

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

GSA

Graduate Students' Association

AGENDA PACKAGE

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, April 29, 2026; 17:00

Meeting Location: GSA Common & Zoom

Graduate Students' Association

The GSA operates on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis Nation. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of our gathering place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

NO	ITEM	ACTION	PAGE
1	Call to order		
2	Approval of Agenda	Decision	1
3	Approval of GSA Council Meeting Minutes ✚ March 25 th	Decision	2-4
4	Approval of Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes ✚ March 4 th	Decision	5
5	Approval of Budget and Finance Committee Meeting Minutes ✚ April 9 th	Decision	6
6	GSA 2025-2026 Budget Actuals	Information	7-8
7	Proposed GSA Budget 2026-2027	Information	9-13
8	Motion to Approve 2026/2027 GSA Budget	Decision	
9	Motion to Amend GSA Bylaws	Decision	14-25
10	GSA Executive Annual Reports a. President b. Vice President Finance and Operations c. Vice President Student Affairs d. Vice President Indigenous Engagement e. Vice President External	Information	26-45
11	Other Business: Update on GSA 2026/2027 Election	Information	
12	Adjournment		

March Council Meeting Minutes

University of Saskatchewan-Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

Wednesday, March 25th, 2026; 17:00-19:00

Meeting Location: Hybrid

Attendance: See appendix A

Council Chair: Clement Abdallah

Vice-Council Chair: Shamsuddeen Ma'aruf

Recording Secretary: Aiminayanate Pepple

a. Call to Order

- The chair, Clement Abdallah, welcomed every council member. The meeting was called to order at 5:21 PM.
- A land acknowledgment was observed, recognizing Treaty 6 territory and the Métis homeland.

b. Rules and Regulation

Clement Abdallah briefed attendees of the:

- Use of Robert's Rules of Order.
- Requirement of mover and seconder for motions.
- Voting procedures (chat or a raise of hands).
- Time allocations: 3 minutes per speaker, with reminders.
- Emphasis on professionalism and respect.

c. Approval of Agenda

The chair asked for the approval of the meeting agenda.

Mover: Mary Fidelma

Seconded by: Sunny Bui

Yes: 12

No: 0

Abstention: 0

Motion carried.

d. Approval of GSA Council Meeting Minutes

✓ **February 25th, 2026, Council Meeting**

Mover: Angelica Uy

Seconded by: Mary Fidelma

Yes: 11

No: 0

Abstention: 0

Motion carried.

e. Motion 1: To receive Diversity Committee Meeting Minutes

✓ **January 16th, 2026**

Mover: Mary Fidelma

Seconded by: Sunny Bui

Yes: 14

No: 0

Abstention: 0

Motion carried.

f. Motion 2: To ratify GSA Social group (Black Graduate Student in Saskatchewan Association (BGSSA))

Mover: Angelica Uy

Seconded by: Jessy Lee Saas

Yes: 16

No: 0

Abstention: 0

Motion carried.

g. GSA Executives Reports

➤ **President – Palash Roy**

- The president advocated for graduate student representation among the University Board of Governors.
- A proposed administrative update regarding the Standard of Student Conduct in Non-Academic Matters was made during the Senate Executive Committee meeting.
- The GSA is engaged in a partnership discussion with Swan Pizza for the provision of discounts on orders.
- The president encouraged graduate students to serve on the GSA Board of Directors.
- The GSA encourages students to participate in the GSA nomination for awards.

➤ **Vice-President Finance and Operations – Lindsay Carlson**

- The last series of the financial literacy series will be held on the 30th of March 2026 from 2 pm - 3 pm.

- A total of 41 students were each awarded \$1,000 for the winter need-based bursary.

➤ **Vice-President Student and Academic Affairs - Mandela Alema**

- The GSA hopes to continue support for the Intramural Sports initiative.
- Through the office of the chairperson of the Diversity Committee, the VP Student and Academic Affairs appreciated the community efforts of nominated black students.

➤ **Vice-President External Affairs – Sunny Bui**

- The GSA, through the office of VP External Affairs, continues to make adequate preparations for the Awards and Gala night.
- The GSA continues to engage in meaningful discussions and partnerships towards the childcare initiative.

➤ **Vice-President Indigenous Engagement - Laila Valila**

- The VP Indigenous Engagement participated in the naming of the University Heights (3) district by the City of Saskatoon.
- The VP engaged in sponsorship discussions with MasterCard Foundation.

h. Any other Business of the Day (A.O.B)

➤ **Announcement of call for Nominations**

- The chair announced the possible extension for nominations towards the GSA election and encouraged graduate students to participate.

i. Adjournment

Mover: Mandela Alema

The meeting was adjourned at 6:01 pm by Clement Abdallah.

University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association
Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2026 Asynchronous - Online
2026 – Winter Term

Members Present: Lindsay Carlson (VP Finance and Operations; Committee Chair), Mary-fidelma Chioma Ndupu (Council Member), Jessica Sharpe (Regular Member), Denise Balogh (Regular Member), Julia-Rose Miller (Council Member), Leah Johnson (CGPS Representative)

Regrets: Mandela Alema (VP Academic and Student Affairs), Hamid Yari (Council Member)

Because the Bursary Selection Committee was thoroughly onboarded in Fall 2025 and the Chair was working remotely during the month of March, the committee decided to review applications asynchronously.

Out of the 347 responses to the bursary application on Survey Monkey, 278 were completed. The committee agreed to disqualify candidates who had been awarded a GSA bursary in any of the previous three terms, per the policy. Three applicants fitting this category were removed from the pool.

Qualifying applications were divided evenly among committee members. Applications were anonymized (used NSID to track applications) to reduce bias. No conflicts of interests were reported by reviewers. The Chair created an R code which automatically assigned points to the objective categories, based on the raw output from SurveyMonkey. The Chair asked the committee to verify the correct score was given in the code, based on the response. No errors were found.

Each committee member read application supplemental materials and scored applicants in subjective categories. Committee members then totaled the objective category score + subjective category score and returned all application materials to the Chair via the shared folder, at which time the Chair revoked shared folder access.

The Chair combined all scored applications and sorted from highest to lowest score. The top 40 applications were selected. Leah Johnson agreed to assist GSA by verifying enrolment, so that students did not have to submit a “confirmation of enrolment” letter, which costs \$10. All 40 of the top-ranked applicants were registered and were awarded a \$1000 bursary via their student account.

Drawing on previous precedent, only successful bursary applicants were notified of the committee's decision, unless they inquired about the results. A PAWS feed announcement was also made sharing that results had been dispersed. It was recommended for those who were unsuccessful to apply again during the next call.

University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association
Budget and Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
April 9, 2026, 11:00 am-12:00 pm – Online
2026 – Winter Term

Members Present: Lindsay Carlson (VP Finance and Operations; Committee Chair), Palash Roy (GSA President), James Pham (Regular Member), Md Nuruzzaman (Regular Member)

Regrets: Shadman Jahin, Eric Baafi

Removed: Sunny Bui – Currently Acting VP External

The meeting was scheduled ~ 1 month prior to the meeting date, and at that time, the Chair shared the current budget and solicited proposals for changes to the GSA Operating Budget from the Committee and the current Executives. A few executive proposals were submitted, but no feedback from the Committee was received.

The meeting was called to order at 11:08 am, after quorum was reached.

The Chair gave an overview of GSA incomes and expenditures, explaining how fees are collected and paid to vendors, and the primary sources of income for the operating budget.

The Chair presented a financial summary for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, and discussed various budget lines and specific expenditures in detail. There were no questions.

The Chair then presented the proposed 2026-2027 GSA Operating Budget line by line, highlighting budget lines which have been added or changed. The Chair noted that GSA did vote to increase the GSA fee by 4.9% next year, and she forgot to update the expected fee income amount in the version sent via email. There was a question about the expected investment income, including how much is currently invested.

The Committee felt that they needed a bit more time to review the budget, so the meeting was called to order at 11:55 am.

A vote was conducted later by Microsoft Forms, and the proposed budget was approved via the asynchronous vote.

description	code	25-26 proposed	25-26 actual (estir 26-27)	proposed	rationale
UPASS	12225	0	0	0	
Health and Dental	12226	0	0	0	decreased revenue or increased expense
CFS Membership	12227	0	0	0	increased revenue or decreased expense
GSA Membership Fees (grad)	41200	282800	278000	295000	remove or recategorize or new number of students
GSA Membership Fees (non-grad)	46500	2000	490	2000	varies annually, we hope to sell more postdoc memberships by doing a better job advertising the postdoc L
UPASS Administration Fees	41301	10054	9995	10000	
GSA Commons Rental	46100	21000	10020	21000	we have plans to increase our commons rental revenue for 2026-2027
Orientation Fundraising/Support	43801 FT		3000 FT		
3MT and Conference Fundraising/Support	43802 FT		1000 FT		
Sustainability/Diversity Fundraising/Support	43803 FT		2500 FT		
Awards Gala Fundraising/Support	43804 FT		15000 FT		
Health Chats Fundraising/Support	43805 FT		0 FT		
Social Event Revenues	43806 FT		1790 FT		
Awards Gala Ticket Sales	44104 FT		930 FT		
Miscellaneous Revenues	46900 FT		3000 FT		
Notary Services	46901	400	0	400	Operations Manager will get notary public designation this year, was not able to do in 2025
Health and Dental Continuum Revenues	46903	1000	800	1000	
Cash Donations/Contributions	43800	3000	1500	3000	
Interest and Investment Income	46800	29400	11798	29400	did not reach investing revenue goal this year because we weren't able to get it going until midway through
GSA Bursary Expenses	51500	70000	70000	75000	
U of S Travel Award Contribution	51551	8500	8500	8500	
USSU Food Bank Contribution	51553	10000	10000	10000	
U of S Crisis Aid Program	51552	10000	10000	10000	
Ratified Student Club/Group Events Funding	51610	10000	10105	10000	
Banking and Credit Fees	52200	245	99	245	
Office Stationary and Supplies	52300	645	105	645	
Office Electronic Equipment	52301	5500	6235	3000	will be used this year to purchase table microphones for hybrid Zoom/in-person council meetings, last year
Office/Commons Furniture Renewal (3 year comm	52302			2000	replace 2-3 round commons tables each year, purchase new office chairs for manager and executive office
Printer Toner/Cartridges	52303	328	0	328	
Postage, Courier, and Freight	52310	84	0	84	
Commons Supplies	52320	800	361	800	
Coffee/Tea Bar Supplies and	52321	934	314	900	
Commons Renewal, Repair and Maintenance	52322	1400	2629	1400	
Expenses for Digital and Print	52330	250	168	250	
GSA Liability Insurance	52400	5997	5772	5997	
GSA D&O Insurance	52401	1587	1471	1587	
Telephone, Facsimile	52500	1969	1050	1100	reduced because we removed three phone lines GSA was no longer using
IT/ICT Technical Support	52550	470	470	470	
Legal Expenses	52601	2500	220	1000	somewhat duplicated with legal contingency fund, reduced due to lack of use
Internal Auditing/Consulting	52603	450	0	450	
Financial Auditing and taxes	52604	16200	33000	16200	higher in 25/26 because completed outstanding audits this fiscal year (approx double cost), should be bac
Bookkeeping	52650	14000	18729	14000	higher in 25/26 because still catching up on bookkeeping from gap without bookkeeper during 2024, should
President Fee	52701	12000	11000	12000	

