

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

GSA

Graduate Students' Association

AGENDA PACKAGE

Council Meeting

Wednesday, February 25, 2026; 17:00

Meeting Location: GSA Common

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		1
2	Approval of GSA Council meeting minutes 📅 January 28 th	Decision	2-5
3	Introduction of Invited Guest by the Vice-Chair	Information	
4	Remarks from Invited Guest Dr. Vince Bruni-Bossio, University President Dr. Marjorie Delbaere, Interim Vice-Provost, Students and Learning Dr. Debby Burshtyn, Dean of the College of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS)	Information	
5	Questions and Answer Session.	Information	
6	Motion to ratify the GSA Social group (Iranian Students Association)	Decision	
7	GSA executive reports a. President b. Vice President Finance and Operation c. Vice President Student Affairs d. Vice President Indigenous Engagement e. Vice President External	Information	6-15
	Other Business: Announcement of call for Nominations (GSA Executive Election Schedule)		
8	Adjournment		

Graduate Students' Association

January Council Meeting Minutes
University of Saskatchewan-Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

Wednesday, January 28th, 2026; 17:00-19:00

Meeting Location: Hybrid (In-person & Online-Zoom)

“As Council gathers, we acknowledge that we are on Treaty C Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of our gathering place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.”

Attendance: See appendix A

Council Chair: Clement Abdallah

Recording Secretary: Aiminayanate Pepple

a. Call to Order

- The chair, Clement Abdallah, welcomed every council member. The meeting was called to order at 5:09 PM.
- A land acknowledgment was observed, recognizing Treaty 6 territory and the Métis homeland.

b. Rules and Regulation

Clement Abdallah briefed council members 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: Palash Roy

Seconded by: Luke Dojack

Yes: 14

No: 0

Abstention: 0

Motion carried.

d. Approval of GSA Council Meeting Minutes

✓ **December 17th, 2025, Council Meeting**

Mover: Luke Dojack

Seconded by: Laila Valila

Yes: 13

No: 1

Abstention: 0

Motion carried.

e. Motion 1: To approve a 5% increase to both the Health and Dental Plan Fees for the 2026/2027 academic year

- The proposed health and dental plan fee for 2026/2027 academic session is \$712.77 with \$237.58 to be paid in fall semester (4 months) and \$475.18 to be paid in winter semester (8 months).
- Voting was inconclusive because the meeting did not reach the required two-thirds majority of Council members needed to proceed.
 - ❖ VP finance suggested that an email be sent to all council members to vote before the 2nd of February 2026.

f. Motion 2: To approve a 5% increase to GSA Fee for the 2026/2027 academic year

- The GSA annual fee is proposed to increase from \$77.80 to \$81.68 for efficient service delivery.
- An email was agreed to be sent to all council members to vote before the 2nd of February 2026.

g. GSA Executives Reports

➤ **President – Palash Roy**

- A welcome session was held in collaboration with OPUS for new and current graduate students.
- GSA is currently working to invest its funds in low-risk investment options.
- The GSA was given the sum of CAD 1,000 by the CGPS towards the development of the childcare proposal.
- The GSA team is working on informing the provincial Education Minister, Everett Hindle, of the challenges faced by graduate students.
- The president informed the council of the
 - ❖ Proposed 5% increase in the health & dental fees for the next academic session.
 - ❖ The GSA increased fee is expected to include and provide optimized services for graduate students.

