GSA Council Meeting MINUTES  
Monday, September 18, 2017 at 6:00 pm  
2-100 University Hall, Van Vliet Complex

IN ATTENDANCE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department/Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Babak Soltannia</td>
<td>Swai Mon Khaing (Biochemistry)</td>
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<tr>
<td>VP Academic</td>
<td>Firouz Khodayari</td>
<td>Francesca Jean (Biological Sciences)</td>
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<tr>
<td>VP External</td>
<td>Masoud Khademip</td>
<td>Graham Little (Biomedical Engineering)</td>
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<td>VP Labour</td>
<td>Sasha van der Klein</td>
<td>Rongrong Zhang (Business PhD)</td>
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<td>VP Student Services</td>
<td>Royle Feng</td>
<td>Karl Roesner; Shweta Pipaliya (Cell Biology)</td>
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<td>Chief Returning Officer</td>
<td>Darcy Bemister</td>
<td>Mengqi Fang (Chemical &amp; Materials Engineering)</td>
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<td>Councillor-at-Large</td>
<td>Abdullah Alzubaidi</td>
<td>Michael Armstrong (Chemistry)</td>
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<td>Councillor-at-Large</td>
<td>Spencer Balay</td>
<td>Pedro Mateo (Civil &amp; Environmental Engineering)</td>
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<td>Councillor-at-Large</td>
<td>Syed Hussain</td>
<td>Natalie Mahé (Communication Sciences &amp; Disorders)</td>
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<td>Councillor-at-Large</td>
<td>Maryse Kiese</td>
<td>Michael Disyak (Computing Science)</td>
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<td>Councillor-at-Large</td>
<td>Kim Nguyen-Phoc</td>
<td>Ira Tuzlukova (Drama)</td>
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<td>Councillor-at-Large</td>
<td>Nicole Noel</td>
<td>Brette Harris; Benjamin Gruber; Alison Thomas (Earth &amp; Atmospheric Sciences)</td>
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<td>Councillor-at-Large</td>
<td>Andrews Tawiah</td>
<td>Danny Wallbank (Economics)</td>
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<td>Councillor-at-Large</td>
<td>Brayden Whitlock</td>
<td>Areej Alshammiry (Educational Policy Studies)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>Talisha Chaput</td>
<td>Chantal Labonté (Ed Psych)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art &amp; Design</td>
<td>Vicky Kwon; Micheal Woolley</td>
<td>Masoud M. Shabestary (Electrical &amp; Computer Engineering)</td>
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Speaker Joshua Connauton in the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

Roll Call

1. Roll Call of Council Members in Attendance

Approval of Agenda

2. Approval of the 18 September 2017 Consolidated Agenda

Prepared by L Hareuther and F Robertson for the Council Meeting of 18 September 2017
Members had before them the 18 September 2017 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 15 September 2017. S van der Klein MOVED; M Aiken SECONDED.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

3. Minutes from the 17 July 2017 GSA Council meeting

Members had before them the 17 July 2017 GSA Council Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 8 September 2017. F Khodayari MOVED; M Khademi SECONDED.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

Changes in Council Membership

4. Changes in GSA Council Membership

i. Introduction of New Councillors: I Tuzulkova (Drama); A Alshammiry (Educational Policy Studies); A Thomas (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences); T Poitras (Neurosciences); V Kwon (Art & Design); T Yoldas (Philosophy); S Pipaliya (Cell Biology); J Farmer (Elementary Education); D Wallbank (Economics); A Christ (History & Classics).

ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors

This was the last meeting for a number of Councillors: B Harris (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences); J Worthy (Philosophy); M Aiken (Political Science).

Councillor Announcements

5. Councillor Announcements

A Bruni reminded GSA Councillors that internships were offered through the Graduate Student Internship Program and that there was currently a public service graduate internship available; one year in length or 42 weeks split in to two 21-week rotations in various levels of government. He added that this position was open to any student interested in public policy and that the deadline to apply was in January. In addition, he indicated that the position of Project Manager for the Graduate Student Internship Program was available and that the competition closed on October 1.

S van der Klein informed GSA Councillors about the Canada 150 Community Celebration on Sunday, September 24 at South Campus. She noted that there was a limited parking and invited members to take transit if there were planning to attend. She added that there would be food trucks, a farmers market, and live performances.

