



GRADUATE
STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION
UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

University of Calgary Graduate Students' Association
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Departmental Graduate Association Policy

Policy Statement

Departmental Graduate Associations (DGAs) are a key component to the governance structure of the Graduate Students' Association. The following document provides operational and governance guidelines to DGA Executives and their members.

Definitions

“Academic Year” means the year beginning September 1 and ending April 30.

“Annual Report” means an annual submission in which the DGA acknowledges it was active in the past Academic Year and continues to meet the Association's Terms of Ratification outlined in Article 2 herein.

“Active Member” means all University students who pay fees to the Association as identified in the Association's Bylaws (Appendix A).

“Association” means The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Calgary.

“Board” means the elected members who make up the Association Board of Directors.

“Consortium” means a collection of two (2) or more DGAs and must meet the requirements of the Association's DGA Policy (this Policy).

“Department” means a division of a UCalgary faculty that administers the academic program.

“Departmental Graduate Association (DGA)” means a graduate student organization composed of Active Members in a Department at UCalgary and officially recognized by the Association.

“DGA Executives” means Active Members who have been elected or appointed to make decisions on behalf of specific DGAs as it relates to the governance of the specific DGAs and the Association as defined in the Association's Bylaws.

“Event Grant” means a monetary grant awarded to offset the costs of DGA/consortium events.

“Executive Officer” (EO) is a full-time staff member responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the Association; the Executive Officer reports directly to the Board.

“Graduate Representative Council (GRC)” means a group of Active Members from eligible Departments at UCalgary; GRC members deliberate on issues affecting the Association, offer advice to the Board, and disseminate information to other Active Members.

“GRC Representative” or **“GRC Representatives”** means a representative or representatives of the GRC.

“Interdepartmental Event Grant” means a monetary grant awarded to offset the cost of events held by multiple DGAs.

“Operational Bursary” means a monetary bursary awarded as continued funding for pre-existing DGAs.

“Ratified/Ratification” means status achieved by DGAs that are in compliance with the criteria and Terms of Ratification established herein.

“Speaker” means an Active Member elected by the GRC to chair GRC meetings, Annual General Meetings, and Special General Meetings, and acts as a liaison between the GRC and the Board as defined in the Association’s bylaws.

“UCalgary” means the University of Calgary.

Applicability

This document applies to all DGA Executives and members of Ratified DGAs and Consortiums.

Reason for Policy

This document outlines the policy and procedures for proper governance of DGAs. It is the responsibility of DGA Executives to ensure they are aware of and adherent to this policy document. Further, this document mitigates the Association’s liability connected with the activities of DGAs.

Non-Compliance

There is significant liability exposure for the Association, both reputational and financial; as such, failure to comply with this document may result in the removal of privileges afforded to DGAs by the Association as determined by the Board.

Authority

Section 93(3) of the Post-Secondary Learning Act (Appendix A) legislates that the students association of a public post-secondary institution shall provide for the administration of student affairs at the public post-secondary institution. This includes the development and management of student committees, the development and enforcement of rules relating to student affairs, and the promotion of the general welfare of the students consistent with the purposes of the public post-secondary institution.

The Board is delegated authority by the GRC to establish principles, strategies, and procedures for how the Association supports and engages DGAs at UCalgary.

The Association's Bylaws govern the operations and activities of the Association, which includes DGAs. Any issue not addressed by the Association's Bylaws, this policy document, or the specific DGA policy shall be referred to by the Board for decision-making purposes.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. The Board:

- 1.1. Create and maintain the Terms of Ratification as identified herein and other related policies and procedures for the creation and operation of DGAs;
- 1.2. Grant Ratified status to eligible DGAs that meet the Terms of Ratification;
- 1.3. Assess and make reasonable decisions for issues related to DGAs' failure to comply to the Association and UCalgary's policies and procedures including suspension or revocation of a DGA's Ratified status;
- 1.4. Encourage the formation of sustainable and financially responsible DGAs that practice good governance and create an inclusive, respectful, and enjoyable environment for Active Members; and
- 1.5. Act as advocates for DGAs at UCalgary.

