



**GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
GRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, March 26, 2019, 5:30 PM
HSC Theatre 1, Foothills**

Attendees:

Brit Paris, President
 Marcela Lopes, VP External
 Mina Iskander, VP Student Life
 Mohammad Mansouri, VP Finances & Services
 Kyle McCallum, Speaker
 Haley Vecchiarelli, Clerk

Quorum

Biochemistry and Molecular Biology DGA (BMBDGA)	Laura Mak
	Megha Murali
Biological Sciences Graduate Students Association (BGSA)	Nicolas Fournier
	Kyle McDade
Biomedical Engineering (BMEG)	Melina Varguez Rie
Biomedical Technology GSA	Sean Rah
Cardiovascular & Respiratory Science Student Association	Loryn Bohne
Chemical & Petroleum Engineering Graduate Students Association	Mailad Ahmadi Khoshooe
Chemistry Graduate Students Association	Duncan Brownsey
	Natasha Garner
	Thomas Welsh
Civil Engineering Graduate Society (CEGS)	Hiva Jalilzadeh
	Sadra Azizi
Classics and Religion DGA (CLARE)	Brittany DeMone
	Justin Nadeau
Communication Film & Media DGA (CMFDGA)	

Community Health Sciences Student Executives (CHSSE)	Bria Mele
	Sophie Hu
	Sarah Lee
Computer Science	Behnam Ousat
Council of Foothills (CFD)	Katie Greene
	Rachel Kratofil
Doctoral Association for Students of Haskayne (DASH)	Steven Granger
	Ke Wang
Economics Graduate Association	Abraham Sucedo Cepeda
	Atena
Electrical and Computer Engineering GSA (ECEG)	Fatameh S.
English Department Graduate Association (EDGA)	Ben Groh
	Hong Nguyen-Sears
Environmental Design Students Association (EVDSSA)	Rosemary Joseph
	Alexander Mayhew
Gastrointestinal Graduate Students Association	Fernando Vicentini
Geography Graduate Students Association (GeoGSA)	Sarah St. Germain
	Kyle Plotsky
Geomatics Graduate Group (G ³)	Sandra Simeonova
	Rudrigo Silva
Graduate Anthropology and Archaeology Students Association (GAASA)	Ally King
	Cynthia Fasola
Graduate Association of Geology & Geophysics (GAGGS)	None
Graduate Engineering Students Consortium (GESC)	Hiva Jalilzadeh
	Annamaris Olmo-Velazquez
Graduate Programs in Education Students Association (GPESA)	

Graduate University of Calgary Mathematics Society (GUMS)	Keira Gunn
	Ryan Morril
Haskayne MBA Society	Ania Karzynska
History Graduate Students Union (HGSU)	Nick Gillen
	Shawn Brackett
Hotchkiss Brain Institute Trainee Organization (HBITO)	Christopher Duszynski
	Michael McLaren
Immunology Graduate Association (IGA)	Amanda Zucoloto
Kinesiology Graduate Students Association (KGSA)	Emily Macphail
	Simon Barrick
Linguistics Graduate Students Association - A Higher Clause	Merion Hodgson
	Elias Abdulluhnejad
Masters of Pathologists' Assistant GSA (MPATH)	Megan Maitland
Masters of Public Policy Students Association (MPPSA)	
Mechanical Engineering Graduate Students Association (MEGSA)	Annamaris Olmo-Velazquez
Medical Science Graduate Students Association (MDSC-SA)	Chidera Nwaroh
	Jodi Rattner
Microbiology & Infectious Diseases GSA (MIDGSA)	Leah Hohman
	Keith Lau
Nursing Graduate Students Association (NGSA)	Mia Ortiz
Philosophy Graduate Students Association	Lara Roth
Physics & Astronomy Dep Grad Association (PHAS DGA)	Taylor Cameron
Political Science Graduate Student Association (PSGSA)	Taruneek Kapoor
	Robert Clifton
Psychology Graduate Students Association (PGSA)	Brooke Russell
	Chelsea Fitzpatrick

School of Creative and Performing Arts Graduate Society	Abdullah Safa Soydan
Sociology Graduate Students' Caucus (SGSC)	Lindsay Kokaritis
	Alex Van Olm
Strategic Studies Students Consortium (S3C)	John Reyes
Sustainable Energy Development (SEDV)	Cn
Veterinary Medicine Grad Students Association (VMGSA)	Diego Nobrega
Vox Condiscipulum (French, Italian, Spanish)	Caitlin Ryan
	Alba fano Trabanco