Action Items

6. Proposed Changes to GSA Policy on Nominating and GSA Nominating Committee

Babak Soltannia (GSA President and GSA Governance Committee Chair) and Radim Barta (GSA Nominating Committee Chair) presented the item.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council, on the recommendation of the GSA Governance Committee, APPROVE the proposed changes to GSA Policy on Nominating and the GSA Nominating Committee, as shown in the attached double column documents and effective immediately.

B Soltannia noted that GSA Council had before them proposed changes to GSA Policy on Nominating and the GSA Nominating Committee. He noted that the GSA Policy on Nominating was first established by GSA Council in 2010 and had not been thoroughly reviewed since that time and, while GSA Policy on the GSA Nominating Committee had been reviewed in the past year, the GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC) and GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC) were now recommending further amendments. B Soltannia invited R Barta to provide an overview of the proposed changes and to answer questions.

R Barta introduced himself as Chair of the GSA NoC and noted the other members of the GSA NoC who were present at GSA Council (A Bruni and K Gordon). He noted that the proposal before GSA Council resulted from discussions during a GSA NoC meeting on July 17, and that these proposed changes were reviewed by the GSA GC on August 15 and by the GSA Board on August 23. He reported that the substantive changes included rewording of the policy to reflect current practice, expanding the number of positions on the GSA NoC that were open to all graduate students instead of just GSA Council members, and formalizing the current practice whereby GSA Council elected all representatives for GSA Standing Committees instead of having the GSA Council ratify nominees that the GSA NoC elected for these positions. R Barta also indicated that while the GSA NoC would continue to vet all nominees brought forward to GSA Council to ensure they met the eligibility criteria outlined in GSA Bylaw and Policy, it would be GSA Council’s role to elect the best nominees for these positions. He noted another change was the removal of the call for additional nominations for GSA Standing Committees, ad hoc committees, and subcommittees,
and GSA Council-Elected Officer positions. He indicated that the call for additional nominations was currently restricted to only GSA Council members and that the proposed policy change would allow for one nominating period that would be open to all eligible graduate students. He emphasized that in order to allow enough time for nominees to put their name forward, each position would still be advertised at least twice. He also noted that while there were currently five voting positions on the GSA NoC, with three positions specified for GSA Council members, and two positions for any graduate student, the proposal outlined that there would now be at least two GSA Council positions and three positions for any graduate students. R Barta noted this would allow for more flexibility in recruiting members to serve on the GSA NoC, and that as the NoC was focused on selecting excellent graduate students to fill vacancies across campus, it would be beneficial to have more graduate students at-large serving on the GSA NoC.

A Tawiah asked what the original rationale was for having three GSA Council members and two graduate students on the GSA NoC. R Barta responded that since the GSA NoC was originally created to act on behalf of GSA Council to elect graduate students to serve on external committees, its membership first included three GSA Councillors, the GSA President, and the GSA Executive Director (ED). He indicated that as time went on and the GSA NoC became more established, the GSA President and GSA ED became non-voting members and the membership was expanded to include two graduate student members. R Barta noted that since the GSA NoC represents GSA Council in filling graduate student positions on external committees across the University that it made sense to have more graduate student members from across campus.

F Jean asked whether the new requirement to advertise positions twice would lead to delays in the nominating process. R Barta responded that advertising positions at least twice wouldn’t increase the timelines, since currently there was already a first call and a second call. He noted that right now the second call for nominations was only sent to GSA Councillors, so the proposed changes would combine these two nominations periods into a single one open to all graduate students. He noted that positions open to GSA Council members would continue to only be advertised to GSA Council. He noted that it was important to allow for enough time to make sure everyone had an equal chance to put their name forward.

A Tawiah asked what the response rate was for getting graduate students to put their names forward to serve on GSA Standing Committees, and with the second call for nominations being sent to only GSA Councillors, if there was difficulty in getting students to fill those roles. He also asked if only GSA Councillors came forward following the second call for nominations. R Barta responded that if the first call for nominations had a low response rate, that the second call for nominations would also normally have a low response rate. He noted that sometimes GSA Councillors would nominate themselves after the second call for nominations, and hoped that GSA Councillors would continue to volunteer for positions. He noted that the GSA NoC would continue to inform GSA Council about all of the available positions and asked GSA Councillors to encourage their colleagues to volunteer. He noted that there were a number of ballots for this Council meeting and that it was harder to fill positions during the summer months.