2. DGA Executives and members:

- 2.1. Comply with the Association and UCalgary's policies and procedures that are relevant to DGAs' operations including the DGA Agreement (Appendix A);
- 2.2. Follow the DGA's Policy as approved by the Board;
- 2.3. Add value to the graduate student experience on campus by creating an inclusive, respectful, and enjoyable environment for Active Members;
- 2.4. Inform the Board of any suggestions that may improve the service to DGAs and Active Members;
- 2.5. Submit an Annual Report to the Governance Coordinator no later than April 30th of each Academic Year.

3. Governance Coordinator:

- 3.1. Maintain and update DGA-related forms, documents, and information on the Association's web site and other communication channels;
- 3.2. Receive, organize, and forward DGA creation requests and funding requests to the Board and/or other appropriate authority;
- 3.3. Inform DGA Executives of the final decision made by the Board regarding DGA creation request and funding requests;
- 3.4. Issue cheques to DGAs with approved funding; and
- 3.5. Take on other related tasks as delegated by the Board.

Statement of Independence

Although DGAs and Consortiums receive support from the Association, DGAs and Consortiums operate autonomously and function independently of the Association according to each organization's own bylaws as approved by the Board or delegates.

Related Regulations, Statutes, and Policies

The Association's Bylaws (Appendix A) govern the operations and activities of the Association, which includes DGAs, Consortiums, and the GRC. Any issue not addressed

by the Association's Bylaws, this policy document, or the specific DGA policy shall be referred to by the Board for decision-making purposes.

Contacts

Subject	Contact	Email
Policy	Vice President Student Life	vpsl.gsa@ucalgary.ca
Administration	Governance Coordinator	governance.gsa@ucalgary.ca

Procedures

1. Membership

- 1.1. Membership of a DGA is composed of all Active Members of the programs of the specific UCalgary department.
- 1.2. DGAs shall not charge a membership fee.

2. Terms of Ratification

- 2.1. At the discretion of the Board or designate, a DGA may be Ratified by the Board if it fulfills the following criteria:
 - 2.1.1.1. All DGA Executives must be Active Members; a minimum of three (3) DGA Executive positions are required including:
 - 2.1.1.2. President;
 - 2.1.1.3. Vice-President; and
 - 2.1.1.4. Treasurer.
 - 2.1.2. DGAs fulfill the GRC representation required by the Association's Bylaws;
 - 2.1.3. The DGA elects DGA Executives and operates according to a complete and properly ratified Bylaws following the DGA Bylaws Template (Appendix A);
 - 2.1.3.1. All DGAs' Bylaws are subject to review by the Vice President Student Life, Governance Coordinator, and/or other delegates to ensure that the Bylaws abide by the Association's Bylaws, and applicable policies and procedures.

- 2.1.4. The DGA abides by the Association's Bylaws, policies and procedures, including the DGA Agreement (Appendix A);
- 2.1.5. The DGA properly fills out the DGA Creation Form (Appendix A) and other supporting documents and submits to the Governance Coordinator (for new DGAs only);
- 2.1.6. The DGA has submitted a properly completed Annual Report and sent to the Governance Coordinator by the end of the Academic Year (for existing DGAs only);
- 2.1.7. DGAs must follow the following guidelines when naming/renaming the DGA:
 - 2.1.7.1. Do not use "University of Calgary" in the DGA name unless you have explicit written permission from UCalgary to do so;
 - 2.1.7.2. Ratified DGAs may use the tagline "Officially ratified by the Graduate Students' Association of the University of Calgary" as part of their marketing and advertising; and
 - 2.1.7.3. Ratified DGAs may use the UC interlock graphic using the UCalgary's visual guidelines [here](#).
- 2.2. The Board may deny, revoke, or temporarily suspend a DGA's Ratification status or access to the Association's services and resources if the DGA:
 - 2.2.1. Fails to meet requirements outlined in section 2.1 of the Terms of Ratification section of this Policy;
 - 2.2.2. Has or intends to violate the Association and UCalgary's policies and procedures including the DGA Agreement;
 - 2.2.3. Fails to collect or submit event waivers when notified by the Association of a requirement to do so;
 - 2.2.4. Fails to pay for repairs or replacement of the Association or UCalgary's property, for which any of its members are responsible for damage, either through willful action or negligence;
 - 2.2.5. Applies for or receives funding or services on behalf of another party;
 - 2.2.6. Applies for or receives funding or services by falsifying or omitting

relevant information; or

2.2.7. Fails to submit their Annual Report.

3. New DGA Registration

3.1. Once the DGA Executives have been selected, a DGA Creation Form (Appendix A) must be completed and submitted within three (3) months of the DGA startup date;