VP External Fee	52702	12000	9000	12000	
VP Operations and Finance Fee	52703	12000	12000	12000	
VP Student Affairs Fee	52704	12000	12000	12000	
VP Indigenous Engagement Fee	52705	12000	10000	12000	
Chairperson / CEO Fee	52707	2175	2200	2175	
Election and Referenda Expenses	52708	350	214	350	
Recording Secretary Fee	52709	1250	875	1250	
CPP and EI Employer Contribution	21501	975	4995	5200	previous budgets were calculating this incorrectly
Office Staff and Coordinator Salary	52800	81500	76150	81500	cover Operation Manager salary plus 3-4 part time student workers (primarily cover events)
Executive Meeting and Retreat	52900	365	288	365	
Executive Meetings with External	52910	252	64	252	based on 18.00 lunch per diem and 14 people (5 executives + 1 guest two times)
Executive Business Cards, Nametags	52333	107	123	107	based on history of use (or lack thereof)
Executive Travel	52920	2500	214	500	reduced due to lack of use/other priorities
Executive Training and Professional Development	52930	525	0	2000	increase requested to provide professional development/leadership/anti-racism training to executives
President's Discretionary Fund	62701	1000	186	1000	
VP External Discretionary Fund	62702	1000	518	1000	
VP Fin Discretionary Fund	62703	1000	520	1000	
VP Student Affairs Discretionary	62704	1000	1000	1000	
Indigenous Engagement Discretionary	62705	1000	547	1000	
GSA Council Foods and Beverage	52903	1000	1007	1000	
GSA Committees Food and Beverage	52904	1000	141	1000	
Town Hall Food and Beverage	52905	250	0	250	
Academic Council Funding	51600	10000	7389	10000	
GSA Awards Gala	53300	2000	2000	2000	
GSA 3MT and Conference	53301	550	0	550	
GSA Fall Orientation	53302	7000	6294	6000	reduced to encourage fundraising
GSA Holiday Hangout	53303			2000	new budget line to ensure designated funds available for this event specifically
GSA Campus Rec./Intramural Sports	53304	210	157	210	
GSA Health Chats	53305	500	0	500	
GSA Social Events	53306	6000	4596	6000	
GSA Sustainability/Diversity Initiative	53307	500	500	500	
GSA Workshops/Initiatives	53308	1800	2700	1800	
GSA New Initiatives	53309	2000	1000	2000	
UPASS USSU Administration Fees	51301	11018	9900	8000	based on # of students for this year
WCB Expenses	52810	600	561	600	
ISC and Incorporation Costs	52811	90	105	90	
GSA Handbook/Calendar	52340	2000	1715	1750	reduced based on actual costs
Leasehold Annual Charges	55130	20	12	12	
Miscellaneous Expenses	61000	500	157	500	
Financial and Legal Contingency Fund	61001	2500	0	2500	
Expenses Total		366396	359356	369917	
Incomes Total		349654	339823	361800	
		-16742	-19533	-8117	

Proposed GSA Budget 2026-2027

EXPENSES		
	GSA STUDENT SUPPORT	2026-2027 Fiscal Year
51500	<i>GSA Bursary Expenses</i>	75,000
51551	<i>U of S Travel Award Contribution</i>	8,500
51552	<i>U of S Crisis Aid Program Contribution</i>	10,000
51553	<i>USSU Food Bank Contribution</i>	10,000
51610	<i>Ratified Student Club/Group Event Funding</i>	10,000
	BANKING, DEBIT, AND CREDIT FEES AND CHARGES	
52200	<i>Banking and Credit Fees and Charges</i>	245
	GSA OFFICE OPERATIONS AND EXPENSES	
52300	<i>Office Stationary and Supplies</i>	500
52301	<i>Office Electronic Equipment, Software, and Batteries</i>	3,893
52302	<i>Commons Furniture Renewal</i>	2,000
52303	<i>Printer Toner/Cartridges</i>	125
52310	<i>Postage, Courier, and Freight</i>	84
	GSA COMMONS OPERATIONS AND EXPENSES	
52320	<i>Commons Supplies</i>	800
52321	<i>Coffee/Tea Bar Supplies and Expenses</i>	900
52322	<i>Commons Renewal, Repair and Maintenance</i>	1,400

Proposed GSA Budget 2026-2027

	GSA ADVERTISING AND COMMUNICATIONS	
52330	<i>Expenses for Digital and Print Ads/Communication</i>	250
	INSURANCE	
52400	<i>GSA Liability Insurance</i>	5,997
52401	<i>GSA D&O Insurance</i>	1,587
	TELEPHONE, FAX, AND INTERNET/ICT COSTS	
52500	<i>Telephone, Facsimile, Telecommunications Costs</i>	1,100
52550	<i>IT/ICT Technical Support</i>	470
	PROFESSIONAL FEES AND EXPENSES	
52601	<i>Legal Expenses</i>	1,000
52603	<i>Internal Auditing/Consulting</i>	450
52604	<i>Financial Auditing and taxes</i>	16,200
52650	<i>Bookkeeping</i>	14,000
	STAFF SALARIES AND EXECUTIVE FEE	
52701	<i>President Fee</i>	12,000
52702	<i>VP External Fee</i>	12,000
52703	<i>VP Finance and Operations Fee</i>	12,000
52704	<i>VP Student Affairs Fee</i>	12,000
52705	<i>VP Indigenous Engagement Fee</i>	12,000
52707	<i>Chairperson Fee</i>	2,175
52708	<i>Election and Referenda Expenses</i>	350
52709	<i>Recording Secretary Fee</i>	1,250
21501	<i>CPP and EI Employer Contribution</i>	5,200
52800	<i>Office Staff and Coordinator Salaries</i>	81,500

Proposed GSA Budget 2026-2027

	GSA EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS	
52900	<i>Executive Meeting and Retreat Expenses</i>	365
52910	<i>Executive Meetings with External Delegates/Guests</i>	252
52333	<i>Executive Business Cards, Pictures, Plaque Updates and Name Tags</i>	107
52920	<i>Executive Travel</i>	500
52930	<i>Executive Training and Professional Development</i>	2,000
62701	<i>President's Discretionary Fund</i>	1,000
62702	<i>VP External Discretionary Fund</i>	1,000
62703	<i>VP Operations and Finance Discretionary Fund</i>	1,000
62704	<i>VP Student Affairs Discretionary Fund</i>	1,000
62705	<i>Indigenous Engagement Discretionary Fund</i>	1,000
	GSA ACADEMIC COUNCIL OPERATIONS	
51600	<i>Academic Council Funding</i>	10,000
52903	<i>Academic Council Foods and Beverage</i>	1,000
52904	<i>GSA Committees Food and Beverage</i>	1,000
52905	<i>Town Hall Food and Beverage</i>	250

Proposed GSA Budget 2026-2027

	GSA EVENTS	
53300	GSA Awards Gala	2,000
53301	3MT or GSA Conference	2,000
53302	Fall Orientation	6,000
53303	Holiday Hangout	2,000
53304	Campus Rec./Intramural Sports	210
53305	GSA Health Chats	500
53306	GSA Social Events	6,000
53307	Sustainability/Diversity Initiatives	500
53308	Workshops	1,800
53309	New Initiatives	2,000
	GSA OPERATING COSTS	
51301	UPASS USSU Administration Fees	10,054
52810	WCB Expenses	600
52811	ISC and Incorporation Costs	90
52340	GSA Handbook Expenses	1,750
55130	Leasehold Annual Charges	20
61001	Financial and Legal Contingency Fund Contribution	2,500
	Total	371,925

Proposed GSA Budget 2026-2027

REVENUE		
	ACCRUED REVENUE	2026-2027 Fiscal Year
12225	UPASS	0
12226	HEALTH AND DENTAL	0
12227	CFS Membership	0
FEE-BASED REVENUE		
41200	GSA Membership Fees (grad)	282,800
46500	GSA Membership Fees (non-grad)	2,000
41301	UPASS Administration Fees	10,054
FUNDRAISING/SALES BASED		
46100	GSA Commons Rental	21,000
43801	Orientation Fundraising/Support	**FT
43802	3MT and Conference Fundraising/Support	**FT
43803	Sustainability/Diversity Fundraising/Support	**FT
43804	Awards Gala Fundraising/Support	**FT
43805	Health Chats Fundraising/Support	**FT
43806	Social Event Revenues	**FT
44104	Awards Gala Ticket Sales	**FT
OTHER REVENUES		
46901	Notary Services	400
46900	Miscellaneous Revenues	1,000
43800	Cash Donations/Contributions	3,000
46800	Interest and Investment Income	29,400
Total		349,654

Motion 1: Update the GSA Constitution to Reference The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2022

Mover: Palash Roy

Secunder: Sunny Bui

References: GSA Constitution (last revised April 23, 2021); The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2022, SS 2022, c 25 (in force March 12, 2023); The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995, SS 1995, c N-4.2 (repealed)

Motion:

Be it resolved that, pursuant to Section 8.6.2.1 of the GSA Constitution, the Annual General Meeting of the Graduate Students' Association, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of Regular Members present, hereby amends the GSA Constitution by replacing every reference to The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995 with a reference to The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2022, including but not limited to the references in Sections 3.5, 4.1, and 6.4 of the Constitution; and where Section 6.4.1 references a specific section number of the prior Act (Section 92), the reference shall be updated to the corresponding provision of The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2022, with the precise replacement to be confirmed by the current 2025/2026 Executive in consultation with the Governance Committee in the housekeeping integration.

Rationale:

The GSA Constitution, last revised April 23, 2021, references The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995 in multiple sections, including Section 3.5 (use of profits), Section 4.1 (governing-document compliance), and Section 6.4 (Board of Directors composition, including a specific reference to Section 92 of the 1995 Act in clause 6.4.1). The 1995 Act was repealed and replaced by The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2022, which came into force on March 12, 2023. The Constitution should reference the statute that actually governs the Association. The amendment is purely a citation update: every instance of '1995' in the relevant references is replaced with '2022,' and the section-92 reference is updated to the corresponding provision of the 2022 Act. No other constitutional provisions are altered by this motion.

Housekeeping Integration:

This amendment is brought forward by the current 2025/2026 Executive, and the integration of the amendment into the consolidated Constitution document shall be undertaken by the current Executive prior to transition, so that the document is clean for the incoming team. The amendment itself takes effect at passage; this housekeeping is administrative.

Motion 2: Re-establishment of the GSA Governance Committee

Mover: Palash Roy

Secunder: Angelica Uy

Bylaw and Policy References: Bylaw 3.11 (Committees of Council); Policy 14.1 (Standing Committees of Council)

Motion:

Be it resolved that the Annual General Meeting of the Graduate Students' Association, exercising its authority over the structure of Standing Committees of Council, hereby restores the GSA

Governance Committee as a Standing Committee of Council on the same substantive terms under which it previously existed before its removal at the prior Annual General Meeting, with the addition of a Fallback Pathway for non-engagement as set out below, and with the GSA President serving as Chair of the Committee for the duration of their term; the previous terms of reference shall serve as the starting point, with any necessary updates to be brought before Council in the ordinary course; and the Committee shall be added to Policy 14.1 as a recognized Standing Committee of Council.