- The USSU has agreed to manage the spring-summer transit pass for graduate students on behalf of the GSA with provided option to opt-out.
 - ❖ In view of this, the GSA hopes to communicate to graduate students in due time about the cost and duration of the transit pass.
 - In discussion with the University President's Executive Committee (PEC), the president advocated for the retention of the USask email addresses by alumni.
 - ❖ A discounted fee option will be available for alumni willing to retain their email address.
 - ❖ Alumni will be informed a year in advance before the closure of the email address.
 - The GSA is in communication with the Deputy Provost's office, the Language Centre, and CGPS for the introduction of International Mother Language Day on campus.
 - The GSA team sympathizes with Iranian students and is willing to provide additional support to alleviate difficulties.
- **Vice-President Finance and Operations – Lindsay Carlson**
- In communication with Studentcare regarding the need for renewal costs, the GSA executives have proposed a 5% increase in health & dental fees for the next academic session.
 - VP Finance plans to host two financial literacy events on saving and investment for the winter term. Graduate students are encouraged to attend.
 - ❖ An in-person information session on tax-filing will be held this winter term for graduate students.
 - The application for the Winter 2026 GSA-CGPS need-based bursary will begin on the 2nd of February 2026 and end on the 20th of February 2026. Recipients will be notified by March 6th, 2026.
- Graduate Students' Association**
- **Vice-President Student and Academic Affairs - Mandela Alema**
- The annual Holiday Hangout held in December 2025 for students by the GSA in collaboration with the USSU, ISSAC, Office of Sustainability and Student Wellness Centre was successful.
 - New graduate students were welcomed on January 5th at the Kick-Off Social of the 2026 USask Winter Orientation.
 - The GSA has launched its first-ever intramural sports teams in the 2026 winter term with two teams called co-ed futsal and one co-ed volleyball.
- **Vice-President Indigenous - Laila Valila**
- The indigenous Resource Fair and Intercultural Exchange held was a success. The VP indigenous hopes to continuously organize these programs.
 - The VP raised concerns about the roles of the office of the indigenous affairs and hopes to make adequate changes for clarification purposes.

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

- The VP hopes to meet with the provincial Education Minister, Everett Hindle and Hon. Buckley Belanger to discuss the childcare initiative.
- The application for nominee for the GSA Awards and GSA Gala is currently open and will end on the 13th of March 2026.
 - ❖ The Award Gala is set to be held in TCU place, Saturday the 25th of April 2026

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

➤ **Sustainability Committee Attendance**

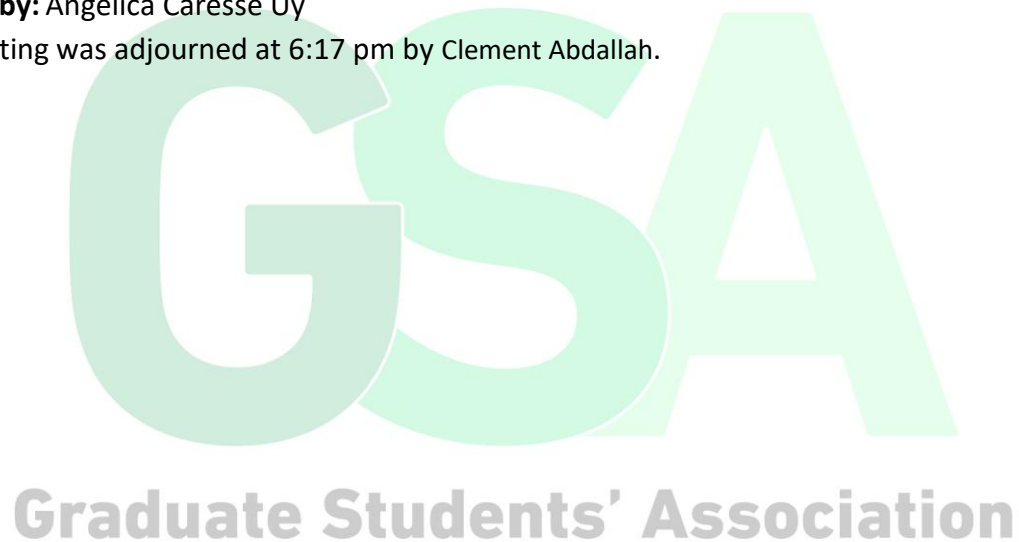
- The chair of the committee, Laila Valila urged members to respond to meeting invitations.

i. Adjournment

Mover: Palash Roy

Seconded by: Angelica Caresse Uy

The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 pm by Clement Abdallah.



EXECUTIVE REPORTS



President:

Dear GSA Councillors,

I am pleased to provide you with an update on my activities as President over the months of January and February. Below, I highlight recent initiatives, accomplishments, and our upcoming priorities.