3.2. In the DGA Creation Form, the following documents must be submitted:

3.2.1. DGA Bylaws;

3.2.1.1. DGA Bylaws cannot contravene the Association's Bylaws or this policy;

3.2.2. Minutes from the Annual General Meeting where the Bylaws were approved; and

3.2.3. Banking documents proving the DGA holds a bank account. A minimum of two (2) signing authorities are required.

3.2.3.1. Signing Authorities must be DGA Executives as identified in section 2.1.1 herein.

3.3. An email from the departmental administrator must be sent to the Governance Coordinator to confirm the number of graduate students currently enrolled in the department and confirm that the DGA is the only official graduate student organization in that department;

3.4. The Governance Coordinator shall then submit the creation request to the Board within five (5) business days of receiving the request for Ratification. The final decision shall be emailed to the DGA within fifteen (15) business days of submitting request;

3.5. Upon registration and Ratification, the DGA shall receive a one-time startup grant of \$300.

4. Annual Executive Election

4.1. All DGAs must hold annual elections for their Executive positions.

4.2. If no students are interested in running for the DGA Executive positions, the positions may be appointed.

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

4.3.1. President;

4.3.2. Vice President; and

4.3.3. Treasurer.

5. Graduate Representative Council (GRC)

5.1. Each DGA shall be represented by one or more GRC Representative(s) at the GRC meetings depending on the number of students enrolled in their program or department as per Article 9.10 in the Association's Bylaws.

5.2. Any GRC Representative position that becomes vacant shall be filled by the responsible DGA. The new GRC Representative shall be official once the Speaker and the Governance Coordinator have been notified.

5.3. If a department has a DGA, it is the responsibility of the DGA Executives to ensure that the GRC position requirement is filled.

5.4. The names of GRC Representatives must be reported to the Governance Coordinator by October 15 of every Academic Year. If, for any reason, the individual fulfilling GRC Representative duties changes, a Change of Information/Operational Bursary Form must be submitted to the Governance Coordinator.

5.5. GRC Representatives can miss only one (1) meeting per Academic Year. If a GRC Representative(s) misses a meeting over the Academic Year, they will be given a warning. If a DGA fails to have a GRC Representative in attendance for two (2) or more GRC meetings, then the DGA will be ineligible for Event Grants for that Academic Year and the Ratification status may be reviewed by the Board.

5.6. If a GRC Representative is expected to be absent for more than one (1) GRC meetings (and no other GRC Representatives from that department will be attending), it is the DGA's responsibility to arrange for another member of the department to attend in proxy of that individual. This may be done by emailing the Governance Coordinator as soon as possible in advance of the GRC meeting(s) for which the GRC Representative(s) will be absent.

- 5.7. A GRC Representative may resign at any time by submitting a letter of resignation to the Speaker. A resignation will begin effective immediately upon receipt of this letter, and a new GRC Representative needs to be selected in accordance with that DGA's Bylaws.
- 5.8. Any GRC Representative who is absent without an alternate for more than two (2) meetings in the Academic Year may be removed as a GRC Representative by majority vote of the GRC.
- 5.9. If no GRC Representatives from a DGA can attend GRC due to scheduling conflicts, the GRC Representative(s) must contact the Vice President Student Life to discuss possible alternate accommodations.

6. General Funding Guidelines

- 6.1. Any funding made available to DGAs may be subject to operational procedures including deadlines and administrative processes established by the Association. A DGA may not be provided with a type of funding or service that is not generally made available to other DGAs.
- 6.2. As established in the Terms of Ratification, the Association may limit a DGA's access to funding and services for failure to comply with the Terms of Ratification.
- 6.3. Cheques issued to DGAs must be cashed within six (6) months of the date of issue. Failure to comply will result in forfeiture of those funds.
- 6.4. Cheques for DGAs will be addressed to the DGA and not made out to individuals.
- 6.5. Funding for DGAs is on a first-come, first-served basis and is not guaranteed.