Rationale:

The GSA Governance Committee was a Standing Committee of Council until it was removed at the previous Annual General Meeting. Its mandate, ongoing review, interpretation, and stewardship of the Association's governing documents, has not since been transferred to any other body. The Code of Ethics and Discipline Committee handles complaints. The Elections and Referenda Committee administers electoral matters. Neither of these is positioned to identify governance gaps before they become disputes, draft proposed amendments, or provide interpretive guidance on bylaw and policy questions. Recent governance experience has reinforced the value of a dedicated body whose mandate is to identify procedural gaps and propose forward-looking improvements, rather than relying on ad hoc responses when issues arise. Restoring the Governance Committee returns this function to the Association.

This motion restores the Committee substantially as it previously existed, with one substantive addition: a defined gateway pathway for situations where the Committee is unable to function due to non-engagement, addressed under the Fallback Pathway section below. That addition is the principal new element of this motion. The remainder is restoration.

The Committee's core functions, on restoration, would include the following:

- Continuous review of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Policy Manual against current practice and legal requirements under The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2022.
- Drafting and bringing forward proposed amendments for Council and General Meeting consideration.
- Providing interpretive guidance to the Executive and Council on questions of governance procedure.
- Reviewing the operation of other Standing Committees and recommending structural improvements.
- Maintaining institutional memory across executive transitions on governance matters specifically.

Chairing of the Committee:

The GSA President shall serve as Chair of the Governance Committee for the duration of their term. The President is the Executive officer with the broadest cross-portfolio view of the Association's operations, the principal spokesperson on governance matters, and the office most directly accountable to the membership for the integrity of the Association's governing documents. Locating the Chair role with the President ensures that governance review is treated as a presidential priority rather than a delegable file.

Engagement and Participation Standards:

To ensure the Committee functions as intended, the Chair shall be responsible for sustained and documented engagement initiatives throughout the year. These shall include, at minimum: a regular meeting cadence sufficient for the Committee to fulfill its mandate (no fewer than monthly during the active academic terms of September through April, with reasonable flexibility during the spring and

summer terms), written agendas circulated in advance, written minutes circulated after each meeting, and active outreach to Committee members at risk of disengagement. The Chair shall also provide a brief quarterly report to Council on the Committee's activity, attendance, and progress.

Fallback Pathway in the Event of Non-Engagement:

If, despite documented good-faith engagement initiatives by the Chair, the Committee is unable to function due to sustained non-attendance, persistent quorum failure, or other unforeseen circumstances, the matter shall first be referred to the GSA Leadership Circle for consultative input. Where time-sensitive interpretive or operational governance matters cannot wait for the Committee to be reconstituted, the Executive may, after engaging the Leadership Circle and in consultation with Council, act on those matters on an interim basis. The Fallback Pathway grants only interpretive and operational authority; it does not authorize the Executive to amend the Bylaws, Constitution, or Policy Manual, which remain subject to the ordinary amendment procedures under the Constitution. The Fallback Pathway is not available where the cause of the Committee's non-function is the Chair's own failure to perform the engagement and participation duties under the section above; in such cases, the matter shall instead be referred to the Code of Ethics and Discipline Committee for review. Any Executive action taken under the Fallback Pathway shall be (a) preceded by a documented record of engagement initiatives attempted and Leadership Circle consultation undertaken, (b) reported to Council at its next regular meeting with written justification, and (c) subject to retroactive Council ratification by majority vote. If Council declines to ratify, the Executive action shall be of no further effect from the date of the Council vote forward, but actions already taken in good-faith reliance shall not be retroactively voided.

Housekeeping Integration:

The current 2025/2026 Executive shall undertake the addition of the Governance Committee to Policy 14.1 and the recovery of the previous terms of reference prior to transition, so that the Committee's structural foundations are in place for the incoming team. The Committee itself is restored at passage; this housekeeping is administrative.

Motion 3: Reform of the GSA Leadership Circle Membership and Meeting Cadence

Mover: Palash Roy

Second: Angelica Uy

Bylaw References: Bylaw 6 (GSA Leadership Circle), particularly Bylaws 6.2.1 (Membership) and 6.3 (Meetings), particularly 6.3.1; Bylaws 2.8 and 2.9 (Resignation and Removal of Executives)

Motion:

Be it resolved that the Annual General Meeting of the Graduate Students' Association, exercising its authority as a General Meeting of the membership to amend the Bylaws, hereby amends Bylaw 6 by inserting the following two provisions: (1) Bylaw 6.2.1 is amended to provide that no former Executive who failed to complete their elected term, whether by resignation, removal under Bylaw 2.9, or any other cause of incomplete service, shall be eligible for membership in the Leadership Circle, with eligibility for the Circle being conditioned on having completed the Executive role to which one was elected; and (2) Bylaw 6.3.1 is amended to provide that the Leadership Circle shall meet not less than twice per academic year, replacing the existing language that limits the Circle to no more than one meeting per academic term, and the Chair may at their discretion convene additional meetings beyond this minimum where the Chair determines that strategic, governance, or consultative matters before the Circle warrant further engagement, with all such meetings

communicated to Council in advance.

Rationale:

The Leadership Circle is intended to provide strategic and institutional continuity to the Association. Bylaw 6.6 already establishes that the GSA President chairs the Circle, which gives the body clear meeting leadership and a structural link to the Executive's institutional decision-making. What the current bylaws do not establish is a credible standard for Circle membership, nor a minimum operating cadence sufficient for the Circle to meaningfully contribute.

First Reform: Membership Completion Requirement.

Bylaw 6.2.1 currently requires the Circle to include 'all members of the GSA Executive Committee from the immediately preceding academic year.' As drafted, this provision makes no distinction between Executives who completed their elected term and those who did not. A former Executive who resigned mid-term, was removed from office under Bylaw 2.9, or otherwise failed to complete their elected service is currently entitled to a seat on the body that advises the Association's strategic direction.

Membership in the Leadership Circle is a position of institutional trust premised on having carried out the responsibilities of an Executive office. An Executive who did not complete that service, for whatever reason, has not earned that institutional position. Their inclusion in the Circle weakens the institutional clarity of what Circle membership signifies. Membership in the Leadership Circle should signal that an individual carried the responsibilities of Executive office through to completion, both for the credibility of the Circle's advice and for the continuity of institutional knowledge it is intended to preserve.

The proposed exclusion is categorical and applies to all causes of incomplete service: resignation, removal, or any other reason. This avoids creating subjective judgments about which incomplete terms 'count' and which do not. Eligibility for the Circle is conditioned on having completed the Executive role to which one was elected. Bylaw 6.2.2 already provides that membership is voluntary and contingent on availability and willingness to participate; this amendment narrows that voluntary pool to those who completed their term.

For the purposes of this clause, a former Executive is deemed to have completed their elected term if they served continuously from the start of their elected term until the formal end of that term, regardless of whether they sought or obtained re-election. An Executive who left office before the formal end of their term, by resignation under Bylaw 2.8 or removal under Bylaw 2.9, has not completed their term within the meaning of this clause.

Second Reform: Meeting Cadence with Chair Discretion.

Bylaw 6.3.1 currently provides that 'the Circle may meet no more than once per academic term.' Read narrowly, this language could be interpreted as a restrictive cap rather than as guidance, and in practice the Circle has functioned only intermittently. Other motions in this package (notably Motion 1, on constitutional alignment) rely on the Circle as a consultative gateway, and a Circle without a defined minimum cadence cannot reliably perform that gateway function across a full academic year.

This amendment makes two related changes. First, it establishes a minimum meeting frequency of twice per academic year, replacing the existing maximum-oriented language with a floor-oriented requirement. This gives the Circle a baseline operating rhythm sufficient to engage with strategic matters as they arise, without burdening volunteer members with excessive obligations. Second, it grants the Chair explicit discretion to convene additional meetings beyond this minimum where the Chair determines that strategic, governance, or consultative matters warrant further engagement. The intent is clear: two meetings is the floor for ordinary years, and the Chair retains the operational flexibility to call the Circle together as often as the work requires. Advance communication to Council ensures transparency about when the Circle is meeting and on what.

Housekeeping Integration:

The current 2025/2026 Executive shall undertake the integration of this amendment into the consolidated Bylaw 6 text prior to transition, so that the document is clean for the incoming team. The amendment itself takes effect at passage; this housekeeping is administrative.

Motion 4: Recommended Increase to the President's Monthly Fee

Mover: Palash Roy

Secunder: Angelica Uy

Bylaw References: Bylaw 5.5 (Executive Fee); Bylaw 5.4.6 (Budget Amendments)

Motion:

Be it resolved that the Annual General Meeting of the Graduate Students' Association recommends to the incoming Council and Executive that the President's monthly fee be increased by two hundred Canadian dollars (CAD \$200) per month for the 2026/2027 academic year, equivalent to an annual increase of two thousand four hundred Canadian dollars (CAD \$2,400); and that this recommendation be incorporated into the initial draft 2026/2027 budget prepared by the Budget and Finance Committee and brought before Council for approval pursuant to Bylaw 5.4, given that Bylaw 5.4.6 prohibits subsequent budget amendments to Executive fees.

Rationale:

The President's role within the GSA carries the highest workload and the broadest scope of responsibility of any Executive position. Bylaw 2.2 sets out the duties of the President, which include ethical and responsible leadership of the Association, official spokesperson responsibilities, the chairing of all Executive Meetings, ensuring the responsibilities of every other Executive position are being met, official liaison duties with government, and service as the graduate student representative on University Senate. These duties are carried in addition to the President's own graduate program of study.

The proposed increase reflects three considerations:

- The time commitment of the role is substantial and sustained. Across the academic year, the President averages approximately 30 meetings per month, including Executive Meetings, Council Meetings, University Council and Senate sittings, committee meetings, meetings with senior university administration, governmental and external partner meetings, and one-on-one meetings with Executive colleagues, Operations staff, and graduate students. Each of these meetings requires preparation, document review, and follow-up. The cumulative meeting load alone is comparable to the meeting load of senior leadership positions within the University, while the President carries it alongside a full graduate program of study.
- The President serves as the primary delegating and integrating officer of the Association. Bylaw 2.2.1.11 assigns the President responsibility for distributing workload across the Executive team, and Bylaw 2.2.1 makes the President accountable for ensuring every other Executive's portfolio is functioning. This integrating function, the work of holding the whole organization together, is invisible in most reports but represents a continuous time and judgment cost that no other position carries.

- The scope of the role has grown materially over recent years, including increased external advocacy load (governmental relations, research partnerships, intergovernmental engagement), expanded governance responsibilities, and the kind of institutional rebuilding work documented in the President's annual report. The position today is materially larger in scope than the position the current fee was originally calibrated against.

A modest, sustainable increase is well within the GSA's current financial capacity, particularly given the projected investment income of approximately twenty thousand dollars annually under the new investment strategy. The proposed CAD \$200 monthly increase represents a fraction of the new annual investment yield and does not require any cut to programming, bursaries, or service delivery.