In Solidarity Regarding Recent Incidents in Tumbler Ridge

We were deeply concerned by the recent and unexpected incidents in Tumbler Ridge. In response, the GSA released an official statement expressing our solidarity with those affected. We are aware that 14 University of Saskatchewan students are from the Tumbler Ridge area or within a 200 km radius, and we recognize that events in their home region may have a direct emotional impact.

Our statement reaffirmed the GSA's commitment to supporting students during difficult times and encouraged those affected to access available campus supports. We continue to stand in solidarity with the Tumbler Ridge community and our members during this challenging time.

In Response to Recent Violence in Mexico

We are deeply shocked by the recent violence in Mexico and recognize that members of our graduate community may have direct connections to the affected regions.

The university shared a message with impacted students, reaffirming that support is available. Students were encouraged to access health and wellness services, financial supports, international student advising, peer support, and 24/7 crisis services. The GSA remains committed to supporting graduate students affected by events at home and abroad.

Update on Support for Iranian Graduate Students

The Provost's Office has engaged directly with Iranian graduate students through one-on-one meetings and small group sessions. I attended several of these sessions to offer support and ensure students' concerns were heard.

We also supported students in conducting a vote to form an Iranian Students Association. Ratification will be brought forward to Council by the VP Academic, Mandela, as a formal agenda item. Given the current situation, I encourage Council to consider ratifying the association mid-academic year to provide students with a recognized platform for representation.

Campus Planning Engagement

We participated in campus planning discussions and emphasized three priorities: securing space for the GSA Childcare Centre, addressing ongoing maintenance concerns with the aging GSA Building and planning for potential relocation if required, and advocating for dedicated drop-off childcare space within the PAC and recreation facilities. We will continue to ensure graduate student needs remain central in long-term planning.

GSA Childcare Initiative

We have made progress on the GSA Childcare initiative. With support from the Edwards School of Business, a student team has been identified to develop a formal business plan. I also met with senior leadership to discuss location options. Rather than renovating an abandoned facility, discussions are focused on integrating the childcare centre into future campus infrastructure. Potential locations include an extension of the Edwards School of Business or space near the Prairie Wildlife Centre.

This is being developed as a five-year long-term plan, with a preliminary estimated budget of \$10 million CAD. The GSA has begun investing funds and will work with the university on fundraising efforts. While an infrastructure fee could be considered in the future if necessary, our priority is to secure funding without additional student costs.

GSA Transit Pass

We have been engaged with Saskatoon Transit and the City of Saskatoon as part of the fee review process. A student survey will soon assess service levels. The City is considering expanded service, including increased frequency on weekends and during the Spring and Summer terms.

While we welcome service improvements, we made clear that any fee increase outside our contract would require a student referendum. We also proposed an optional family pass to better support graduate students with families.

Despite discussions since November, we have not received a clear projected fee structure, including details necessary to consider a Spring and Summer pass. We will continue to follow up and advocate for clarity before moving forward.

Meeting or Events Attended as President

January 26 City Connections Committee

January 28	Iranian Students Group
January 29	Director of Language Centre
January 29	University Council Meeting
January 30	University EDI Specialist
February 2	Edwards Business School MBA, MSc Program Manager
February 3	Gordon Oakes 10 Year Anniversary
February 3	Iranian Student
February 5	PEC Meeting
February 6	GSA Childcare Business Plan
February 9	Provost and Iranian Student
February 10	City Council Tour
February 10	Governance Committee
February 12	GSA UFSA
February 12	Executive Meeting
February 13	GSA Childcare Meeting
February 13	Grad Student Issue
February 18	Iranian Student Group
February 19	CGPS Dean
February 23	Campus Planning
February 23	Saskatoon Transit

Thank you for your continued engagement and leadership. I look forward to discussing these updates further at Council.

Regards,

Palash R. Roy (he/him)

President, Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

PhD Student, Department of Computer Science, University of Saskatchewan



VP Finance:

Dear GSA Councilors,

Please find below an update on my February activities as the Vice-President Finance and Operations.

