

Brit Paris

GSA President

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March 20, 2019 to April 22, 2019

As this is my final report as your GSA President, I want to say thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve our community. Together, we have enhanced the graduate student experience and I will keep advocating for graduate students wherever and whenever I can.

Strategic Plan Pillars

As President, part of my job is to ensure the organization is moving forward in accordance with the strategic plan. The GSA's 3-year strategic plan (2016-2019), *Peer Beyond*, can be found [here](#).

Improving the Association (Resilience)

Improve Governance Processes and Procedures – 2018-2019 Goal

- Develop and implement policy review timeline and processes
- Develop and implement DGA Bylaw approval processes

Update:

- Privacy Policy has been approved by the Board and adopted by the association.
- Governance committee reviewed the bylaws of 31 DGAs this year. This is incredible progress and the vast majority of DGAs have been receptive to suggested changes to come into alignment with GSA policy. The next governance committee will need to work on how to hold DGAs accountable when they do not follow their own bylaws. Currently we are bringing it to the attention of the DGA President and strongly urging compliance. Event funding may be withheld if DGAs are not in good standing with the GSA, but this needs to be clarified and consistently communicated.

Hire new Executive Director

- It is my pleasure to announce that the new Executive Director of the GSA is Danielle Abbott! Danielle previously served the GSA in the role of Director of Finance and Operations and has been supporting the GSA as interim ED since February 2019. We are very excited to continue working with Danielle in this new capacity.

Improving Student Engagement

Improve the Quality Money Program – 2018-2019 Goal

- Increase student applications
- Increase quality of applications
- Increase impact of applications
- Improve tracking of funded projects

Update:

- This year we were able to increase the number of QM applications received and now we'll need to work on measuring the impact of the funded project.
- Annual report has been sent to the Provost's office and we are now awaiting a response.

Emergency Bursaries

- Applications open and ongoing. Please let people know about this valuable service!
<https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/financial-support/bursaries/>

Improving Student Representation (Organizational Learning)**Establish Labour Relations Committee – 2018-2019 Goal**

- Increase autonomy of committee from the Board
- Increase student representation

Update:

- Lunch and Learns have been delivered in 5 DGAs so far with great attendance! These will be continuing throughout the summer and ramping up in the fall as new students arrive on campus.

Renew Strategic Plan – 2018-2019 Goal

- Create a strategic plan to guide the organization to sustainable growth from 2019 through to 2022.

Update:

- The Board has approved the 2019-2022 strategic plan! This will be presented at the April 30, 2019 meeting!

Other Accomplishments

As I've been in this role for 2 years, I'm going to list what I've accomplished over the entirety of my roll.

- Who is a graduate student? (Released video project that was started by previous President, Sam Hossack)
- Opened That Grad Space in Crowsnest Hall (with VPSLs)
- Tuition Framework released by provincial government that aligned with ab-GPAC asks (with VP Externals)
- Engaged in Federal advocacy efforts and developed a plan that allowed for membership in CASA (with VP Externals)
- Improved access to QM through redevelopment of QM Pillars and application form
- Improved GSA responsiveness by hiring a part-time researcher (with ED)
- Developed a budget that allowed for hiring a full-time researcher, with policy and advocacy duties, to come on board in summer 2019 (with VPFS)
- Reduced number of GSA committees and administrative burden on VPSL
- Developed and implemented a framework for Graduate Student Groups (grad clubs)

- Improved the efficiency and engagement of GRC meetings
- Negotiated an increase to Emergency Bursary Funding
- Joined Calgary Student Alliance (idea began with VP External in 2017, but was picked up in 2018 by SAITSA and SAMRU)
- Improved relations between the GSA and SU (started by previous President, Sam Hossack)
- Chaired the strategic planning committee leading to the adoption of a new strategic plan
- Chaired the search committee for a new Executive Director