Per Bylaw 5.5.4, executive fees cannot be changed during the fiscal year and are specified in the approved budget. This motion does not amend the bylaws or unilaterally change the fee. It is a recommendation from the membership at AGM to the incoming Council and Executive that this increase be reflected in the 2026/2027 budget when it is brought forward for approval under Bylaw 5.4.

Note for the floor: The President bringing this motion forward is concluding his term and will not benefit personally from the proposed increase. This recommendation is offered to ensure that the Presidency, going forward, is compensated in a manner commensurate with the workload, scope, and institutional responsibilities the role actually carries.

Motion 5: Reform of President Nominee Eligibility: Removal of the Volunteer Pathway and Expansion of Recognized Governance Pathways

Mover: Palash Roy

Seconder: Angelica Uy

Bylaw References: Bylaw 4.8.3.4.5 (Presidential Candidate Eligibility); Bylaw 4.8.3.4 (Eligibility Requirements generally)

Motion: **Graduate Students' Association**

Be it resolved that the Annual General Meeting of the Graduate Students' Association, exercising its authority as a General Meeting of the membership to amend the Bylaws, hereby amends Bylaw 4.8.3.4.5 in two related respects: first, by removing in its entirety the volunteer-experience pathway for President nominee eligibility ("have volunteer experience with GSA confirmed by VP External Affairs"); and second, by adding to the existing list of recognized governance pathways a new pathway recognizing completed Executive service in equivalent student governance bodies at other accredited North American post-secondary institutions, as set out in detail in the Qualifying Pathways section below.

Rationale:

The President of the Graduate Students' Association holds the most senior office in the Association. The President chairs Executive Meetings, is accountable for ensuring every other Executive's portfolio is functioning, serves as the Association's official spokesperson, represents the Association at University Senate, and acts as the principal liaison with government. The role demands a working understanding of how the GSA operates internally: how Council functions, how Executive decisions are made, how committees interact, how the Bylaws are interpreted in practice, and how the Association relates to its

institutional partners. That understanding cannot be acquired through volunteering at events, however sustained or well-intentioned that volunteering may be.

The current bylaw permits a President nominee to qualify on the basis of 'volunteer experience with GSA confirmed by VP External Affairs.' This pathway was likely intended to keep the role accessible to engaged members who had not yet held formal positions. In practice, however, it creates two problems:

- First, it sets a structurally low bar for the most senior office in the Association. Volunteering at a GSA event, even repeatedly, does not provide exposure to the governance, financial, advocacy, and institutional dimensions of the President's role. A nominee qualifying through this pathway may take office without ever having sat in a Council meeting, observed an Executive decision, or read the budget.
- Second, it places the VP External Affairs in the position of certifying eligibility for an individual seeking the Presidency, often during the same election cycle the VP themselves may be standing in. There is no defined evidentiary standard for the confirmation, which creates real procedural awkwardness for whichever VP holds that office at the time.

Qualifying Pathways:

This motion does two things together: it removes the volunteer pathway from the existing list of recognized pathways under Bylaw 4.8.3.4.5, and it adds one further pathway recognizing equivalent service at other accredited North American institutions. The addition is intentional and serves an equity purpose. Limiting eligibility to the existing pathways would disadvantage graduate students who completed their undergraduate or prior graduate studies elsewhere and who therefore had no opportunity to serve in the listed USask-internal roles, despite holding equivalent governance positions at other institutions. The addition ensures that the Presidency remains accessible to that population while preserving the underlying requirement of demonstrated, completed governance experience.

After this amendment, the recognized pathways under Bylaw 4.8.3.4.5 shall be:

- GSA Council Chair, GSA Vice-Chair, or GSA Recording Secretary.
- Any GSA Executive position.
- GSA Councillor.
- Member of a GSA Standing Committee.
- Member of a University of Saskatchewan search committee.
- Executive member of an Academic Council unit or GSA Ratified Social Group.
- Executive experience at University of Saskatchewan undergraduate student union (USSU).
- (NEW) Executive service in a recognized graduate or undergraduate student association at any other accredited North American post-secondary institution, held during the nominee's undergraduate or graduate studies at that institution, where that association is the analogous representative body to the GSA or USSU.

Each of these pathways carries an observable record of meetings attended, decisions made, and conduct demonstrated. A nominee who has served, in a completed capacity, in any one of these positions has, by virtue of that service, acquired the foundational governance understanding the President's role requires. The amendment removes only the volunteer-experience pathway, which is a structurally lower bar that

does not provide comparable exposure to governance, and adds one pathway for equivalent service elsewhere.

Accessibility of the Remaining Pathways:

This motion does not create a new barrier to the Presidency. It removes a pathway that does not, in practice, prepare a nominee for the role. The remaining pathways are deliberately broad: they include Recording Secretary, Councillor, and ratified-group Executive positions, all of which are accessible roles that any engaged graduate student can step into within their first year of GSA involvement. A nominee who is genuinely interested in the Presidency is best served by serving first in one of those roles, which both qualifies them for the office and prepares them for it.

Application:

This amendment shall apply to all Presidential nominations submitted after the date of passage of this motion. Any nominations already validly accepted under the prior version of Bylaw 4.8.3.4.5 shall not be affected by this amendment, in keeping with ordinary principles of non-retroactivity in election rules.

Housekeeping Integration:

The current 2025/2026 Executive shall undertake the integration of this amendment into the consolidated Bylaw text prior to transition, so that the document is clean for the incoming team. The amendment itself takes effect at passage; this housekeeping is administrative.

Motion 6: Mandatory Anti-Racism Training for All GSA Executives, Councillors, and Staff

Mover: Palash Roy

Seconder: Sunny Bui

References: Anti-Racism Memorandum of Understanding (in development between the University, the GSA, and the USSU); current GSA budget line for anti-racism training

Motion:

Be it resolved that the Annual General Meeting of the Graduate Students' Association directs that anti-racism training shall be mandatory for all GSA Executives, Councillors, and staff, and shall be completed within sixty (60) days of the individual taking office or commencing their role; that the Executive shall be responsible for arranging suitable training that meets the standards contemplated under the tri-party Anti-Racism MOU between the University, the GSA, and the USSU; and that completion of this training shall be tracked, recorded, and reported to Council on an annual basis.

Rationale:

During the 2025/2026 academic year, the GSA co-organized an Anti-Racism Symposium and established a permanent budget line for anti-racism training for executives, staff, and councillors. The infrastructure for this training is therefore already in place. What remains is to make participation in that training a binding expectation of holding office or working with the Association, rather than an optional offering that some may take up and others may not.

The case for making this training mandatory is straightforward. The GSA represents a graduate student body that includes students from across Canada and around the world, with a wide range of racialized identities and lived experiences. Executives, Councillors, and staff make decisions every day that affect those students, and they sit at tables with University leadership, government partners, and external

stakeholders where the GSA's positions are taken to represent the membership. Holding those roles carries an institutional responsibility to engage with the issues the GSA has formally identified as priorities. Anti-racism is one of those priorities.

A mandatory training requirement also strengthens the institutional credibility of the Anti-Racism MOU currently being finalized between the University, the GSA, and the USSU. The GSA cannot in good faith ask the University to commit to anti-racism standards that it does not also apply to its own elected and appointed representatives.

Implementation:

- All incoming Executives shall complete the training within Ninety (90) days of taking office.
- All incoming Councilors shall complete the training within Ninety (90) days of being seated.
- All GSA staff shall complete the training within sixty (60) days of being hired, with refresher training as determined appropriate by the Executive.
- All Executives, Councilors, and staff currently holding office or in role at the time of this motion's passage shall complete the training within sixty (60) days of the motion's passage, treating this AGM as the start of the compliance window for current incumbents.
- The Operations Manager shall maintain a record of completion for all individuals subject to this requirement.
- The Executive shall report annually to Council on training completion rates.
- Failure to complete the required training within the prescribed timeline shall be referred to the Code of Ethics and Discipline Committee for appropriate action.

Motion 7: Continuity of Childcare Advocacy Until Implementation

Mover: Palash Roy

Seconder: Sunny Bui

References: GSA Five-Year Childcare Strategic Plan (initiated 2025/2026); ongoing collaboration with CGPS, senior University leadership, and provincial and federal governments

Motion:

Be it resolved that the Annual General Meeting of the Graduate Students' Association affirms accessible and affordable graduate student childcare as an ongoing standing priority of the Association, and directs each successive Executive to actively advance the Five-Year Childcare Strategic Plan initiated in the 2025/2026 academic year until graduate student childcare is operationally available on campus; that no incoming Executive shall be permitted to deprioritize or set aside this file without a formal majority vote of Council with written justification; and that the Executive shall report to Council at least twice per academic year on progress against the Five-Year Plan, including milestones met, milestones outstanding, and external engagement undertaken.

Rationale:

Childcare has been a stated priority of the Graduate Students' Association for more than a decade. For most of that time, it remained a priority without a plan. In the 2025/2026 academic year, the GSA initiated

a Five-Year Strategic Plan in collaboration with senior University leadership and CGPS, with a parallel business plan being developed by an MBA capstone team and engagement raised at both federal and provincial levels of government. This is the most concrete progress the file has seen in the Association's recent history.

Five-year plans are vulnerable to executive transitions. A file that depends on sustained engagement across multiple Executive teams can be quietly dropped by any one team that does not see it as a priority, and the work of the previous teams becomes lost. This motion exists to prevent that outcome. By establishing childcare advocacy as a standing priority that no Executive may set aside without Council approval, the membership ensures that this file continues to be carried forward until graduate student childcare is actually available, not merely planned.

The motion is deliberately structured to preserve Executive flexibility on tactics while binding them to the goal. Each incoming Executive is free to decide how best to advance the file in the conditions they face, and the twice-yearly reporting requirement ensures that Council can hold them accountable for sustained engagement without micro-managing the work itself.

Implementation:

- Each incoming Executive shall include the Five-Year Childcare Plan in their transition documentation and orientation.
- The Executive shall report to Council on childcare progress at minimum twice per academic year, in the fall and spring terms.
- Any decision to formally pause or deprioritize the file shall require a majority vote of Council with written justification, recorded in the meeting minutes.
- This standing priority shall remain in force until graduate student childcare is operationally available on the University of Saskatchewan campus, at which point Council may, by majority vote, formally retire the standing priority.

Motion 8: Continuation of the GSA Graduate Voices Series

Mover: Palash Roy

Secunder: Sunny Bui

References: Graduate Voices series (launched 2025/2026, hosted on the GSA news channel); GSA Annual Awards program; GSA Award Selection Committee

Motion:

Be it resolved that the Annual General Meeting of the Graduate Students' Association affirms the Graduate Voices series, launched during the 2025/2026 academic year and hosted on the GSA's news channel, as a continuing programmatic offering of the Association; that the series shall be added to the GSA Policy Manual as a recognized programmatic offering under the Vice-President External Affairs portfolio; that the series shall feature GSA Annual Gala awardees and other exceptional graduate students nominated by the membership and the University community; and that selection of featured graduate students shall be made in consultation with the GSA Award Selection Committee and the GSA President.