MOTION: That the GSA Council, on the recommendation of the GSA Governance Committee, APPROVE the proposed changes to GSA Policy on Nominating and the GSA Nominating Committee, as shown in the attached double column documents and effective immediately. BS MOVED. FK SECONDED.

Motion PASSED unanimously

Elections

7. GSA Council Elections

Radim Barta (Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee) presented the items. He explained the election process and noted that members had five ballots to consider.

Dean of Business Review Committee

R Barta noted that both the MBA Association and the Business Doctoral Association submitted a nomination for the graduate student position on the Dean of Business Review Committee as per UAPPOL regulations. He noted that the nominees were not able to attend GSA Council and encouraged GSA Council members to read the bios and resumes included in the Council package, prior to casting their vote.

Nominees for Dean of Business Review Committee:
Asif Malik (Business PhD Nominee)
Kyle Schweiger (MBA Nominee)
GSA Deputy Speaker
R Barta presented the item and introduced the nominee, who was given the opportunity to address GSA Council by responding to a question provided in advance.

The question for the nominees was as follows and the nominee had 45 seconds to respond: “please tell GSA Council what motivated you to run for the position of Deputy Speaker.”

Nominee for GSA Deputy Speaker:
Theadora (Teddy) Carter (MBA)

GSA Standing Committees
a. GSA Awards Selection Committee (5 vacancies)
R Barta presented the item and noted that not all of the nominees were able to attend GSA Council. He encouraged GSA Council members to read the bios and resumes included in the Council package, prior to casting their vote. He noted that there were three nominees for five positions and that the option of “none of the candidates” was included on the ballot.

Nominees for GSA Awards Selection Committee:
Hayden Danyluk (Surgery)
Camila Lemos Pinto (AFNS)
Andrews Tawiah (Rehabilitation Science)

b. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (2 vacancies)
R Barta presented the item and noted that the nominee was not able to attend GSA Council. He encouraged GSA Council members to read the bio and resume included in the Council package, prior to casting their vote. He noted there was still one position available on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee for a GSA Council member.

Nominee for GSA Elections and Referenda Committee:
Hayden Danyluk (Surgery)

c. GSA Nominating Committee (1 vacancy)
J Connauton presented the item and introduced the nominee, who was given the opportunity to address GSA Council by responding to a question provided in advance.

The question for the nominee was as follows and the nominee had 45 second to respond: “please tell us why you’d like to serve on the GSA Nominating Committee.”

Nominee for GSA Nominating Committee:
Swai Mon Khaing (Biochemistry)

For Discussion
None at this time

Reports
8. President
   i. President’s Report:
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 September 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition B Soltannia welcomed everyone to a new academic year and invited GSA Councillors to come to the GSA coffee break on September 29 and to attend the GSA Fall Social Event on October 12.

A Tawiah asked for a summary of the discussion he had with the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Students and Research and the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) about the funding review proposal mentioned in B Soltannia’s report. B Soltannia responded that the funding review proposal was still in early stages and that there were no major updates to report on. F Khodayari added that negotiations have started between the GSA, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Students and Research, and the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) but that these negotiations could take a long time. He added that as soon as there were developments GSA Council would be updated.
ii. GSA Board
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 September 2017. The report stood as submitted.

iii. Budget and Finance Committee
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 September 2017. The report stood as submitted.

iv. GSA Governance Committee
No meetings this reporting period.

9. Vice-President Academic
i. Vice-President Academic’s Report:
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 September 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition F Khodayari reminded GSA Councillors of the Professional Development requirements and noted that the restriction on having no more than four hours in any one area had been lifted, which would allow for greater flexibility. He invited GSA Councillors to visit the FGSR website for more details.

10. Vice-President External
i. Vice-President External’s Report
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 September 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition M Khademi highlighted that in the past few months he had been engaged in discussions about Student Group policies with the Dean of Students Office and he invited GSA Councillors to provide feedback. He specified that any feedback would be submitted to the Dean of Students.

M Kiese asked if there was a particular reason to update these policies. M Khademi explained that the movement started from the Students’ Union and they had concerns that these policies were not as effective as they could be. He added that some of these discussions go back a certain number of years but that the current Dean of Students had taken the issue on to review and update the policies. M Kiese pointed out that there were many references to the University reputation and asked if this was of particular concern. M Khademi responded that the concern was not specific but that they were trying to redefine “reputation” to make it easier for students to understand what that risk meant for the University.

ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee’s Report
No meetings this reporting period.

11. Vice-President Labour
i. Vice-President Labour’s Report
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 September 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition S van der Klein reminded GSA Council that the GSA was about to enter negotiations for the Collective Agreement. She noted that the GSA was holding a town hall on September 26 at 10:00 AM in the FGSR Boardroom in Triffo Hall and she invited students with assistantships to attend. Alternately, she invited student assistants to submit feedback by sending an email to S van der Klein at gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca

S van der Klein noted that, over the last year, she had worked to create the Manage Up Speaker Series with FGSR, a workshop series with different themes. She specified that four dates were planned for the fall term and invited GSA Council to consult the FGSR website for additional details. She added that each workshop was one hour and would count toward Professional Development hours.

A Harrigan asked if the town hall was only for currently employed graduate students. S van der Klein responded that the GSA welcomed all but that, during collective bargaining, the GSA was required to act on behalf of the bargaining unit, which means currently employed graduate students (Graduate Teaching Assistant, Graduate Research Assistant (GRA), Graduate Research Assistant Fellowship (GRAF) or graduate students with short term academic employment).

M Armstrong asked for clarification of the difference between a GRA and a GRAF. S van der Klein explained that all graduate students paid by their supervisor to work on their own thesis research used to be classified as a Research Assistant (RA) but that in the last round of collective bargaining RA and students working on their thesis research had been separated, the latter one becoming GRAF. She added that for GRA positions there was a minimum level of payment outlined the Collective Agreement.
and that for GRAF positions there was no minimum payment attached to it. She specified that GRAFs were also academically-employed and the conditions of their appointment was outlined in the Collective Agreement.

C Labonté asked if there would be additional Town Halls or if this was the only one. S van der Klein responded that this was the only one but that she was happy to meet in person or encouraged members to send feedback via emails.

**ii. GSA Negotiating Committee**
No meetings this reporting period.

**iii. GSA Labour Relations Committee**
No meetings this reporting period.

**12. Vice-President Student Services**

**i. Vice-President Student Services’ Report**
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 September 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition R Feng noted that the Campus Food Bank Executive Director, Cory Hodgson, and the Campus Food Bank Board Chair, Gary McCorquodale, attended GSA Board last week to provide an update on their operations. He added that this year is their 25th anniversary.

**ii. GSA Student Affairs Advisory Committee**
No meetings this reporting period.

**13. Senator**

**i. Senator’s Report**
No written report at this time.

**14. Speaker**

**i. Speaker’s Report**
No written report at this time.
Sasha – doing a great job for first time

**15. Chief Returning Officer**

**i. Chief Returning Officer’s Report**
No written report at this time.

**16. GSA Nominating Committee**

**i. GSA Nominating Committee Report**
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 September 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition R Barta stated there was still a vacancy for GSA Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) and noted that this person role was to assist the GSA Chief Returning Officer (D Bemister). He specified that the GSA NoC would not be advertising this position in the next few weeks but it was still looking for nominees. He invited GSA Council to email him if they or their colleagues were interested, please email.

He noted that there was still a vacancy for a GSA Council member on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee. He noted that there were three positions for graduate students available on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board. He added that there were still positions available on the FGSR Research Council, the Student Library Advisory Committee, and the Arts Faculty Council and associated sub committees. K Joseph added that the Student Library Advisory Committee was looking for graduate students outside of the School of Library and Information Studies who could speak to library services and benefits and how to improve them.

S Hussain asked about the DRO position and if a graduate student could run in the election if they were DRO. R Barta clarified that a member of ERC or the DRO cannot run in the GSA General Election. It was noted that the GSA Bylaw and Policy outlined the specifics but that, essentially, the student would need to step down when they put their name forward as a candidate for the GSA General Election. J Tanguay further clarified that students who ran in the last GSA General Election were not eligible.
17. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee
   i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report
   Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 September 2017. The report stood as submitted.

18. GSA Management
   i. Executive Director’s Report
   Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 September 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition J Tanguay invited GSA Council to review the Staff Snapshot provided to read about the people who supported the GSA.

Question Period

19. Written Questions
   None at this time.

20. Oral Questions

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.