Total Hours

Meetings: 98

Other: 103

Total: 201

Average per week: 45

Meetings Attended

Meeting name	Day of the Week	Date
CASA AGM	Wednesday	March 20
Travel Home	Thursday	March 21
BOG Dinner	Thursday	March 21
BOG	Friday	March 22
Transition 1 on 1 with Mohammad	Friday	March 22
GSA Strategic Plan Committee	Friday	March 22
ED Interviews	Monday	March 25
TI Scholar Adjudication	Monday	March 25
TI Scholar Adjudication	Tuesday	March 26
1 on 1 Diane Kenyon	Tuesday	March 26
Graduate Representative Council	Tuesday	March 26
ED Search	Wednesday	March 27
Lunch with Student Experience team	Wednesday	March 27
GSA Strategic Plan Committee	Wednesday	March 27
Ab-GPAC BOD meeting	Thursday	March 28
Review speaking notes - Celebration of Teaching	Thursday	March 28
FGS Exec Committee	Thursday	March 28
ED Search	Friday	March 29
ED Search	Monday	April 1
ED Search	Monday	April 1

Graduate College Oversight Committee	Monday	April 1
Consultation with QM recipient	Tuesday	April 2
TI Celebration of Teaching	Tuesday	April 2
EDU Director Search	Friday	April 5
Forum moderating discussion	Friday	April 5
President's Installation	Monday	April 8
President's Installation Dinner	Monday	April 8
GSA Strategic Plan Committee	Tuesday	April 9
Election Forum Moderation	Tuesday	April 9
Ab-GPAC Governance Committee	Wednesday	April 10
BOD Meeting	Thursday	April 11
GSA Strategic Plan Committee	Thursday	April 11
Grad College Head Search	Thursday	April 11
GradFest	Friday	April 12
Ab-GPAC Transition	Saturday	April 13
GSA Strategic Plan Committee	Monday	April 15
LRC Lunch & Learn - ARTS	Monday	April 15
APPC	Monday	April 15
President's Leadership Award Adjudication	Tuesday	April 16
Farewell for Events Team	Wednesday	April 17
1:1 FGS Dean	Wednesday	April 17
BOD	Thursday	April 18
By-Election All Candidates Meeting	Thursday	April 18
GFC	Thursday	April 18
Meeting with Residence to discuss changes to rent payments	Thursday	April 18
EDU Director Search	Monday	April 22

Elena Favaro
Vice President Academic
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21 March – 22 April 22, 2019

Strategic Plan Pillars

As Vice President Academic, I'm committed to ensuring that the GSA's Strategic Plan is the guiding document when developing program, undertaking projects, or participating in initiatives as a representative of the Graduate Student population. The GSA's 3-year strategic plan (2016-2019), *Peer Beyond*, can be found [here](#). Our new strategic plan will be coming shortly.

Update on 2018-2019 Goals

Improve access to support during Academic Crises

- Improve understanding of support available to students in Academic Crisis by April 2019, through developing resources that tell students where to turn for help through outreach (multimedia, in-person, social media, partnerships with groups on campus [ie. SU Wellness center, Ombuds, Faculty of Graduate Studies]).

Update:

- The Wellness Centre developed a series of educational materials to this effect, releasing them early in the spring term. I turned my attention to building or strengthening partnerships with student advocacy and wellness groups on campus. For example, we offered graduate-specific Bystander Intervention Training. I also advocated for students during policy development and reviews in FGS, many of which have already taken effect.
- I also helped more than 30 students navigate challenging academic times by providing support (setting up and attending meetings) and guidance. If I was not able to help, they were directed to faculties or facilities on campus that could.

Improve the Quality Money Program

- Improve fiscal accountability and accessibility by September 2018 through a comprehensive review and renewal of the current program, including updating handbook, application form, evaluation rubric, and reporting methods.

Update:

- This year, we saw an increase in QM applications. We have ended our multi-year QM projects and have clarified QM ToRs to ensure the success of the applications we receive.

Increase Awareness of Awards Program

- Increase awareness of awards program by April 2019, through a marketing and communications plan including social media and video projects.

Update:

- We saw more than double the PDG applications in 2018-2019 (210 applications) over 2017-2018 (100). There were fewer Bursary applications this year (112 applications) than last year (179 applications)
- Overall, we funded 95 PDGs (67,981.30\$) and 27 Bursaries (39,822\$). I successfully lobbied for increased funding for PDGs and Bursaries, which allowed us to fund more applications than previously anticipated.
 - Last year, 27 Bursaries were successful (57,822 with a QM top-up) and 71 PDGs were successful (67,981.30\$).