Rationale:

- The Graduate Voices series was launched during the 2025/2026 academic year as a storytelling platform hosted on the GSA's news channel, providing graduate students a space to share their research, achievements, and personal journeys with the broader university community. The series contributed meaningfully to the year's overall increase in graduate student engagement with the GSA, which reached its highest level since before the pandemic. It also gave the GSA a recurring, owned channel for surfacing the work and stories of its membership, which strengthens the Association's institutional voice.
- Graduate Voices is a natural complement to the GSA Annual Awards program. Each year, more than forty graduate students are recognized through the Awards across ten categories, and three finalists per category are honoured at the Annual Gala. These individuals represent excellence across research, teaching, leadership, and community contribution. Their stories are exactly what Graduate Voices was designed to share. Anchoring the series to the Awards ensures a sustainable pipeline of candidates and connects two of the GSA's flagship initiatives into a single coherent narrative about graduate student excellence at this University.
- Engagement initiatives like Graduate Voices are easy to start and easy to let lapse. They produce no immediate operational deliverable and do not show up in the kind of metrics that demand immediate attention. But they are precisely the kind of programming that builds the long-term relationship between the Association and its membership. Discontinuing Graduate Voices would lose a year of accumulated momentum and partnership for no operational gain.

Selection and Editorial Process:

- Featured graduate students shall be drawn from the GSA Annual Gala awardees and finalists, supplemented by additional exceptional graduate students nominated by the membership, faculty, or University community.
- Selection shall be made in consultation with the GSA Award Selection Committee, who carry institutional knowledge of the awardee pool, and the GSA President, who provides cross-portfolio oversight and editorial coordination.
- Final editorial decisions, including pacing, format, and publication scheduling on the GSA's news channel, shall reside with the Vice-President External Affairs in coordination with the Operations Manager.

Implementation:

- The Graduate Voices series shall be added to the GSA Policy Manual as a recognized programmatic offering under the Vice-President External Affairs portfolio. The current 2025/2026 Executive shall undertake this Policy Manual addition prior to transition, so that the series has institutional anchoring in place for the incoming team.
- The Vice-President External Affairs shall maintain editorial oversight of the series in coordination with the Operations Manager, who supports the GSA's communications channels.

- A brief summary of Graduate Voices activity, including the number of graduate students featured and any partnership developments, shall be included in the GSA's Annual Report each year.
- The current terms of reference of the GSA Award Selection Committee shall be updated to reflect the consultative role contemplated by this motion; this update shall be undertaken by the current 2025/2026 Executive prior to transition, in keeping with the housekeeping convention applied throughout this package.
- Any decision to discontinue or substantially reduce the Graduate Voices series shall require a majority vote of Council with written justification, recorded in the meeting minutes, in keeping with the standing-priority structure used in Motion 7 of this package.

Motion 9: Comprehensive Bylaw and Policy Review for Future-Proofing

Mover: Sunny

Secunder: Palash

Bylaw References: Bylaws 1.1.3, 1.6.3, 1.14, 2.2.1.6, 2.8, 2.9, 3.7, 4.3, 4.3.3, 4.4.1, 4.8.3.10, 4.10, 5.5; GSA Policy Manual

Motion:

Be it resolved that the Annual General Meeting of the Graduate Students' Association directs the incoming Executive, in consultation with the re-established Governance Committee, to undertake a comprehensive review of the GSA Bylaws (last revised September 16, 2025) and Policy Manual (last revised September 19, 2025), with specific attention to the structural vulnerabilities and policy gaps identified in the tables accompanying this motion, and to bring forward concrete bylaw and policy amendments for Council ratification by the end of the 2026 calendar year.

Rationale:

The 2025/2026 academic year tested the GSA's governing documents under conditions they were not designed to anticipate. While the bylaws as currently drafted were sufficient to navigate this year's challenges, the experience surfaced specific clauses and structural gaps that should be addressed before they are tested again.

This motion does not predetermine the specific amendment language. It directs the incoming Executive to develop concrete proposals through proper consultative processes, in consultation with the Governance Committee re-established under Motion 2, with the Council Chair, and with affected Standing Committees. Constitutional alignment with the Act is addressed separately under Motion 1, and Leadership Circle reform is addressed separately under Motion 3, so the focus here is the Bylaws and the Policy Manual specifically. The deliverables under this motion shall be brought to Council for ratification, and where required, to a General Meeting for membership approval.

The incoming Executive and Governance Committee may identify additional matters during the review (suggestions will be provided in transitional documents). The intent of this motion is to direct that the work be undertaken systematically, with concrete amendment proposals brought back to Council and the membership within the timelines indicated.



Graduate Students' Association

President's Final Report to GSA Council

Graduate Students' Association | University of Saskatchewan | April 2026

Members of Council,

This is my final report to you as President of the Graduate Students' Association. I want to use it not only to account for the work of the past year, but to leave the institutional record clear for the executives and councillors who will follow.

The 2025/2026 year was defined by two things happening at once. The GSA was working to repair organizational gaps that had accumulated over several years, and at the same time, responding to a graduate student body under real financial and personal pressure. We did not have the option to address one before the other. Both demanded attention simultaneously, and the team delivered on both.

I also want to acknowledge, plainly, that this was not a seamless year inside the organization. We navigated governance disputes within Council itself that required procedural rigour, careful judgment, and difficult conversations among ourselves. I raise this not to relitigate it, but because the institutional record should reflect that this organization was tested this year, and that it held. That outcome is owed to councillors who took their role seriously when it would have been easier not to.

Where the GSA Stood at the Start of This Term

To understand the priorities of this year, Council should know the conditions we inherited:

- The GSA's non-profit status with Information Services Corporation had lapsed since 2022, blocking grant eligibility and fundraising capacity.
- Multiple fiscal-year audits remained outstanding and overdue.
- Substantial GSA reserves sat in low-interest accounts with no investment strategy in place.
- Childcare for graduate students had been identified as an organizational priority for over a decade with no actionable long-term plan.
- Graduate student engagement with the GSA had declined significantly during and after the pandemic.
- The U-Pass remained inequitable: GSA members continued to pay more than USSU members for fewer months of coverage.

These were not failures of any single previous administration. They were accumulated institutional gaps. Addressing them was the central work of this term.

Principal Outcomes of 2025/2026

Restoring the Foundations

As of September 1, 2025, the GSA's non-profit status with Information Services Corporation has been formally restored. This was the most consequential institutional outcome of the year. It re-opened access to grant funding, charitable fundraising, and revenue partnerships that had been closed to the organization for three years. I want to credit this outcome directly to Vice-President Finance Lindsay Carlson, whose persistence across two consecutive terms, working through overdue audits and ISC filings that had accumulated since 2022, made the reinstatement possible. Maintaining this status now requires an annual audit cycle that the incoming executive must protect.

On the strength of that restoration, the GSA launched its first strategic investment program in its history. Vice-President Finance Lindsay Carlson led this work from her portfolio, in close collaboration with our banking partners at RBC and with my engagement throughout the year on strategy and execution. Reserve funds previously sitting in low-interest accounts are now structured across short and long-term Guaranteed Investment Certificates, balanced against the liquidity needs of our Health and Dental plan. Projected annual return is at minimum \$20,000: money that will return to student programming. I want to be clear with Council that this is Lindsay's accomplishment in particular: the strategy, the engagement with RBC, and the structural design of the allocation are work she carried, and I had the privilege of working alongside her on it. This is not a one-year achievement; it is the start of a financial posture this organization has never had before, and I urge Council to hold future executives to it.

Responding to Student Financial Pressure

Demand for graduate student financial support reached unprecedented levels this year. Across the year's three calls, our jointly administered need-based bursary program received its highest application volume on record. The 110 bursaries available, distributed in partnership with CGPS, were vastly oversubscribed. In response, the GSA has built bursary expansion into the 2026/2027 budget and formally requested a matching increase in the CGPS contribution. Dean Dr. Debby Burshtyn has responded to that request with the kind of partnership the file requires, and I am grateful for it. I want to state clearly for Council: the bursary program needs to grow faster than the demand driving it, and that is a multi-year commitment, not a single budget line.

The GSA continued its standing contributions to the campus food bank, the Crisis Financial Aid program, and the ISAAC-administered graduate student travel fund. These are not new initiatives, but they are essential, and Council should know they were sustained through a year in which the demand for them grew.

A First-Ever External Research Partnership

This year the GSA was named, for the first time in its history, as a formal partner organization on a successful external research grant. The SSHRC Individual Partnership Development Grant (approximately \$200,000 CAD over March 2026 to March 2028) is led by Dr. Zhixi Zhuang at Toronto Metropolitan

University, with Dr. Ryan C. Walker at the University of Saskatchewan among the co-investigators, alongside collaborators from Simon Fraser, Dalhousie, Waterloo, and UBC.

The significance of this for Council is not the dollar value. It is that the GSA is now visible at the national research-partnership level as an organization that can be relied on as a partner. That is a credibility asset that future executives will be able to build on.

Childcare: From Rhetoric to Roadmap

Childcare has been a stated GSA priority for more than a decade. For most of that time, it has been a priority without a plan. This year, working with senior university leadership and CGPS, the GSA initiated a five-year strategic plan for graduate student childcare. In parallel, an MBA capstone team is developing a sustainable delivery model. The file has also been raised in the GSA's engagement with both federal and provincial governments. Sunny Bui, our Acting VP External Affairs and a parent of two children using campus childcare himself, has carried this file alongside the Executive throughout the year and ensured that lived experience informed every conversation.

I want to be honest with Council about what this is and is not. It is the first concrete plan, with a timeline, that this organization has ever had on this file. It is not a solved problem. The five years are the work, not the announcement.

U-Pass: A File Still Open

The U-Pass remains inequitable. GSA members continue to pay more than undergraduate students for eight months of coverage rather than twelve. I led this file personally throughout the year, with Sunny Bui contributing through the External Affairs portfolio, and together we maintained active negotiations with the City of Saskatoon to extend coverage through summer term. As a constructive step, we incorporated the City's transit survey into the GSA Student Experience Survey to provide the data the City requested. We are now awaiting the City's approval of the necessary agreement amendments, after which a member referendum will follow.

This file did not close this year. I want Council to hear that directly. The work has been advanced, but the inequity is not yet resolved, and the incoming executive will need to keep the pressure on.

Student Housing and Accommodation

The GSA advanced direct advocacy this year on the conditions of graduate student accommodation on campus, focused on tangible improvements to the residences our students actually live in. As a result of sustained engagement with the relevant University offices, several material changes are now in place: enhanced security camera coverage in residence buildings, replacement of aging mattresses across student units, and a series of related accommodation upgrades. These are not headline-grabbing items, but they are the kind of day-to-day quality-of-life improvements that meaningfully affect graduate students who are paying to live on campus. I want Council to know that this advocacy was carried in addition to our

other portfolio files, and that the University responded constructively. I encourage the incoming executive to keep this channel of engagement active, because the conditions of student housing require continuous, not episodic, attention.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

In November, the GSA co-organized an Anti-Racism Symposium with the USSU and Student Health and Wellbeing. The symposium was designed to be more than a single event: its outcomes are now informing a tri-party Memorandum of Understanding between the University, the GSA, and the USSU on equity and anti-racism. That MOU is in the final stages of being signed. The GSA has established a permanent budget line for anti-racism training for executives, staff, and councillors, ensuring that this commitment outlasts any particular term.