GRC Meeting Minutes

Meeting Began 17:30

Roll Call 17:30

Territorial Acknowledgement 17:34

Brit: You may have noticed that we are not doing a territorial acknowledgement during every meeting anymore. We do not want it to become rote but will be sharing what reconciliation means to me. Reconciliation means that we have welcoming spaces for all and moving beyond the current state of rampant racism, sexism, etc. By opening spaces to the rightful indigenous owners of this land, I hope we are opening spaces to all. I want to create a campus community where all feel welcome and all feel at ease no matter where you're from or god you do or do not worship. As a privileged woman in a position of leadership, it is my responsibility to stand up for reconciliation, for respect and honour for all peoples and I hope you will all join me in that mission, where people want to study here because how they are welcome here.

Approval of Agenda 17:37

Motioned/seconded
 Opposed:0
 Abstained:0
 CARRIED

Approval of January 2019 GRC Minutes 17:37

Motioned/seconded

Opposed:0
Abstained:1
CARRIED

Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (Victoria Schindler, Director at Large of CASA; and Annie Sherry, Member Relations Operator) 17:38

Next GRC we will be voting on whether to become members of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA), so we have a presentation from a few members of CASA.

- About CASA
 - Member-driven
 - Created in 1995
 - Collective of student unions and student associations that represents and defends member's interest to the federal government
 - Registered non-for-profit with 23 student government members, representing:
 - 280,000 students
 - 350,000 students through partnership with Quebec partnership
 - Represents undergrad, graduate and college + polytechnic associations
 - Democratic, member-driven organization that promotes affordable, accessible, innovative post-secondary education of the highest quality
- Organizational Structure
 - CASA's Student Leadership — The Membership
 - Delegates are student leaders from member organizations
 - Primary and secondary delegates from almost all student groups
 - Delegates are responsible for electing 7 Board of Directors (BoD) members
 - Members have control over organization (operational governance)
 - CASA's Working Bodies — Committees
 - Committees
 - National Advocacy Committee
 - Federal Policy Committee
 - Graduate Committee
 - Will be forming an advisory group
 - Group will review anything concerning graduate students
 - Other committees will have a guaranteed spot for graduate students
 - Trades and Technology Committee
 - Will be forming an advisory group
 - Membership Relations Committee

- Governance and Internal Review Committee
 - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- All committees:
 - Are made up delegates from members
 - Are connected through BoD through a Board Representative
 - Are responsible for developing a working plan with BoD
 - Report to membership
- CASA — UEQ (Quebec) Partnership
 - Union Étudiante du Québec
 - 8 student associations
 - 79,000 graduate and undergraduate students
 - Partnership
 - May 2017-May 2019, currently renegotiating partnership
 - CASA only national group to represent Quebec students
 - Attend each group's conferences
 - No voting rights in other organization
- Federal Government and Post-Secondary
 - Post-Secondary (PSE) Advocacy
 - There are many groups in Canada that present to government on behalf of postsecondary stakeholders
 - Federal Role in PSE
 - \$20 billion a year in support of PSE
 - Citizenship and Immigration Canada
 - Resident Visas for International Students
 - Permanent residency for grads
 - Employment and Social Development Canada
 - Canada Student Loans Program
 - Canada Student Grants
 - Canada Social Transfer
 - Youth Unemployment
 - Global Affairs Canada
 - International Student Visas
 - Study Abroad
 - Finance
 - Statistics Canada
 - Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
 - Elections Canada
 - Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

- NSERC, SSHRC
 - Health Canada
 - Mental Health
 - CIHR
 - Advocacy at CASA
 - Media Engagement
 - Partnerships
 - UEQ
 - Mental Health Commission of Canada
 - Apathy is Boring
 - Consultations
 - Campaigns
 - Get Out the Vote (GOTV) (2015 Federal Election)
 - CASA provided training, technical infrastructure, support
 - 42,000 students pledged to vote
 - StudentsLetsAct
 - Student-led mental health campaign to advocate for improved financial support for student mental health in Canada
 - CASA partnered with Mental Health Commission of Canada to help develop a post-secondary standard on mental health
 - Meetings
 - MP, Senators, PSE stakeholders
 - Generally occur in November, but changing this year because of Federal Election
 - Research
 - Member driven research into policy papers
- A Year With CASA (2019-2020)
 - Due to Federal Election, yearly structure is somewhat changing
 - Foundations Conference in May
 - Student leaders go to Ottawa
 - GOTV Campaign Regional Conferences in August
 - Policy and Strategy Conference in November (normally in July)
 - Supercon (Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Advocacy Week) in February (after new government is elected) (normally Advocacy week is in October/November and AGM is in March)
- Record of Success
 - CASA asks have a history of making it into the federal budget regardless of government