7. Operational Bursary

- 7.1. DGAs are eligible for an Operational Bursary of \$300 once per academic year.
- 7.2. By October 15 of each Academic Year, DGAs must fill out a DGA Change of Information/Operational Bursary Form (Appendix A). This form informs the Association of the names and contact information of all current Executives, GRC representatives, the most current governing documents, banking information, the number of students in the department, and any other pertinent changes to the DGA.

7.3. DGAs must fill out the DGA Change of Information/Operational Bursary Form each Academic Year, even if there have been no changes to the DGA, in order to receive an Operational Bursary.

7.3.1. DGAs must include their current bylaws with their Change of Information/Operational Bursary Form prior to receiving Association funding.

8. Event Grant

8.1. DGAs may apply for reimbursement for funds used for events. A DGA may be eligible to receive a maximum of \$300 per Academic Year, or \$150 per intake.

8.2. Only events approved by the Association shall receive an Event Grant.

8.3. There are two (2) intakes per Academic Year. The first intake is for events that take place between April 1 and September 30 each Academic Year. The second intake is for events that take place between October 1 and March 31 each Academic Year.

8.4. To receive reimbursement for events, DGAs must fill out an Event Submission Form (Appendix A) two (2) to three (3) weeks prior to the event date and receive formal approval from the Association.

8.5. Copies of receipts from the event need to be submitted via the After Event Report Form (Appendix A). Funding will not be given to DGAs with missing information or receipts. Receipts must be submitted by October 15 for the first intake and April 15 for the second intake.

8.6. Cheques shall not be written for more than the receipt(s) amount.

8.7. To be eligible for funding for the second intake, DGAs must have a representative attend six (6) out of the seven (7) GRC meetings that Academic Year and submit the Annual Report by April 15.

9. Interdepartmental Event Grant Funding

9.1. DGAs may apply for reimbursement for funds used for events in partnership with one or more DGAs. A DGA may be eligible to receive a maximum of \$500 per Academic Year or \$250 per intake. This is in addition to the individual DGA Event Grant.

9.2. DGAs may request the Interdepartmental Event Grant Funding using the same procedures outlined in Section 6.

10. Events and Risk Management

- 10.1. DGAs must refer to the instructions from the Association's Event Handbook and DGA Handbook (Appendix A) while planning an event.
- 10.2. The Event Organizer must fill out the Event Submission Form (Appendix A) and obtain a formal written approval from the Association's Staff to obtain third party liability insurance coverage and to take advantage of other Association's services and resources, including but not limited to:
 - 10.2.1. Equipment rentals;
 - 10.2.2. Promotional items;
 - 10.2.3. LDL coupons;
 - 10.2.4. Free beverages;
 - 10.2.5. Waiver templates;
 - 10.2.6. Event Grant; and
 - 10.2.7. Other event support.
- 10.3. Event waivers must be filled out by all participants if the event or activity has elements of physical or legal risks. Completed forms shall be returned to the Association's Events Coordinator for records and storage. During this process, the Procedures and Guidelines for Administration of Waivers (Appendix A) shall be followed.
- 10.4. The Association may cover costs through the Association's insurance, excluding costs associated with negligence, which the Event Organizer might become legally obligated to pay as damages to a third party as defined in the Association's Insurance Policy arising from an incident where they were hosting an Association-approved event, for any of the following reasons:
 - 10.4.1. Bodily injury; and
 - 10.4.2. Property damage.
- 10.5. The Events Coordinator shall be available for any event-related questions or to provide resources via email, phone, or in-person, provided the request is made with reasonable notice.
- 10.6. DGAs are entitled to free classroom and space booking with the University of Calgary's Conference and Events Management (CEM).

10.6.1. To book a classroom for DGA related events, an Event Submission Form (Appendix A) must be filled out and submitted to the Association. Once received, the Governance Coordinator will book a room on the behalf of the DGA. Note: the Association is only allotted a certain amount of classroom bookings each month; as such, room bookings will be divided out evenly amongst requesting DGAs and on a first-come, first-served basis. The Association will do everything possible, acting reasonably, to ensure all DGAs have access to room bookings.