1) Saving and Investing: Financial Literacy Series

The second event in our Financial Literacy Series will be held on via Zoom on Thursday March 5, 2026 1:00-2:00. Please [RSVP](#) to learn more about saving and investing, and share this with your council members. This is an online-only event.

2) Winter 2026 GSA-CGPS Need-Based Bursary

The GSA-CGPS need-based bursary for winter term opened on February 2 and closed February 20. We received 337 applications, which is the most that have been received for a single term during the 2024-2025 or 2025-2026 academic years. Approximately 35 \$1,000 awards will be awarded during this call. Successful applicants will be notified by March 10.

VP Finance Meetings Attended

1/23/2026	GSA Executive Meeting
2/5/2026	President's Executive Committee Meeting
2/6/2026	Meeting with Studentcare Representative
2/23/2025	Fee Review Committee Meeting

As always, please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns.

Regards,

Lindsay G. Carlson (she/her)

VP Finance and Operations, Graduate Students' Association (GSA)
PhD Candidate, Department of Biology University of Saskatchewan



VP Student Affairs:

Dear GSA Councillors and members,

I am writing to provide you with an update on my activities as Vice President Academic and Student Affairs for February and upcoming initiatives.

1. GSA Intramural Sports Update

The GSA intramural teams continue to make encouraging progress this term. The volley and futsal team have already won a couple of games which is an important milestone that reflects growing cohesion and development. While there is a range of skill levels, including several beginners, the team has fostered a supportive environment where experienced players mentor others. Importantly, the initiative is meeting its broader objective of strengthening graduate student community. New cross-departmental friendships are forming, contributing positively to student engagement and well-being.

There is strong interest in continuing GSA intramural teams in the Fall term. Therefore, it is recommended that recruitment begin early in the academic year to maximize awareness, particularly among incoming graduate students. Overall, the GSA intramural initiative is progressing well and delivering meaningful community impact. I would like to thank Ernest Leung and Azim Daryabi for coordinating this initiative, as well as the participating students. I would encourage all of us to support our teams by attending their games and cheering them on. Your presence would mean a lot to them.

2. Diversity Committee Update

The Diversity Committee met on January 16, 2026, to plan upcoming initiatives aimed at promoting inclusion, cultural celebration, and community engagement within the GSA. The Committee approved the organization of a “Mini Folk Fest” as a Food and Music event, tentatively scheduled for March 20, 2026. The event will feature traditional attire, cultural performances, music, and dancing, with prizes awarded for best traditional outfit. Cultural groups and social clubs will be invited to mobilize participation, and the GSA will allocate budget to purchase selected dishes representing different regions to ensure inclusivity and food safety.

In recognition of Black History Month, the Committee agreed to celebrate Black graduate students who are parents and who balance academic and family responsibilities. This initiative will highlight their challenges, achievements, aspirations, and broader contributions beyond academic performance. The Committee also marked International Mother Language Day on February 21 by sharing video recordings of students speaking in their mother languages to promote linguistic diversity and multilingualism.

Additionally, two committee members will participate in a 30-minute engagement session with the Leadership and Diversity Group of the Saskatoon Open Door Society to discuss leadership and diversity within the GSA. Overall, the Committee continues to advance initiatives that foster belonging,

representation and cross-cultural engagement within our graduate community.

3. Student and Academic Affairs Update

My portfolio continues to champion and advocate on behalf of graduate students in academic and student-related matters. I have remained engaged with relevant university stakeholders to ensure graduate student perspectives are represented in policy discussions and institutional decision-making processes. My office remains committed to advancing academic excellence, student well-being, equity, and meaningful engagement while ensuring that graduate students' voices are effectively represented at all levels of the University.

4.0 Meetings attended

1. February 2nd, 2026: Graduate Program Committee (GPC)
2. February 3rd, 2026: Meeting with Iranian Student to explore
3. February 4th, 2026: Academic Programs Committee (APC)
4. February 5th, 2026: Student Executives and PEC
5. February 12th, 2026: GSA Executives Meeting



Graduate Students' Association



VP External:

Dear GSA Council,

I am writing to report on my activity for the month of February and last part of January 2025.