- 2016-2018
 - Fixed Rate Contribution and abolition of work assessment
 - Inclusion of Canadian PSE Experience in Express Entry Assessment
 - Bill C-33 and making it easier for students to vote
 - Investment of \$90 million in Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP)
 - Elimination of unpaid internships in federally regulated sectors
- 2016 Budget
 - \$141 million allocation to tri-council granting agencies, the highest amount in annual funding for research in over a decade
- 2017 Budget
 - Creation of 25 research chair position
 - \$287.2 million invested to make student assistance better at supporting adults who wish to return to school
- 2018 Budget
 - \$925 million into research support, including undergraduate and graduate students
- Ongoing Advocacy for Graduate Students
 - Consistent Advocacy for the Expansion of Canada Student Grant Program to Graduate and PhD Students
 - Non-repayable Canada student grant expanded to graduate students, have been advocating for since 2006
 - Funding Direct and Indirect Costs of Research
 - Advocated (2014-2016) for the expansion of funding to the indirect costs of research
 - Budget 2018 included \$231.3 million for Research Support Fund
 - Helps covers indirect costs of research including maintenance of facilities and equipment, faculty salaries, and regulation and safety compliance costs
 - Advocacy Week 2018
 - Recommended that the Government ensures that students are given their fair share of research dollars by investing at least \$55.9 million in student programs of Canada's granting agencies
 - Recommended that the Government create an up-front, non-repayable Canada Student Grant for Graduate Students
- 2019 Budget Wins for Grads
 - Direct Scholarships for Graduate Students

- Budget 2019 provides \$114 million over five years to federal granting councils
 - This will result in an additional 500 MSc scholarships and 167 PhD scholarships
 - Parental Leave for Student Researchers
 - Budget 2019 provides \$37.4 million over 5 years to federal granting councils to expand parental leave to 12 months for students and postdoctoral fellows who receive granting council funding (previously capped at 6 months)
 - Student Loan Interest Rates
 - Canada Student Financial Assistance Act will be amended so student loans will not accumulate interest during the six-month non-repayable period
 - Contact, Questions?
 - Victoria Schindler, CASA Policy Director (director1@casa.ca)
 - Annie Sherry, CASA Member Relations (members@casa.ca)

Q: You are able to lobby on our behalf with opposition and Liberal government. What kind of policy goals do we have in the future?

A (Annie): Member-driven organization. Membership sets the direction for what is to be advocated on. We have an ongoing list with priorities related to graduate students, international students; student loan program for example.

Annie: You can ask questions to Marcela (vpext.gsa@ucalgary.ca), who can email us.

Brit: We are not members of CASA. You gave us the budget so that we could join. We are going to bring joining CASA to a vote at GRC next month.

Marcela: There is a lot of information available on their [website](#).

**2019-2020 Health and Dental Fee (for approval) (Mohammad Mansouri, VPFS)
18:07**

- Fee recommendation
 - Student only
 - 2018/2019 Fee: \$600.67
 - 2019/2020 Fee: \$590.67 (reduction of \$10 from previous year)
 - One dependent (in addition to student fee)
 - 2018/2019 Fee: \$618.58
 - 2018/2019 Fee: \$618.58 (no change)
 - More than one dependent (in addition to student fee)
 - 2018/2019 Fee: \$913.51
 - 2018/2019 Fee: \$913.51 (no change)

- \$10 decrease in student fee for 2019/2020, but at least same level of coverage
 - Currently negotiating potential enhancements
- Motion
 - BIRT the Graduate Representative Council (GRC) approves the 2019/2020 Health and Dental Plan fee of \$590.67 for individual students, \$618.58 for one dependent, and \$913.51 for more than one dependent.
 - Motioned/seconded
 - Discussion

Q: How can the plan improve mental health services for grad students?

A (VPFS): We cannot promise any specifics, but we are negotiating mental health part.

Q: Specifics of new plan are not decided?

A (VPFS): No, not yet.

Q: Would not taking the \$10 decrease put us in a stronger negotiating position, better plan?

A (VPFS): The more money, the better the plan.

A (PRES): We want to get a plan that has good coverage, but will not very much increase the usage, because fee guarantee for only 2 years. We do not want to see a huge fee increase in year 3 of plan.