In January, the GSA hosted the inaugural Indigenous Resource Fair, connecting graduate students with Indigenous-specific campus resources, cultural activities, and teachings from an Elder and Knowledge Keeper. Throughout the year, the VP Indigenous Engagement extended the GSA's outreach to ratified Indigenous-led student groups across this campus, building relationships that I believe will outlast this executive and the next.

Supporting Students Through Global Events

This year was shaped, both inside and outside the GSA, by global events that reached directly into the lives of our graduate students. The unfolding situations in Iran, in Palestine and Gaza, and in other regions of geopolitical instability did not stop at the border of our campus. They affected students who hold passports tied to those regions, students whose families remained in conflict zones, students whose academic and financial circumstances shifted suddenly because of events thousands of kilometres away, and students whose communities here in Saskatoon were navigating grief, fear, and uncertainty in real time.

The GSA's response to these situations was, in my view, one of the quieter but most important things this organization did all year. We chose not to issue performative public statements that would have polarized our membership without helping any individual student. Instead, the Executive worked directly with affected students on the practical realities they were facing: connecting them with University-level supports, advocating on their behalf in conversations with the appropriate offices, ensuring that financial aid pathways stayed accessible, and providing space within the GSA for community when community was what was needed. We listened first, and we acted on what we heard.

I want to record for this Council that the GSA's approach was recognized at the University level, including in discussion at University Council itself. Senior University leadership noted that the GSA's handling of these situations, the steadiness with which we navigated them and the focus we maintained on the students themselves rather than on public posturing, was constructive and measured. That recognition belongs to the team. It also belongs to the students who came to us in difficult circumstances and trusted us to respond

carefully. The standard the incoming executive should hold to is the same: when global events affect our students, the GSA's role is to serve those students, not to use their circumstances as a platform.

Tuition Advocacy

The GSA represented graduate student concerns on tuition increases in conversations hosted by CGPS Faculty, RSAW, and JSGS, with particular focus on course-based programs where domestic and international students face the steepest pressures. We also held a seat at the University's Fee Review Committee, where I want Council to note one significant outcome: a proposed Facility Access Fee that would have charged graduate students for laboratory space access was successfully opposed and voted down. That outcome was made possible by graduate students in the relevant department who organized opposition and submitted strong written objections, and by the GSA holding the line at the committee table. The incoming executive should expect the proposed Institutional Fee to occupy similar space in the year ahead.

Engagement and Community

The most meaningful indicator from this year is one I cannot put on a balance sheet. Graduate student engagement with the GSA reached its strongest level since before the pandemic. Sixteen events over the academic year, the most in our recent history, with consistent and growing attendance across programming.

The GSA also launched Graduate Voices, a storytelling initiative that gave graduate students a platform to share their experiences with the broader university community. The annual GSA Awards program drew over forty applications across ten categories, culminating in our Annual Gala on April 25 at TCU Place. A structural review of the Awards program is underway to establish a sustainable devolved funding model that does not depend on year-to-year sponsorship.

On the Gala specifically, I want to record something for Council. Coming into this year, I personally wanted the GSA Gala to be bigger and better than it had been before, a night that genuinely reflected the calibre of the graduate students it was honouring. Sunny Bui took that intention and delivered it. The Gala this year was, in scale and execution, the strongest in our recent memory, and I want this to be recognized as the new baseline. The standard that Sunny set this year should be the floor for what the GSA Gala is going forward, not a ceiling that we drift back from in future terms.

I want Council to take note of what these numbers represent in aggregate. The GSA's impact on graduate student life increased measurably this year compared to the years preceding it. Event attendance is the highest it has been since before the pandemic. Award applications reached record levels. Bursary applications hit volumes the program has never seen. Engagement with our equity, Indigenous, and community programming was substantive and sustained. Each of these is an indicator on its own, but taken together they tell Council a single thing: graduate students re-engaged with this organization this year, and they did so because the organization was worth re-engaging with. This momentum is the most valuable thing this term produced. It does not sustain itself. It must be carried forward by the incoming

executive with the same intention, the same effort, and the same standard. I am asking Council to expect that of them.

These numbers matter, but the underlying point is simpler: graduate students showed up this year. They came to the events, they applied for the awards, they shared their stories, and they trusted us to represent them. That trust is the asset I am most concerned to hand on intact.

Digital Infrastructure and Website Modernization

One area of work I want to flag for Council, because it does not appear in any other portfolio's report, is the modernization of the GSA's digital infrastructure. I personally worked on restructuring and automating the GSA website over the course of this term. The site is now significantly more organized, easier for graduate students to navigate, and substantially more automated in how it handles core functions, including event funding submissions for ratified groups, governance documentation, and access to GSA resources. Where the previous site relied on manual handling for routine requests, much of that workflow now moves automatically through the site itself, which reduces the operational burden on the Operations Manager and on incoming executives. This is foundational work that future executives will continue to benefit from without necessarily knowing it is there, which is the appropriate outcome for infrastructure of this kind.

Professional Development

Professional development remains an area where the GSA can do more, and where institutional offerings remain uneven across colleges. I want to acknowledge CGPS for introducing new professional development courses this year, which begin to address a real gap, and I encourage continued expansion.

Unfinished Business and Transition

The following items remain in progress and will require the focused attention of the incoming executive. I have organized them so that nothing is lost in the handover.

Item	Current Status	Next Step
FY2026 Audit	Begins May 2026 following close of fiscal year	Submit by November 1, 2026 to maintain non-profit status
U-Pass Summer Extension	Awaiting City of Saskatoon approval for agreement amendments	Secure approval; conduct member referendum
Childcare Five-Year Plan	Plan initiated; MBA capstone business plan in development	Move toward Year 1 implementation milestones

Anti-Racism MOU	In process of being signed with University and USSU	Finalize and execute
Bursary Expansion	Increase proposed in 2026/2027 budget; CGPS contribution requested	Confirm CGPS funding; implement expanded program
Awards Restructuring	Structural review initiated; devolved fund model under discussion	Complete review; establish funding mechanism
Investment Strategy	Funds in GICs through 2027 and 2028	Monitor returns; report to Council at AGM
Fee Review Committee	Institutional Fee proposal under review	Engage diligently; represent graduate student interests

Closing

I took on this role understanding that the GSA needed institutional repair before it could grow. That repair has been done. The non-profit status is restored. The audits are complete. The finances are organized and earning returns. For the first time, this organization has a childcare plan with a timeline, an investment strategy with projected returns, and a research partnership that places the GSA alongside major Canadian universities.

I also took on this role understanding that none of that institutional work matters if graduate students do not feel that the GSA belongs to them. This year, our events drew the strongest attendance since before the pandemic. Students applied for awards, attended the Indigenous Resource Fair, participated in the Anti-Racism Symposium, and shared their stories through Graduate Voices. That is the part of this year I will carry with me.

The GSA is in a stronger position today than it was a year ago. It is not in a perfect position. The U-Pass remains inequitable. The bursary program needs to outpace demand. Childcare is a five-year commitment that has only just begun. These are not shortcomings of this term. They are the ongoing work of the organization, and I trust the incoming leadership to carry them forward.

I want to thank my executive team: Lindsay Carlson, Sunny Bui, Mandela Alema, and Laila Valila, and every student who contributed time and energy to this organization alongside their own graduate work. I thank our Operations Manager, Brenna Maxwell, whose continuity and competence held this organization steady through every transition. I thank the councillors who engaged in difficult governance conversations

and held this executive accountable. I thank CGPS, and Dean Dr. Debby Burshtyn in particular, for meeting us as genuine partners throughout this term.

It has been the honour of my career to represent the graduate students of this university. I thank Council for its partnership, its scrutiny, and its commitment to the community we serve.

Respectfully submitted,

Palash Ranjan Roy

President, Graduate Students' Association

University of Saskatchewan

April 2026



Graduate Students' Association



Graduate Students' Association

GSA Vice President Finance and Operations Annual Report 2025-2026 Academic Year

Completion of Audits and Restoration of Non-Profit Status

I worked closely with Buckberger Baerg & Partners LLP (contracted auditor), AVO Bookkeeping, and Brenna Maxwell (GSA Operations Manager) to gather necessary information and complete the fiscal year 2024 and 2025 fiscal year audits, covering the period from May 1, 2023, to April 30, 2025. This brings GSA completely up to date with bookkeeping and auditing, such that the 2026 fiscal year audit process can begin in May 2026, following the close of the current fiscal year. Note that excessive budget expenditures in these budget lines are associated with the catch-up from the 2023-2024 academic year when these efforts lapsed and no funds in these budget lines were spent.

Completing outstanding audits was the first step toward restoring GSA Non-Profit Status with Information Services Corporation (ISC), and we brought our status into good standing as of September 2025. Submission of the next audit by November 1, 2026 is required to keep our status current. Non-Profit status is necessary to maintain our new investing portfolio, apply for grant-based funding, and is mandated in our bylaws, so I urge the incoming President and VP Finance to be diligent in ensuring necessary steps are completed.

The GSA executives voted to renew our contract with our current auditor for the 2026 fiscal year's audit, and also to sign a three-year agreement with the bookkeeping firm we have been working with since late 2024. I hope that this consistency and institutional knowledge will benefit incoming executives, and limit workload for the Operations Manager.

Investing Health and Dental Savings Account Funds in GICs

Following the renewal of our non-profit status, we re-engaged our banking team at RBC to set up an investment plan for GSA's Health and Dental Savings Account. This account exists because the cost of the plan (amount the insurance company charges GSA) is driven by claims, whereas the fee (amount charged to students) is set ~9 months before the plan year begins and is based on the predicted cost of the plan. In some years, the cost of the plan exceeds the fees collected, in which case GSA pays the difference on behalf of students. In other years, the fee collected exceeds the cost of the plan, and these funds are saved for the future. The funds in this account have been accrued over many years, earning negligible interest in the savings account.

Following extensive engagement to help our banking team understand GSA's organizational structure and priorities, as well as map timing of potential expenditures. We developed a plan to place savings funds into a variety of GICs, such that some cash would be available when they may be needed to offset our

plan cost this year (expected \$60,000 to \$100,000 deficiency this year), but two equal portions of the remaining fund are invested through February 2027 or February 2028.

Though GICs will not earn as much as other potential investing options, they have a guaranteed interest rate (no-risk), and funds can always be removed from GICs early if needed (though the total expected interest income may not be earned if removed early). The VP Finance role will lead decision-making or future investments, with approval of the Executives, and under advisement by the RBC Investors. An investment portfolio report is not available for this fiscal year, because all of our funds are still invested. However, RBC will produce these reports on our behalf, and future executives should provide a portfolio report at the AGM each year.

I personally feel that a future goal of GSA should be to earn enough from investing, grant-writing, fundraising, and business ventures to limit increases in GSA student fees and continue to offset the cost of the health and dental insurance plan. This is the first step in that direction.