GSA Awards and GSA Gala

The deadline for nominee applications is March 13th and the Awards Gala will occur on Saturday April 25th at TCU place. My main focus for this past month has been to ensure that we have a coordinated email and social media campaign. I've been working towards updating the website section of the GSA Awards and GSA Gala. Furthermore, I have organized two meetings with the Awards Selection Committee; one before the deadline and one after the deadline to discuss expectations and work through the adjudication of the awards. In my previous letter to council, I stated I wanted to restore the prestigiousness of this event and I plan to create a more sustainable plan for this event for future years. I've begun this work by seeking out additional help from the Awards Committee members (Angelic Caresse Uy, Lily Buckles-Whittle, Amy Meyer, Maureen Amuche Mwobodo, and Blessing Dwumah Manu) in the planning of the Gala and plan to revise the committees responsibilities to ensure the continuity of this event in the absence or lack of leadership in the preparation for the Gala. This year, each category will have two to three finalists, all being invited to the gala, where the winner will be announced for the award. All senior administration, all deans and GSA Councilors are invited to attend free of charge.

GSA Childcare Initiative

We are awaiting the Hon. Buckley Belanger's confirmation and response to our meeting request. Minister Everett Hindley is awaiting a mutually convenient time to meet. We will be engaging them on the issue of childcare at USask. In addition, at the February 23rd meeting, we met with Campus Planning to discuss plans for the future of the GSA Commons and our need for a childcare facility. With our approach at the federal, provincial, and university administration levels, we believe this will communicate the severity of the issue that many graduate student parents face: childcare while in full-time studies.

UPASS for Spring/Summer

I attended a meeting with Saskatoon Transit in company of the president and office manager to discuss the potential of a spring/summer UPASS. We are currently paying more for 8 months compared the USSU membership which pays less and received their UPASS for 12 months. Given the nature of this, we communicated the unfairness as graduate students are enrolled year-round. In addition, we communicated the need to provide us with costs so we can present this to council, however, they are undergoing a review of the transit fares. The current phase 2 will include the evaluation of the GSA UPASS. Phase 1 that has surpassed resulted in a 10% increase of fares for Teenagers, Adult and Seniors. We've agreed to circulate their survey on transit to our students in a GSA Student Experience Survey. Data from the survey will be shared with Saskatoon Transit and council will perform their due diligence in determining if anonymized demographic data can be shared.

Meeting and Events Attended

January 27th: Teaching Learning and Academic Resource Committee Meeting

February 5th: PEC Meeting

February 12th: Meeting with the Faculty Association of uSask

February 12th: GSA Executive Meeting

February 23rd: Campus Planning Framework w/ Campus Planning & Real Estate (CPRE) unit development

February 23rd: U-PASS Meeting with Saskatoon Transit

February 24th: Teaching Learning and Academic Resource Committee 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



VP Indigenous:

Dear GSA Council,

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

Sustainability Committee

My committee began working on January 9th, following difficulties with member engagement. After discussing our perceptions of sustainability, we have decided to spend the rest of the academic term focusing on campus events that promote environmentalism. As of now, we plan to host documentary screenings with trivia (1-2, as time permits) and an Earth Day campus cleaning, similar to the Meewasin program.

OVPI Meeting

This meeting focused on funding opportunities for the Indigenous Resource Fair and Intercultural Exchange on January 21st. Additionally, we discussed the transition following Angela's departure from her position and the implications for future collaboration with the GSA. The OVPI can provide event funding at its discretion, so it is essential to build a strong relationship with the incoming Vice Provost Indigenous to ensure continued collaboration.

Meeting with Gordon Oakes Director, Dallas Pelly

This meeting was held to introduce the GSA President to Gordon Oakes' staff. We confirmed the Soup and Bannock event on February 25th and discussed a transitional document that the staff created to aid incoming student leaders with knowledge surrounding Indigenous peoples in the province. The document has been used for the USSU this past year, so we will now have access to these transitional documents for incoming GSA Executives.