Improving the Association (Resilience)

GSA Elections and Transition of New Board of Directors (BoD)

- GSA by-elections for VPA (and VPSL) will occur on the night of GRC. I am committed to transitioning the new VPA, and the new Board, in May.

Awards Committee Chair and Vice-Chair Opportunities

- The position of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Awards Committee are open for applications.

Organizational Learning

- I continue to sit on the USRI Working group. As the sole Grad student on this working group, I have advocated on behalf of the graduate student as a student enrolled in a course and as a TA in a lab/tutorial.

Total Hours

Total: 48.5

Meetings Attended

Meeting name	Day of the Week	Date
GSA Executive Director Search	Multiple days	
Awards Committee meeting	Tuesday	26 March
SES Leadership and Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning lunch meeting	Wednesday	27 March
GAPS	Wednesday	27 March
Board Meeting	Thursday	28 March
Confidential meeting with Students	Thursday	28 March
GFC Exec	Tuesday	2 April
Board Meeting	Thursday	4 April
Meeting with Prospective VPA	Tuesday	9 April
Meeting with Prospective VPA	Wednesday	10 April
Meeting with Prospective VPA	Tuesday	16 April
All Candidates meeting	Thursday	18 April

Marcela Lopes
GSA VP External
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to March 19th, 2019 to April 22nd, 2019

Strategic Plan Pillars

As the Vice President External, part of my job is to ensure the organization is moving forward in accordance with the strategic plan. The GSA's 3-year strategic plan (2016-2019), *Peer Beyond*, can be found [here](#).

At the beginning of my term in May, 2018 I have presented my 2018-2019 goals. I developed metrics for each one of them, as follows.

GOAL #1: Increase awareness of graduate student issues

Increase advocacy efforts

- ab-GPAC: Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council
Through our provincial council we had over 15 meetings with Members of the Legislative Assembly, stakeholders, and the Minister of Advanced Education. We presented a document with research from previous years and the research developed this year (more information below).
- CASA: Canadian Alliance of Students Associations
At its core, CASA advocates on behalf of post-secondary students to the federal government. CASA advocates for students using policy development and research, awareness campaigns, government relations, and partnerships with other stakeholders.
CASA helped us to push our federal advocacy efforts. Being observer members of this Alliance, we advocated to the federal government on many issues related to graduate school, including but not limited to research scholarships, work integrated learning, international student challenges, and graduate students grants.

Increase our own understanding of issues

We developed multiple consultation within the university during the past year. Consultations included, but were not limited to student housing, parking, professional development, relationships within unbalanced power relationships (ex: student – supervisor), public transit, mental health on campus.

Besides the above-mentioned consultation, we were able to develop research and share best practices with some groups.

- ab-GPAC:

The board of directors developed two advocacy policies during the past year, one concerning tuition and fees, and the other concerning post-graduation employment. We also worked on how to alleviate the barriers for indigenous students during grad school, this research will be continued during the next year. The tuition and fees policy was reflected on Bill 19 presented by the provincial government last October. The GSA has been advocating for tuition regulation for international and domestic students during, at least, the past three years. Bill 19 legislates domestic tuition by capping it to the consumer price index (CPI). There is a piece from Bill 19 that includes predictability to international tuition. We considered Bill 19 as a win to all students.

- ThinkGRAD:

ThinkGRAD is a group composed by graduate students' associations across the country. The group meets twice a year to share best practices. During the discussion, it was possible to realize that our GSA provides multiple types of support to graduate students that it not seen anywhere else, such as our volunteer recruitment program, financial assistance to students facing challenges, events to promote and social interactions, and so on. The group also developed research on international student's main issues during grad school. The research shows that most of the issues students face at UCalgary, they also face at other post-secondary institutions.

- CASA:

This year, CASA and the Quebec Student Union develop research on graduate students that showed that the amount of funds from federal agencies dedicated to student scholarships decreased over the past few years. The Federal Budget for 2019-2020 showed that \$114 million over the next five years will be dedicated to create over 500 new master's and doctoral level awards and scholarships.

GOAL #2: Increase awareness of the University of Calgary Graduate Students' Association

Increase GSA's exposure to federal government

This year, the UCalgary GSA attended the CASA Advocacy Week. During two days last November in Ottawa, we were able to present CASA's priorities to several stakeholders, members of parliament, and senators. I had a total of eight meetings.