Bursary Distributions

This year, GSA allotted \$70,000 of our own funds toward the GSA-CGPS Need-Based Bursary. CGPS contributed \$40,000, which allowed us to distribute a total of 110 bursaries in the amount of \$1,000. The bursary agreement with CGPS was renegotiated in Fall 2024, which includes a stipulation that bursaries will be distributed directly to student accounts through CGPS. Though some students have expressed frustration that the funds can no longer be picked up as a cheque/deposited to their personal bank account, I do support this arrangement because it reduces labor for executives and office staff, reduces bookkeeping costs associated with issuing T4As for so many students, and ensures that everyone (including remote students) can receive their funds promptly.

I thank the Bursary Selection Committee for this academic year: Jessica Sharpe, Denise Balogh, Julia-Rose Miller, Mary-fidelma Chioma Ndupu, Hamid Yari, and Mandela Alema. We met in person during fall, and remotely during the winter term, and they will continue to serve through the spring/summer terms following installment of new executives. These selfless individuals volunteered their time to read, score, and double check applications, and by participating in the committee, cannot apply for the bursary themselves. Distribution of bursaries would not be possible without them, so I express my great appreciation.

GSA received more than 1,000 applications for the GSA-CGPS Need-Based Bursary during my term of service. We recognize that the rising cost of living is affecting graduate students significantly. GSA is proposing a \$5,000 increase in this budget line for 2026-2027 academic year. We hope that CGPS will increase their contribution to match, and that GSA can provide more funds directly to graduate students next year.

Ratified Group Funds and Event Applications

Following closing of the council ratification period, we distributed annual council support funds (based on number of students in the council and GSA council meeting attendance of the councilor) to our 19 councils for a total of \$7,389 in funds distributed.

In September, we launched a new web form for collecting event funding requests from ratified groups. The form can be found under the Academic Councils section of the Governance tab on the GSA website and can be used by both Academic Councils and Ratified Social Clubs to request event funding up to \$750, in any denomination, for 1-2 events per academic year. We feel that this new form streamlines the event funding process for applicants, and provides Executives with a simpler, standardized submission to improve efficiency and fairness of review. Since May 1, we received 32 event funding requests and distributed \$10,105 (the entire budgeted amount). We congratulate our ratified groups on hosting so many fantastic events!

Advocacy for Fair Treatment of Graduate Students in Fee Planning

One of the roles of the Vice President Finance and Operations is to serve on the University's Fee Review Committee (FRC). This committee reviews all proposed fees, from the recently suggested Institutional Fee to fees charged to cover materials costs in chemistry labs. As a member of this committee, I communicated with students in the Department of Agriculture and Bioresources who expressed opposition to a newly proposed Facility Access Fee which would be charged to graduate students for access to laboratory space. Thanks to their well-written letters of opposition, I was able to lead an argument against the implementation of the fee. After significant discussion, the FRC voted against this fee.

I regularly vote against and make arguments for fees and fee-structures that I feel are unfair to students, but as just one member of a 10+ member committee, I am typically overruled. I credit the vehement opposition by members of the PGSA for success in this advocacy.

Graduate Students' Association

I urge the incoming VP Finance and Operations to engage diligently with the FRC, specifically as the University's proposed Institutional Fee makes its way through approval next year.

Financial Literacy Event Series

In collaboration with Susan Winmill from Student Finance and Awards, GSA hosted a three-part series focused on helping students gain financial literacy and knowledge. The first event (Budgeting) was hosted in person at the GSA Commons during the fall term. We hosted two online events during the winter term: Saving and Investing and Taxes 101. We thank Susan for her efforts in creating and presenting material, and we hope that students gained valuable knowledge from these events.

Low-Cost Professional Headshots Event

The results from our graduate student interest survey conducted over the summer indicated that a free professional headshot event was the most popular among graduate students. We hired Dave Stobbe

(university-associated professional photographer who photographed the GSA Gala in previous years) and hosted the event at the GSA Commons on November 25. Though we wanted to keep this event as low-cost as possible, we also wanted to make sure students who signed up for the event actually attended, so we charged \$10 to secure a time. GSA covered the remaining cost of the event.

We had a limited number of photo slots available (80) during the three-hour event, and the event sold out completely. Each student received edited, digital copies of 1-2 portraits of their choice. This event was open to graduate students and postdocs only, and we received wildly positive feedback.

Farewell

I got involved in GSA because I felt that GSA was not serving graduate students the way that it should be. I hope I have been a small part in turning that around, but ultimately, it is a constant effort and relies as much on the incoming executive team as it did on me. I'd like to share motivation and encouragement with incoming executives, and any student interested in getting involved in governance. Student governance can be thankless and frustrating. You may receive pushback from your advisor, who doesn't feel that it is a worthwhile use of your time. You certainly will work long hours and face challenges balancing your research, GSA commitments, and personal life. However (though I can only speak for myself), I feel that the skills I've gained from working in student governance have prepared me for a variety of future career and life pursuits better than the majority of my graduate education. That said, you get out what you put in. So, to incoming executives, I urge you to do your best -- and then do a little more. You just might surprise yourself with what you can achieve.

It has been an honor to serve graduate students for the past two year. Thank you for electing me.

All the best,

Lindsay Gray Carlson

Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Biology

GSA VP Finance and Operations 2024-2025

GSA VP Finance and Operations 2025-2026

Graduate Students' Association



Graduate Students' Association

Annual Report – Vice President Academic and Student Affairs

Mandela Alema

1.0 Overview

Over the 2025-2026 academic year, the Office of the Vice President Academic and Student Affairs advanced initiatives aimed at strengthening grad student engagement, enhancing academic representation, and fostering an inclusive and supportive community at the University of Saskatchewan. This work was guided by a commitment to advocacy, student well-being, and meaningful collaboration with campus and external stakeholders.

2.0 Key Initiatives and Activities

2.1 Graduate Student Engagement and Community Building

A major focus of the portfolio was strengthening community among grad students through both academic and social initiatives. The 2025 GSA Fall Orientation was successfully redesigned into a flexible, drop-in format, allowing students to engage directly with campus partners and services. The event recorded strong participation with over 300 attendees and received highly positive feedback.

The GSA also participated in the 2026 Winter Orientation through an information booth, engaging approximately 90 new grad students and providing information on services and supports. In collaboration with the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union (USSU), the Graduate Opportunities Workshop was delivered as part of Academic Awareness Week. This initiative connected undergraduate students with graduate mentors and provided guidance on graduate school pathways, applications and experiences.

2.2 Holiday Hangout Initiative

The 2025 Holiday Hangout was successfully organized in partnership with the USSU, International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC), Office of Sustainability, and Student Wellness Centre. The event provided a welcoming environment for grad students and their families remaining in Saskatoon during the holiday period. The event recorded strong participation across two days, successfully achieving its objective of fostering belonging and reducing isolation. It featured meals, activities, and family-oriented programming, and was supported through both financial and in-kind contributions from multiple partners.

2.3 GSA Intramural Sports Program

For the first time, the GSA launched intramural sports teams during the Winter 2026 term, including volleyball and futsal. Participation included students with varying skill levels, and the initiative successfully fostered community, peer support, and cross-departmental engagement. The teams competed throughout the term, finishing 4th (volleyball) and 8th (futsal). Beyond competition, the program achieved its primary goal of enhancing student well-being and building social connections. Strong interest has been expressed in continuing and expanding the program.

2.4 Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

Through the Diversity Committee, several initiatives were advanced to promote inclusion and representation. These included recognizing the experiences of Black graduate student parents through a storytelling initiative. These efforts contributed to fostering a more inclusive and culturally engaged graduate student community.

2.5 Student Support and Financial Aid

The portfolio contributed to student financial support through participation in the GSA-CGPS Need-Based Bursary program. In 2026, forty-one graduate students were awarded \$1,000 each, as part of a broader annual allocation supporting students experiencing financial need.

2.6 Academic Representation and Advocacy

A core responsibility of the portfolio involved representing graduate students in academic governance and institutional processes. This included active participation in key committees such as the University Council, Graduate Programs Committee, Graduate Academic Affairs Committee, and Academic Programs Committee. The office also coordinated graduate student representation on faculty councils, search committees, and review committees across multiple colleges, ensuring that graduate student perspectives were included in institutional decision-making. Additionally, advocacy efforts addressed key issues affecting graduate students, including academic policies, funding, and student services, through ongoing engagement with university stakeholders and external organizations.

2.7 Ratification and Governance Support

The annual ratification process for Academic Councils and Social Clubs was successfully completed with 19 Academic Councils and 14 Social Clubs ratified for the 2025–2026 academic year. This process was supported by the implementation of a web-based application system, improving efficiency and accessibility.

3.0 External Engagement and Stakeholder Collaboration

The portfolio engaged with national and external stakeholders to advance grad student interests. This included participation in the ALUMO Graduate Stakeholder Meeting in Montreal where discussions focused on student health coverage, mental health supports, and emerging policy developments. Engagement with the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) further supported advocacy efforts on issues affecting graduate students, including academic and policy-related concerns.

4.0 Conclusion

Over the past year, the Office of the VP Academic and Student Affairs has made significant progress in advancing initiatives that support grad student engagement, well-being, and representation. Through collaborative efforts, new programming, and sustained advocacy, the portfolio has contributed to enhancing the graduate student experience at the University of Saskatchewan.

5.0 Acknowledgement

It has been a privilege to serve as VP Academic and Student Affairs for the GSA. This role has been an invaluable learning experience, providing me with the opportunity to grow both professionally and personally while contributing to the graduate student community.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all graduate students for their engagement and trust, to GSA Council for their continued support and collaboration, and to my fellow executives for their guidance and teamwork throughout the year. Your collective efforts have been instrumental in advancing the initiatives of this portfolio.





Dear GSA Council,

I am writing to report on my activity for the month of April 2026.

GSA Awards and GSA Gala

A significant portion of my work this month remained focused on the GSA Awards and Gala. In late March, I met with staff at the venue to continue discussions related to event planning and evening logistics. A scheduled committee meeting was subsequently cancelled following the earlier decision to extend the awards deadline, and committee members were instead asked to continue reviewing submitted applications.

On April 7, the Awards Committee met to review submitted scores and discuss the top-ranked applicants across categories. Finalists were discussed and approved through formal motions, resulting in the selection of finalists from a strong pool of applications. The adjudication process involved thoughtful discussion, especially in categories where applications were closely ranked, and this helped ensure careful consideration of the final results.

Throughout April, additional planning meetings and volunteer coordination continued in preparation for the Gala. This included a further meeting with the venue to review accommodations and update event orders, as well as committee support for gift bag preparation and other final event logistics. I appreciate the support of committee members who volunteered their time to assist with the organization and preparation of the event.

The GSA Awards and Gala took place on April 25 and was a success. The event brought together graduate students, supervisors, senior university leadership, and government officials for an evening of celebration and recognition. A key goal in planning the event was to maintain a strong flow throughout the evening through consistent programming and entertainment, which contributed to the overall success of the event.

Governance and Executive Work

This month also included regular and special executive governance work. I attended the regular executive meeting at the end of March, as well as a special executive meeting on April 1 that was called in response to serious bylaw-related concerns that had implications for the credibility of the Association. I also attended a special council meeting on April 7 that followed from this executive work, as well as the regular bi-monthly executive meeting later in the month.

