

ABOUT ME

I am the current GSA Vice President Academic, a Professional Engineer and PhD Student in Environmental Engineering at the University of Calgary, researching climate-resilient water and sanitation systems. I hold an MSc in Civil Engineering from the University of Calgary and a BSc in Water and Sanitation from the University of Cape Coast, Ghana. With over 10 years of experience as a Water Engineer and global advocate for youth engagement in water security, I am committed to using my experience to strengthen financial and governance transparency, enhance service delivery within the GSA, and expand supports that advance graduate student well-being and academic success.



EXPERIENCE WITH THE GSA AND STUDENT LEADERSHIP

GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION, UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

VICE PRESIDENT ACADEMIC (2025/2026)

Improved and led the 2026 Peer Beyond Graduate Research Conference organizing. Reviewed all GSA bursaries, awards and grants terms of references to ensure equity. Advocated for the increase of bursaries and grants' amounts and budgets. Supported students to resolve complex academic challenges. Defended graduate students' interests on the over 16 University Committees I served on.

VICE CHAIR, AWARDS COMMITTEE (2024/2025)

Facilitated fair and timely adjudication of graduate student grants and scholarships.

COMMISSIONER, GSA REPRESENTATIVE (2024/2025)

Represented graduate students on the decanal search committee.

MEMBER, GSA AWARDS COMMITTEE (2021/2022 & 2023/2024)

Assisted in reviewing GSA Awards applications.

INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

Member, Board Committee (Membership Engagement), International Water Association (2025 – Present)

– Contributed to the design and development of the Association's digital membership engagement platform serving over 20,000 members across the globe.

Chairperson, Public Utility Workers Union, National Youth Committee (2020 – Present)

– Advocated for fair salaries and labor policies for young professionals in Ghana's water, energy, and housing sectors.

Chair, International Water Association Young Water Professionals Global Steering Committee (2022 – 2024)

– Advocated for the successful establishment of a 2 million – dollar endowment fund to support young water professionals. Coordinated global initiatives for knowledge-sharing in the water sector.

Curator, Global Shapers Ho Hub, an Initiative of the World Economic Forum (2020 – 2021)

– Established transparent governance structures for effective leadership.



Jacob meeting with the minister of Advance Education

A VOTE FOR ME IS A VOTE FOR;
...IMPROVED **T**RANSPARENCY
...ABSOLUTE **A**CCOUNTABILITY
...A **P**ROGRESSIVE GSA.

I AM READY TO LEAD WITH
EXPERIENCE, CONTINUITY, AND
A STEADFAST COMMITMENT TO
YOU AND OUR GRADUATE
COMMUNITY!
JACOB CARES!!!

Scan code to know more about me



VISION: TAP

I am seeking the role of President with a guiding **Vision – TAP:**

- **Transparency** in how decisions are made and funds are allocated
- **Accountability** that ensures the GSA delivers services with speed and passion
- **Progressive Mindset** that pushes the Association to prioritize students wellbeing and academic success

My platform is rooted in empowering graduate students, strengthening advocacy, deepening engagement, and creating real pathways for student influence in the Association's governance.

1. DEEPENING STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

The GSA's strategic priorities emphasize broadening student engagement and embedding diverse voices in policy and advocacy work. I propose systematic, structured avenues for members to shape the Association's direction, including:

- **Graduate Policy Forums** – quarterly open strategy sessions where students can debate and vote on priority issues directly influencing GSA Council deliberations.
- Create a **Policy Advisory Panel** composed of representatives from Departmental Graduate Associations, Graduate Student Groups and interested students from all faculties, with direct reporting to the President and the Executive Council.
- An **Online Policy Portal** for continuous input on bylaws, strategic priorities, services, and advocacy positions, increasing transparency and participation.

These mechanisms will ensure the collective graduate voice meaningfully impacts decision-making.

2. FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY AND BUDGET SCRUTINY

To strengthen trust and accountability within the GSA, I will:

- Publish **quarterly expenditure reports** with clear, accessible explanations of spending trends and reserves.
- Hold **annual open budget reviews**, including student Q&A sessions.

This approach demystifies financial decisions and gives students real insight into Association spending.

3. ADVOCACY ON ACADEMIC WORKING TERMS AND PROVINCIAL ENGAGEMENT

The GSA advocates on behalf of graduate students at the University, Municipal, Provincial and Federal government levels. My platform commits to:

- Advance a strong, evidence-based case to University leadership **to extend the revised minimum funding framework to all thesis-based students who were excluded**, ensuring fairness, consistency, and financial stability across board.
- Continue to advocate municipally for affordable student housing options around the University.
- Team up with other student associations in Alberta to lead a provincial advocacy coalition to push for standardized academic supervision regulations that protects students' rights.
- Advocate at the Federal level for **Graduate Research and Teaching Assistants with no Canadian Work Experience to be considered for the recently announced Express Entry priority areas for researchers.**

4. STRENGTHENING COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY

Accessible, responsive communication is critical to engagement. Current GSA channels include newsletters, social media updates, and volunteer outreach. I will enhance communication by:

- Launching a GSA Mobile App for real-time updates on services, events, advocacy alerts, and consultations.
- Monthly "President on the Road" Town Halls hosted across faculties and departments to listen, learn, and mobilize.
- Revamping digital content formats to include video explainers on policy, budget, and services that matter to students.

These channels will improve clarity and build a stronger sense of community and connection.

5. CREATING STUDENT INTERNSHIPS & EXPANDING STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT WITHIN THE GSA

Graduate students bring unique skills to leadership, research, communications, and operations. I will:

- Establish paid student internship roles in key GSA service areas (advocacy research, communications, community outreach, and budgeting).
- **Increase annual bursary and grants** budget to target under-funded students, especially course-based students.
- Partner with faculties, external organizations, and alumni to **co-fund awards, workshops, travel and housing grants.**

These efforts will help reduce financial barriers that impede graduate student success.

CLOSING STATEMENT

If elected President, I will champion a GSA that reflects and responds to the evolving needs of graduate students, one that truly lives our shared values of inclusivity, engagement, and service. I invite all members to join this journey towards a more transparent, accountable, and progressive Association.

With your support, we can build an Association that is stronger, more responsive, and more empowering for every graduate student at the University of Calgary.