!

Q: How can you ensure that GRC reps are doing their due diligence so that reps are communicating to their students and getting feedback?

A (Brit): Added in more support for DGAs. Feedback on bylaws. GRC digest. First part was getting the reps involved.

A (Willem): Part of this is that you have a responsibility to do that. How much involvement should the board have?

Q: Most of us are employees of the UofC? Most companies contribute to cost of health plan for employees? Are we talking to UofC about that? Are we advocating for more nationalized coverage of health coverage in general?

A (Willem): A lot of graduate students are on temporary contracts or not at all. Majority of graduate students are not employed at any time. CA related. Look at labour relations committee, good union based question. Not something we are going to add to this collective agreement, but could build momentum on. Interesting point.

A (Brit): Not employed full-time, but short term contracts. Contributes to EB fund, part of negotiations with CA.

Q: We are union-ish, are we advocating for better national healthcare coverage or policy?

A (Willem): priority on ab-GPAC before, but no clear picture across CARIs. Very different structurally across schools. Has been talked about. Encourage you to talk to new VP External.

Q: We have a lot of MDs that can supervise MSc and PhD students, but often not great at supervising student.

A (Alya, CFD Chair): New policy from GSE.

A (Brit): On radar. Super important.

A (Willem): Supervisors can get privileges but hard to take away.

Q: If you want to supervise PhD students, should have a PhD!

DGA Period 7:49

OER week next week!

Other Business 7:50

- GRCI
 - GRCI Award
 - One more workshop
 - Conflict resolution
 - Should definitely come!
- Elections! Remember to vote!

Adjournment of Open Session 7:55

Moved/seconded

Opposed:0

Abstained:0

CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 7:55