University Representation and Advocacy

On March 26, I met with the faculty association to discuss topics affecting the university community, including artificial intelligence, academic misconduct policy developments, and exam-related policies. On April 2, I attended the General Academic Assembly. During that meeting, a motion was brought forward calling for divestment from companies connected to the arms and weapons industry to be advanced to the Board of Governors. The motion received strong support in the assembly. Quorum not met. The Chair (President) advised that this will move forward to the Board of Governors.

On April 16, I attended University Council and delivered the GSA report on behalf of the President.

Awards Adjudication

On April 27, I was invited to participate in the adjudication meeting for the Scholar of the Year Award. This continued my involvement in graduate student recognition work beyond the Gala and broader awards process.

Meeting and Events Attended

March 26th: Meeting with the USASK Faculty Association

March 26th: Gala - Meeting with TCU Place

March 27th: GSA Awards Committee Meeting #2

March 30th: GSA Exec Meeting

April 1st: Special GSA Exec Meeting

April 2nd: USask General Academic Assembly

April 7th GSA Awards Committee Meeting #3

April 7th: Special Council Meeting

April 15th: Gala - Meeting w/ TCU Place

April 16th: USask University Council

April 17th: Gala – GSA Awards Committee

April 22th: GSA Exec Meeting

April 24th: Gala – GSA Awards Committee

April 25th: GSA Awards & Gala

April 27th: Scholar of The Year Award Adjudication Meeting



 Graduate Students' Association

Regards,

Sunny Bui (il/lui/he/him/his)

VP External, Graduate Students' Association

PhD Student, College of Kinesiology, University of Saskatchewan



Report of the Vice President Indigenous Engagement
Laila Valila / April 21, 2026

Event Organization

Working along the Executives, my portfolio was expanded to collaborate on annual GSA events. These include, but are not limited to; Welcome Week, the Halloween Hangout, Holiday Hangout and the Annual Gala. Additional support was given for new events such as the USSU/GSA Racism Symposium, the Iranian Student Support Event and the professional headshot session near the beginning of the academic year.

Under the VP Indigenous portfolio, multiple events were hosted and collaborated on. On January 21st, 2026, the GSA held its first annual Indigenous Student Resource Fair and Intercultural Exchange. This event had three main objectives; (a) to connect Indigenous graduate students with on-campus and off-campus supports for employment, professional development and volunteering; (b) provide access to Elders and Knowledge Keepers for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students to speak with; and (c) educate International students on Indigenous peoples in the Saskatchewan context. The Resource Fair had limited participation but new funding avenues have been used and the participating student groups have agreed to attend the 2026-27 Fair.

Following the Fair, the GSA co-hosted a Soup and Bannock event with Gordon Oakes on February 25th, 2026. The event was a success; over 150 students attended and the VP Indigenous was able to speak on the Graduate Student Association's support, upcoming events and promote participation amongst Indigenous graduate students.

Indigenous Engagement

Within my portfolio, many of the duties are to engage with Indigenous graduate students and their respective student bodies to promote collaboration, synchronize programming and support and to gain feedback on the Graduate Student Association's ways of doing and knowing. While reflecting on the 2025-26 academic year, I identified two core issues surrounding Indigenous participation within the GSA and the Indigenous experience on campus.

First, Indigenous students are largely unaware of the support the GSA provides for them and the opportunities available for both academic and leadership recognition. Throughout my tenure I facilitated one-on-one consultations with many of the Indigenous student governance bodies on campus, particularly the graduate level bodies, and a mutual concern for a lack of GSA sponsorship for events and collaborative events was evident. The concern for a lack of Indigenous engagement in the GSA is substantiated by the receipt of one nomination for the Indigenous Studies award at the Annual Gala.

Second, Indigenous students emphasized the need for Indigeneity within communication, event organization and GSA governance. Many Indigenous governance bodies on campus have recognized Robert's Rule as colonial and have opted for consensus-based decision making mechanisms. Students expressed discomfort in participating in a governance system that is not inclusive and lacks consistent Indigenous leadership as a whole.

Aside from consulting with these groups on a monthly basis, I attended a majority of the Indigenous-led events for the academic year. I strongly believe that attending these events created visibility for the GSA among Indigenous students and promoted a strong relationship between the GSA and Indigenous leaders on campus. Additional information can be found within monthly minutes but events in which the GSA was able to present relative information included: the Gordon Oakes Soup and Bannock, the ISU Bingo and Braids event and the MSU's New Years Party. It is through these avenues that the GSA will be able to create a sustainable, working relationship with Indigenous bodies on campus.

Advocacy

Indigenous advocacy was at the forefront of my duties as Vice President Indigenous Engagement. This was achieved through consistent attendance within Cousin's events, the Indigenous Graduate Leadership Circle, the Indigenous Students Leadership Circle and larger student-led initiatives from the ISU and University. I was also honoured to be invited to participate in the City of Saskatoon's Naming Committee, the Canadian Federation of Student's Indigenous Circle and the OVPEI's first Annual Leadership Symposium.

Coming into my position, I had multiple concerns regarding the GSA's operations and the experience of Indigenous students on campus. These concerns were largely surrounding land acknowledgement protocols, Indigenous participation in non-Indigenous-led student bureaucracy and cultural insensitivities. Appropriate measures were taken to address these concerns, namely consistent advocacy at a Faculty level for renewed land acknowledgement practices on campus, communication with CGPS leadership and attendance in CGPS Committees and information halls.

At an institutional level, I brought forward concerns regarding the international student experience on Treaty lands. Considering the colonial context of Canada as a whole, it is imperative that international students arrive at the University with a basic understanding of our Indigenous people, the Treaties and the role of reconciliation that they will be a part of. By providing additional context to incoming students, they will be more equipped to approach Indigenous topics within curricula and may alleviate cultural clashes on campus.

Lastly, at a federal level, I attended two Canadian Federation of Students conferences where I acted as a voting member. As the representative for the University of Saskatchewan, my votes directly impacted: (a) the election of the incoming CFS Executive and Indigenous Circle Executive; (b) a motion to maintain autonomy for native languages within Nunavut educational institutions; and (c) a nation-wide, coordinated approach to rising concerns surrounding tuition costs.

Recommendations for 2026-27

As the outgoing Vice President Indigenous Engagement, I have identified objectives that may be considered for future implementation and action.

1. *Advancing Education for Incoming International Students:* in January 2026, the GSA hosted its first Indigenous Resource Fair and Intercultural Exchange. International participation was relatively high and there is a substantiated need for more educational opportunities led by Indigenous students themselves. The GSA is in a unique position; while the University continues to identify discrepancies in the knowledge that International students come with surrounding Indigenous peoples in Canada, there is room for student-led direction and innovation.
2. *Inclusion of Indigenous Student Bodies:* The Graduate Student Association's Council, consisting of ratified student bodies on campus, currently lacks Indigenous student bodies. Due to the relatively low population of Indigenous students at the graduate level, groups such as the Metis Students of Usask and the Indigenous Students Union (ISU) allow membership for both categories. The lack of participation is not a true reflection of the strength of our community and in order to ensure that Indigenous graduate students are represented, the ISU should be approached with a participatory, non-voting membership for Council meetings. In addition, I recommend an invitation for graduate ISU members to participate in the various Committees the GSA Executive facilitates, namely the Diversity Committee and Sustainability Committee.
3. *Removal of Participation in the Faith Council:* the University of Saskatchewan hosts a Faith Council wherein religious leaders and professors on campus gather on a monthly basis. The appointment of Vice President Indigenous Engagement to this Council disregards the lived experiences that Indigenous peoples have had with organized religion and does not align with the campus-wide approach to Indigenous governance. Going forward, I recommend the removal of this appointment and encourage the GSA to explore alternative participatory positions within Indigenous-led committees on campus.

Graduate Students' Association

Appendix A

	Academic Council	Councillor	March 2026
1	Agricultural and Resource Economics Graduate Students' Society	Councilor – Aminata Ba Alternate – Cornelius Mensah	A
2	Animal and Poultry Science Graduate Students' Association	Councilor - Megan Dubois Alternate - Beatriz Montenegro	A
3	Biology Graduate Students' Association	Councilor - Portia Mohrbutter Alternate - Laura Dyson	A
4	Chemistry Course Council	Councilor - Shreya Tiwary Alternate - Segun Liyansan	A
5	College of Medicine Graduate Student Society (CMGSS)	Councilor 1 - Griffin Lehnert Alternate 1 - Christopher Chivers	A
		Councilor 2 - Amber Jurke Alternate 2 - Hetvi Darji	A
6	College of Kinesiology Graduate Society	Councilor - Sunny Bui Alternate - Karissa Johnson	A
7	Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)	Councilor - Mary-fidelma Chioma Ndupu Alternate - Md Shamimur Rahman	P
8	Education Graduate Students Association (EGSA)	Councilor - Kiegan Lloyd Alternate – Rumpa Banik	P
9	Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC)	Councilor 1 - Farzana Haque Reeti Alternate 1 - Binod Sapkota	A
		Councilor 2 - Adit Raj Chalise Alternate 1 - Corwyn Shomachuk	A
10	English Course Council	Councilor - Hamid Yari Alternate - Jasmine Redford	A
11	Geography and Planning Graduate Student Council (GEPL)	Councilor - Emily Ireland Alternate - Prakash Sapkota	P
12	History Graduate Student Association	Councilor - Jessy Lee Saas Alternate - Julia-Rose Miller	P
13	Nursing Graduate Students Association	Councilor - Kirsten Witter Councilor - Aja Tost	A
14	Physics and Engineering Physics Graduate Association of Students at University of Saskatchewan (PEGASUS)	Councilor - Jeisson Vanegas Alternate - Brody Dunlop	P
15	Plant Science Graduate Students' Association (PSGSA)	Councilor 1 - Luke Dojack Alternate 1 - Makenna Mitchell	P

		Councilor 2 - Giri Raj Paudel Alternate 2 - Sachintha Attanayake	P
16	School of environment and Sustainability Student Association	Councilor 1 - Nelly Ataawomba Afuubi Alternate 1 - Jethro Opara	A
		Councilor 2 - Jabed Chowdhury Alternate 2 - Anas Ansari	A
17	Sociology Graduate Students Association	Councilor – Meaghan Boily Alternate - Leah Houseman	A
18	Soil Science Graduate Students Association	Councilor - Nemat Dindarloo Alternate - Levi Lundell	A
19	The School of Public Health Students' Association (SPHSA)	Councilor 1 - Motajo Modupeoluwa Olakunle	P
		Councilor 2 - Angelica Caresse Uy Alternate - Sun Thai	P
20	Toxicology Graduate Student Association	Councilor - Chantel De Lange Alternate - Catherine Roberts	A

Executive member	Name	February 2026
Executive President	Palash Roy	P
Exec. VP Finance and Operations	Lindsay Carlson	A
Exec. VP Academic and Student Affairs	Mandela Alema	P
Exec. VP External Affairs	Sunny Bui	P
Exec. VP Indigenous Engagement	Laila Valila	P

Graduate Students' Association