The GSA was also invited by the UCalgary's Vice President Relations, Diane Kenyon, to attend a couple of events related to the federal government. Brit Paris attended to an event with the Prime Minister, and I attended the budget release with the Minister of Finances.

Increase GSA's exposure to other associations

During the last couple of years our GSA developed multiple relationships with other students' associations, especially with GSA across Alberta and the UCalgary Student Union. This year, we were able to develop relationships with many other associations.

- CASA: attending the four CASA conferences over the last year our GSA was exposed to over 23 students' associations from across Canada.
- ThinkGRAD: During the ThinkGRAD summer meeting, I met student leaders from many GSAs across the country, including from the universities of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, MacMaster, Sherbrook, and Montreal.
- CSA: As members of the Calgary Student Alliance, we now have monthly meetings with many student associations from our city. The members are the student associations from SAIT, UCalgary, Mount Royal University, Bow Valley College, and Alberta University of Arts.

Ongoing Committees

- Tuition and Fees Consultation Committee
- Senate Engagement Committee
 - Mentorship working group
 - Lecture of a lifetime working group
- Senate Strategic Plan Working Group
 - Create a new Strategic Plan for UCalgary Senate
- ab-GPAC governance committee
- CASA graduate committee
- GSA Strategic Planning
- GSA Executive Director Search
- Task Force on Relationships

Total Hours

Meetings: 63 hours

Other: 75 hours (including events and travel)

Total: 138 hours

Average per week: 27.6 hours

Meetings Attended

Meeting name	Day of the Week	Date
CASA observer members roundtable	Thursday	March 21
Lunch - Minister of Finances presentation (Budget 2019/2020)	Monday	March 25
Bermuda Shorts Day logistics	Monday	March 25
Sanate Engagement committee	Tuesday	March 26
Graduate Representative Council Meeting w/ a potential candidate for External relations committee chair	Tuesday	March 26
Professional Development meeting with Career Services and MyGradSkills	Wednesday	March 27
GSA Executive Director Search	Wednesday	March 27
Lunch with student experience team	Wednesday	March 27
GSA Strategic Planning	Wednesday	March 27
Board Meetings	Thursday	March 28
Ab-GPAC Board meeting	Thursday	March 28
Vice President Research Search	Friday	March 29
GSA Executive Director Search	Friday	March 29
GSA Executive Director Search	Monday	April 1
1:1 w/ Nicole	Monday	April 1
GSA Executive Director Search	Monday	April 1
GSA Strategic Planning	Tuesday	April 2
Interviews - External Advocacy committee	Thursday	April 4
Forum - Provincial election	Thursday	April 4
One-on-ones With Mina and Elena	Thursday	April 4
Faculty of Graduate Studies Council	Thursday	April 4
Forum - provincial election	Friday	April 5
Building Bridges Booth	Monday	April 8
Forum - provincial election	Monday	April 8
Meeting w/ external relations committee chair	Tuesday	April 9
GSA strategic planning	Tuesday	April 9
Ab-GPAC Governance committee	Wednesday	April 10
GSA Executive Director Search	Thursday	April 11
Calgary regional mental health network	Friday	April 12
GSA Strategic planning	Monday	April 15
1:1 with ab-GPAC ED and chair	Monday	April 15

Task Force on relationships	Tuesday	April 16
Board Meeting	Thursday	April 18
GSA Election meeting	Thursday	April 18
General Faculties Council	Thursday	April 18
Meeting w/ Ancillary Services	Thursday	April 18

Mina Iskander
Vice President Student Life
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March 20 to April 19, 2019

2018-2019 Goals

Strategic Plan Pillars

As Vice President Student Life, I am committed to ensure that all aspects of my portfolio are in alignment with the GSA's strategic plan. The GSA's 3-year strategic plan (2016-2019), *Peer Beyond*, can be found [here](#).

Improving the Association (Resilience)

Provide better DGA support

- I have worked with several new DGA executives to strengthen their understanding of their roles as student leaders and to facilitate the transition process.
- I have worked on streamlining the logistics of events booking and event grants and support (in collaboration with the governance coordinator). Therefore, for a DGA/GSG to organize an event, all they need to do is fill out one form on our website that includes everything they need including venue booking.