A (VPFS): This is the optimal solution. We considered the balance between the fee and services. Some students don't want to pay this much.

Q: Does anyone from the Faculty of Management have anything to add? Who has the plan gone through?

A (VPFS): This has been reviewed by our Consultant (Mercer), the Health and Dental Advisory Committee and BoD.

- Opposed:0
 - Abstained: 1 (Duncan Downsey)
- CARRIED

2019-2020 Budget (Mohammad Mansouri, VPFS) 18:15

- Same document in package that you received in paper form last meeting
- Major changes in budget this year is in staff salaries and professional development
 - Hiring full time advocacy coordinator
- Motion

- BIRT the Graduate Representative Council approves the 2019-2020 Budget as presented and recommended by the Finance Standing Committee
- Motioned/seconded
- Discussion

Q: Regarding the staff salaries and PD development. Is all of that changing the part-time to full time

A (Pres): Yes, and also basic increases.

A (ED): Based on our current composition of staff, but there have been some shifts.

Q: GSA Executive Fellowships are what and are also increasing?

A (Pres): Fellowship/Honoraria for the Executives.

A (ED): Represents a 2 % cost of living increase.

Q: Does this happen every year?

A (Pres): We didn't put it in last year.

A (ED): We would expect a 1-2 % increase every year.

Q: Grad student payment has not gone up, but staff and fellowships are?

A (Pres): Staff are different, we are a professional organization, these increases represent cost of living, standard increases to salaries, necessary to retain and attract qualified staff. The increase for the executive is not considered a raise but rather a cost of living increase. You can amend the budget as you wish. We are advocating for graduate student pay increases.

- Opposed: 2
- Abstained: 0
- CARRIED

President's Report (Brit Paris) 18:22

- Report Highlights
 - ED search
 - First round interview this week, second round interview next month
 - Working with a search consultant, Janet Souls
 - New Strategic Plan
 - We would love your feedback by email or during question period
 - 4 Goal Pillars
 - Advocacy
 - Engage in meaningful consultation, research, and policy development in order to relentlessly advocate for the changing records of UCalgary

graduate students to the university and all levels of government.

- Communication
 - Foster direct and constructive communication between the GSA members, staff, and board to promote transparency, trust, and inclusion.
- Service Delivery
 - Maximize the impact of our services with the available resources through collaboration and consultation to support the success of all graduate students.
- Organizational Structure
 - Foster a nurturing, professional, and productive environment that empowers innovation and risk taking, while maximizing efficient and impact.

Vice-President (Academic) Report (Elena Favaro) (In package ONLY)

Vice-President (External) Report (Marcela Lopez) 18:24

- Report Highlights (Advocacy)
 - Provincial (ab-GPAC)
 - Any grad student association in province can join
 - Developing a volunteer policy
 - Federal (CASA)
 - International student focus
 - Municipal (CSA)
 - Public transit
- Committees
 - Residence Consultation Committee (May onward)
 - On call committee, meetings as needed
 - External Advocacy Committee
 - Call for Chair open
 - Early because ab-GPAC BoD turn over in April
 - Apply by March 27 (vpext.gsa@ucalgary.ca)

Vice-President (Student Life) Report (Mina Iskander) 18:28

- Report Highlights
 - Family Housing Parking fees (now starting Sept 1)
 - Give a chance for people to move out if can't afford fee
 - No penalty if need to move (if they signed before communication went out)
 - Comm/media agreement signed!
 - 2 free bookings a month

- Agreement is on website
- Coffee mornings
 - Wednesdays 10am
 - That Grad Space! (heating is now fixed)
 - Please fill out surveys
- Building Bridges (ICT Lounge)
 - April 8
- GradFest! April 12!
 - 5 pm LDL \$5.50, one drink + food!

Vice-President (Finances and Services) Report (Mohammad Mansouri) 18:31

- Report Highlights
 - H&D Plan
 - Current negotiating change in coverage, enhancements
 - Improve LDL performance
 - Still improving versus last year
 - Revenue
 - Sustainability Committee
 - Workshop March 21
 - Waste audit at LDL
 - ED applicant interviews
 - Transition and GSA Strategic Plan

Question Period 18:33

Q: How many applications have you received for chair?

A (VPEExt): Unsure at the moment.

Q: Just want to ensure that the date was open long enough that you get applicants.

A (VPEExt): Was open for a week. Can potentially re-open if I feel I don't have sufficient interest.

A (PRES): Was in the newsletter last week and today. Wanted to make sure was after GRC so you could advertise to your constituents.