10.7. DGAs shall follow the DGA Handbook (Appendix A) to learn about how to book an event venue.

10.8. DGAs are eligible to receive a twenty-five percent (25%) discount on food and non-alcoholic beverages at the Last Defence Lounge with a minimum of twelve (12) people present. A DGA Executive must be present to receive the discount.

11. Consortiums

11.1. A group of two (2) or more DGAs may form a Consortium. The Association recognizes the existence of Consortiums under the same regulations and funding policies as DGAs. A Consortium needs to fill out a Consortium Creation Form (Appendix A). Consortiums must abide by the following guidelines:

11.1.1. Consortiums must consist of a minimum of two (2) DGAs;

11.1.2. Consortiums must have their own name, following the same DGA naming guidelines;

11.1.3. Consortiums must submit their own set of bylaws and update these as necessary and according to general DGA policies;

11.1.4. Consortiums may have their own, maximum of two (2) non-voting GRC representatives; and

11.1.5. Consortiums must have at least two (2) Executives with at least one (1) representative from each of the participating DGAs.

11.2. DGAs cannot belong to more than one (1) Consortiums.

11.3. Consortiums may appoint up to two (2) non-voting GRC Representatives. If a consortium's GRC Representative is a voting GRC Representative of a DGA, they retain their DGA voting privileges.

12. Consortium Funding

12.1. Operational Bursary

12.1.1. Consortiums are eligible for an Operational Bursary of \$100 or \$0.50 per member, whichever is greater, up to a maximum of \$350 once per academic year.

12.1.2. By October 15 of each Academic Year, Consortiums must fill out a Consortium Change of Information/Operational Bursary Form (Appendix A) even if there have been no changes to the DGA, in order to receive an Operational Bursary.

12.2. Consortium Event Grant Funding

12.2.1. Consortiums may apply for reimbursement for funds used for events. A Consortium may be eligible to receive a maximum of \$1000 per Academic Year or \$500 per intake;

12.2.2. Consortiums may request the Consortium Event Grant Funding using the same procedures outlined in Section 6.

13. Annual Report

13.1. All GSGs must submit the Annual Report to the Governance Coordinator at the close of each Academic Year. Annual Reports are due by April 30 (or the next business day) of each Academic Year.

13.2. The Annual Report should be 2-4 pages in length and must include the following items:

13.2.1. DGA Executive names and email addresses for the outgoing DGA Executives and (if known) the incoming DGA Executives;

13.2.2. Names and email addresses of GRC Representatives;

13.2.3. Total number of members;

13.2.4. List of activities for the entire Academic Year, and the number of people who attended each activity;

13.2.5. Financial statements (bank statements, income statement, cash balances, and outstanding items); and

13.2.6. Issues or concerns (if applicable).

14. Department Mergers

14.1. If two (2) or more DGAs are associated with departments that have merged, and they do not have two (2) independent graduate programs under the newly created department, DGAs will have eighteen (18) months from the date of the merger to merge and register a new DGA. The same DGA registration procedures described in Section 2 must be followed.

15. University and Other Third-Party Complaints

15.1. The Board shall not mediate third party complaints against a DGA. For the purposes of this procedure, third parties shall include all on- and off- campus organizations, campus service providers, and other student groups.

15.2. The Association may investigate complaints or charges that a DGA has acted in a manner that is inconsistent with these procedures or other Association's policies and procedures.

15.3. In the event the Association receives complaints that an Active Member affiliated with a DGA has violated UCalgary or the Association's policies or procedures, the Association may refer the matter to the relevant UCalgary authority.

Appendix A: Forms and References

1. [Post-Secondary Learning Act](#)
2. [Association's Bylaws](#)
3. [DGA Creation Form](#)
4. [DGA Change of Information/Operational Bursary Form](#)
5. [Consortium Creation Form](#)
6. [Consortium Change of Information/Operational Bursary Form](#)
7. [Event Submission Form](#)
8. [After Event Report](#)
9. [Procedures and Guidelines for Administration of Waivers](#)
10. [Events Handbook](#)
11. [DGA Agreement](#)
12. [DGA Bylaws Template](#)
13. [DGA Handbook](#)

Access all DGA and Consortium information and resources on the Association's web site [here](#).