Secure agreements for the continuing benefit of our students

- I have negotiated and signed our agreement with the conference and events management to secure 120 room bookings for the whole GSA per month – including DGAs and GSGs. This number is to be managed by CEM so we can offer more room bookings for active DGAs and GSGs.
- We have the Com/media agreement signed and it is available online. Finally!

Implement a new collaborative structure for student experience committees

- This year, based on recommendations from the previous Board, I have a new structure of the student experience committees. The new structure contains one main committee: Student Experience and Events Committee and this committee includes four subcommittees: Community Engagement and Events, Gender and Sexuality Alliance, Mental Health and Wellness and Newcomers and International Students. This new structure ensures a collaborative approach in all student experience aspects.

Update:

- The committee has finalized their activities for this academic year with a great success. Call for committee chairs for the new academic year 2019-2020 is getting out soon. Keep an eye on the GSA newsletter.

Improving Student Engagement

Provide on-ground communication

- This year, in collaboration with the Community Engagement and Events (CEE) Subcommittee, we established a new on-ground communication program called *Building Bridges*. GSA Quality Money funds this project. Simply, each month we have a booth in specific places on campus providing information about a specific topic with the help of one executive member, volunteers from CEE and the Chair of CEE.

That Grad Space

- Space now open! See <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/services/thatgradspace/> for more information

Support our remote campuses

- I am communicating with student representatives from Foothills campus and Downtown campus to host social events there in addition to the regular events that have been happening in Foothills previously.

Organizational Learning

None this time.

Other Accomplishments

- We booked most of the summer activities already for the new VPSL to have things arranged for the first couple of months while they are still transitioning.
- This year the events coordinators and I worked really hard to provide a more attractive setup of events, we are very happy to announce that attendance, and student satisfaction this year is very high. GradFest 8 had more than 300 people attending which is a record-breaking number. Thank you everyone who helped me to have this successful year. More details in terms of statistics will be presented in the meeting.

FYI & Highlights

- During the spring/summer you can enjoy lots of events that are already booked and will be up for sale soon like: Lake Louise trip, Kayaking, Canoeing, Rafting (we only provide rental vouchers), mountain biking and much more. If you read this please come to GRC wearing the Black T-Shirt that we give away in the office for #gradimpact and you will win a GSA swag item of your choice the very next day. Please keep your eye on the newsletter because that's how we tell you about what we offer

Total Hours

Meetings: 43
Events: 12
Other: 25
Total: 80
Average per week: 20

Meetings Attended

Meeting name	Day of the Week	Date
SEEC Chairs meeting	Wednesday	March 19
Events Weekly meeting	Monday	March 25
GRC	Tuesday	March 26
Lunch with SES leadership	Wednesday	March 27
Board Meeting	Thursday	March 28
GRC Make-up for SEDV	Thursday	March 28
ED search interviews	Friday	March 29
Volunteer Appreciation Night	Saturday	March 30
Events Weekly meeting	Monday	April 1
Neighbourhood Task Force	Tuesday	April 2
Meeting with Thao and Lina	Wednesday	April 3
Chair for external advocacy interviews	Thursday	April 4
FGS Council	Thursday	April 4
Awards Gala	Thursday	April 4
Events Weekly meeting	Monday	April 8
Board Meeting	Thursday	April 11
GradFest	Friday	April 12
Meeting with Hormoz Izadi (Volunteer)	Tuesday	April 16
Farwell Party for Laura and Jaime	Wednesday	April 17
Board Meeting	Thursday	April 18
By-election all candidate meeting	Thursday	April 18
General Faculties Council	Thursday	April 18
Meeting with Residence Services	Thursday	April 18

Mohammad Mansouri
Vice President Finance and Services
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March 17, 2019 to April 22, 2019

Strategic Plan Pillars

As Vice President Finance and Services, my activities and undertaken projects must be in alignment with the GSA's Strategic Plan. The GSA's 3-year strategic plan (2016-2019), *Peer Beyond*, can be found [here](#).

Improving the Association (Resilience)

Health and Dental plan

- As a VP Finance and Services, I usually receive daily emails from graduate students regarding the health and dental plan. I reply to all emails in less than 24 hours, usually two hours.