Q: Residence representative committee, limit to number?

A (VPEExt): At least 8 from each Family Housing and Crowsnest. We want a diversity of community (car, kids, etc.).

Q: What about departments? Any limits on members?

A (VPEExt): No limit, but we want a diverse committee. Want to make sure there is broad representation across multiple groups.

Q: Can we request a printer for That Grad Space?

A (Pres): A QM Grant Application would be a great way to do that! They should be up in the summer.

Q: Clarification, recommendation of Health and Dental Committee in terms of services?

A (VPFS): We receive a lot of feedback, there was a survey ran by Studentcare, feedback from students emailing me, Health and Dental Committee. Studentcare gave us price. Health and Dental Committee made recommendation for fee and services based on this.

Q: What was the recommendation from Committee?

A (VPFS): Confidential, we have considered everything, but we cannot release details right now.

A (Pres): There will be enhancements, but we don't know and can't say yet.

Q: What is our overall plan and strategy for External Advocacy Committee?

A (VPEExt): Continued provincial advocacy, particularly through working with ab-GPAC. PSE is through provincial jurisdiction. This was the first year that we had meetings with MLAs. We accomplished two policies (e.g. tuition and fees, last October). Every year, we would do something similar to what CASA does and see what our members want, then advocate provincially. We have made policies around mental health, tuition and fees and employment post-graduation. Committee will be helping with those policies and bringing those policies forward.

Q: More information, contact inform?

A (VPEExt): Revamping committee, it is on the website right now. We will have a call for members once chair is picked.

Q: GSA Elections, what is happening with VPSL.

A (Pres): Going to go to a by-election. More to come.

Q: VPSL wasn't vacant, it had 4 nominations

A (Pres): The results were not certified. Things that occurred during the elections meant that the results could not be valid.

Q: Same nominations?

A (Pres): We will get to that, but nominations will be open again.

DGA Period 18:42

- History Graduate Students Union
 - Thank you for attending our annual Chiniki lecture!

Announcements 18:43

- Community Engagement and Events sub-Committee
 - Thursday, March 28, 3-5, free cupcakes and chocolate fountain
 - If you bring your own mug, special prize!
- [The Role of Science in the Media?](#)
 - April 9, Health Sciences Clara Christie 3-5
- PolySci
 - Invites you to take time to look at the policies of the provincial parties. If you are eligible to vote in Alberta, we encourage you to vote.
 - Pres: If you pledge to vote with the Undergrad Pledge to Vote campaign, you will be entered to win prizes in theirs and our drawings.

- VPEExt: We are organizing a [debate](#).
- Indigenous Strategy grant competition will be announced in April
- [Cumming School of Medicine Symposium](#)
 - Friday, May 3, 2019
 - Great speakers and free food!
- [Grad Student Success Week](#)
 - Organized by the Student Success Centre
 - May 7-9, 2019
 - Lots of great workshops/panels for all stages of your grad career
 - Closing event: Rising Leaders Forum

Other Business 18:49

Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) (Haley Vecchiarelli): We will have a by-election for the two remaining positions for the GSA BoD, VPA and VPSL. For a by-election, our by-laws leave the voting up to GRC, but GRC, by a two-thirds majority, has the option to open up the by-election to the entire graduate student community. We are not recommending one way or another but are putting it out there for you to decide.

- Motion
 - BIRT the Graduate Representative Council open the by-election.
 - Motioned/seconded
 - Discussion

Q: How will voting occur?

A (DRO): Same, through Qualtrics.

Q: You could just look up anyone's email and enter it in, how do we know it will be secure?

A (DRO): Use the link to your email address.

A (Pres): 1 vote per IP address.

A (DRO): Additionally, we did not hear of anyone not being able to vote using their email, but we can look into securing it further.

Q: Why can't we use another method, such as D2L?

A (Pres): We were told by IT to not use D2L. With D2L, we have to manually add all active graduate students to the course, is onerous and unwieldy.

Q: What are the details for the by-election?

A (DRO): Depends on how this vote goes, but similar, nomination period, campaign period, forum then voting. The dates will be online soon.

- Opposed: 13
- Abstained: 2
- CARRIED

Next Month 18:58

- ST147
- By-elections Candidate Forum
- New Strategic Plan
- CASA Membership Vote
- Election of Speaker, Clerk, CRO and Finance Standing Committee Chair

Adjournment of Open Session 19:52

Moved/seconded

Opposed:0

Abstained:0

CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 19:52