Tuition Conversation

An additional mandatory fee, titled Institutional fees, is being introduced for all students. This fee will be similar to Recreation and Athletic fees insofar as it is mandatory for *all* students, regardless of their status (part-time/full-time, undergrad/graduate). Tuition rates will follow the same formula as the year prior, with increases of 5% (Master's and PhD) and 6% (JSGS Course-Based), respectively.

Meeting and Events Attended

January 3rd, 2026: GSA Exec Meeting

January 5th, 2026: GSA Welcome Week Tabling at Louis' / Tuition Conversation

January 8th, 2026: PEC Meeting / Opus Event

January 9th, 2026: Sustainability Committee Meeting

January 13th, 2026: OVPI Meeting

January 14th, 2026: Meeting with Gordon Oakes Director

January 15th, 2026: RSAW Meeting / Meeting with BIRM Coordinator / MSU Event

January 16th, 2026: ISSAC Event

January 20th, 2026: Sustainability Committee Meeting / Iranian Students Support Event

January 21st, 2026: GSA Indigenous Resource Fair and Intercultural Exchange

January 23rd, 2026: GSA Exec Meeting

January 28th, 2026: GSA Council



Graduate Students' Association

Appendix A

	Academic Council	Councillor	December 2025
1	Agricultural and Resource Economics Graduate Students' Society	Councillor – Aminata Ba Alternate – Cornelius Mensah	P
2	Animal and Poultry Science Graduate Students' Association	Councillor - Megan Dubois Alternate - Beatriz Montenegro	P
3	Biology Graduate Students' Association	Councillor - Portia Mohrbutter Alternate - Laura Dyson	P
4	Chemistry Course Council	Councillor - Shreya Tiwary Alternate - Segun Liyansan	A
5	College of Medicine Graduate Student Society (CMGSS)	Councillor 1 - Griffin Lehnert Alternate 1 - Christopher Chivers	A
		Councillor 2 - Amber Jurke Alternate 2 - Hetvi Darji	A
6	College of Kinesiology Graduate Society	Councillor - Sunny Bui Alternate - Karissa Johnson	A
7	Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)	Councillor - Mary-fidelma Chioma Ndupu Alternate - Mahdi Moayeri	A
		Councillor - Mary-fidelma Chioma Ndupu Alternate - Mahdi Moayeri	A
8	Education Graduate Students Association (EGSA)	Councillor - Kiegan Lloyd Alternate – Rumpa Banik	P
9	Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC)	Councillor 1 - Farzana Haque Reeti Alternate 1 - Binod Sapkota	P
		Councillor 2 - Adit Raj Chalise Alternate 1 - Corwyn Shomachuk	P
10	English Course Council	Councillor - Hamid Yari Alternate - Jasmine Redford	A
11	Geography and Planning Graduate Student Council (GEPL)	Councillor - Emily Ireland Alternate - Prakash Sapkota	P
12	History Graduate Student Association	Councillor - Jessy Lee Saas Alternate - Julia-Rose Miller	P
13	Nursing Graduate Students Association	Councillor - Kirsten Witter Councillor - Aja Tost	A
14	Physics and Engineering Physics Graduate Association of Students at University of Saskatchewan (PEGASUS)	Councillor - Jeisson Vanegas Alternate - Mona Zolghadrshojaee	P

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

Executive member	Name	January 2025
Executive President	Palash Roy	P
Exec. VP Finance and Operations	Lindsay Carlson	P
Exec. VP Academic and Student Affairs	Mandela Alema	P
Exec. VP External Affairs	Sunny Bui	P
Exec. VP Indigenous Engagement	Laila Valila	P

Appendix B

GSA Social Group	
Iranian Students' Association (ISA)	Mitra Sabetghadam Moghadam – President Farzan Hayati – Vice President of Administration Farnoosh Tabatabaieian – Vice President, Finance Nooshin Shekari – Vice President, Culture & Sport