Improve Health and Dental Plan - 2018-2019 goal

- Define a timeline
- Study the current plan
- Involve students as much as possible
- Involve experts
- Define criteria
- RFP process and call for proposal
- Select the best option
- Perform transition

Update:

The highlight achievement of this project can be summarized in three categories as follows:

- **Fee:** The Health and Dental Fee decrease from \$600.67 to \$590.67 for individual students
- **Coverage:** In spite of decreasing the Fee, the Health and Dental plan coverage will increase, which is great. The potential coverage enhancement is in the following parts
 - Dental
 - Psychology
 - Drug maximums
- **Professional development and organizational learning:** Several GSA staffs including ED and HR was involved in this process. This involvement increases their knowledge in various aspects of health and Dental plan. This helps GSA to address the potential uncertainty in the GSA contract with Studentcare. The new contract will lead to more transparency in the annual report that GSA will receive from Studentcare. The contract even has considered the punishment for Studentcare if they fail to fulfill their obligations.

Although the GSA retained with Studentcare as TPA, new contract will address problems with Studentcare in past such as transparency and accountability. This is the indirect benefit of RFP.

Finance Standing Committee

- The committee will have a monthly meeting to review the income statement of GSA & LDL.
- The committee will review GSA investment policy

Continue to Improve LDL performance-2018-2019 goal

- Increase the benefits
- Optimum Hours of operation
- Manage food costs for highest possible revenue
- Manage labour expenditures for highest possible revenue
- Improve sustainability

Update:

Fortunately, LDL had a good trend in the last three years in the term of the net income. I tried to keep this trend. The achievements can be categorized as follows:

- **Net income:** LDL loses was \$25,353, which is \$1,583 more than 2017/18. Although loses is more than last year, it is because of circumstances happen in the last years as follows:
 - Food waste because of LDL cooler fail: The food that has been stored in the cooler were spoiled
 - Cooler change
 - Fire alarm at LDL: Because of a fire alarm, all customers left the LDL without paying their bills
 - Ice machine
- **Labour expenditures:** The Labour Ratio in this fiscal year is 49%. This is 3% better than Labour Ratio in previous years
- **GOGS Ratio:** The GOGS Ratio in this is 34.66%. In comparison with the previous year, the GOGS is around 4% better. This is also a good achievement for LDL

Improving Student Engagement

Sustainability Committee

- The Third workshop of the committee held on March 21, 2018.
- The workshop taught to make toothpaste in a sustainable way. A licensed coach guided this workshop.
- The committee organized three workshop during 2018/19, which is a great record
- The committee started and continued the collaboration with internal and external organization including office of sustainability and student on sustainability during 2018/19.

Health and Dental Advisory Committee

- The committee was involved in RFP process for H&D plan

Improving Student Representation (Organizational Learning)

None at this time

Other Accomplishments

- Review the investment policy in collaboration with Finance standing Committee

FYI & Highlights

Health and Dental Plan

- Please don't hesitate to email me if you have any questions, concerns, or feedback regarding Health and Dental Plan.

Total Hours

Meeting: 51

Others: 49

Total: 100 hours

Average per week: 20 hours

Notes:

Meetings Attended

Meeting name	Day	Date
2019 Sustainability Awards ceremony	Tuesday	March 19
Volunteer appreciation dinner with H&D advisory Committee	Wednesday	March 20
Meeting with Studentcare	Wednesday	March 20
FGS policy Committee	Thursday	March 21
Board of Governors Meeting	Friday	March 22
GSA Strategic Planning	Friday	March 22
Finance Standing Committee	Friday	March 22
ED interview	Monday	March 25
Transition Meeting with Brit	Monday	March 25
Campus and Facilities Development Subcommittee	Tuesday	March 26
GRC	Tuesday	March 26
ED search interview	Wednesday	March 27
GSA Executive, SES Senior leadership team and vice provost	Wednesday	March 27
GSA Strategic Planning	Wednesday	March 27
GSA board meeting	Thursday	March 28
Team Charter meeting	Thursday	March 28

APPC	Monday	April 15
Meeting with ED	Wednesday	April 17
Board meeting	Thursday	April 18
By-election all candidates meeting	Thursday	April 18
GFC	Thursday	April 18
Meeting with co-chair of APPC	Thursday	April 22