



Graduate Students' Association

**University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
Annual general meeting
Wednesday, April 30th, 2025- Hybrid**

As Council gathers, we acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 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.

	<i>Action</i>	<i>Page</i>
1 Call to order		
2 Approval of agenda	<i>Decision</i>	
3 Approval of Council meeting minutes 3.1 March 26, 2025	<i>Decision</i>	<i>1-11</i>
4 Approval of Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes 4.1 December 18, 2024 4.2 February 13, 2025 4.3 March 24, 2025	<i>Decision</i> <i>Decision</i> <i>Decision</i>	<i>12-14</i> <i>14-16</i> <i>16-17</i>
5 GSA Awards GALA report	<i>Information</i>	<i>17-22</i>
6 Proposed GSA budget 2025-26	<i>Decision</i>	<i>23-27</i>
7 GSA 2024-25 budget actuals	<i>Information</i>	<i>28-32</i>
8 Motion to Amend GSA Bylaws	<i>Decision</i>	<i>33-44</i>
9 GSA Executives' Annual Report Questions & Answers	<i>Information</i>	<i>45-51</i>
10 Election results & Introduction to new Executives	<i>Information</i>	
11 Announcement of By-elections for President and VP Indigenous & Engagement	<i>Information</i>	
12 Announcement of Election for Vice-chair	<i>Information</i>	
13 Other Businesses		
14 Adjournment		

University of Saskatchewan-Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

Wednesday, March 26th, 2024; 17:00-19:00

Meeting Location: Online

“As Council gathers, we acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 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

Chair: Shaily Tandekar

Recording Secretary: Arman Heydari

- **Call to Order**

The Chair, Shaily Tandekar, welcomed everyone to the Graduate Students Association meeting for March 2025. She expressed her gratitude to the executive team for their support and emphasized her excitement about working with all attendees. She extended a warm welcome to the council members, students, and GSA executives, appreciating their dedication to supporting the graduate student community.

Before proceeding with the agenda, Shaily acknowledged that the meeting was being held on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. She paid respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this land and reaffirmed the commitment to maintaining relationships with one another.

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 PM after the quorum was met.

- **Rules and Regulation**

Before proceeding with the agenda, the Chair introduced the rules and regulations for the meeting.

- **Agenda: Approval of Agenda**

The chair stated that today's agenda was emailed to all council members. The chair then asked if there were any amendments to the agenda package.

Hearing none, he called for a mover and a seconder to approve the agenda.

As the majority of the council voted in favor, the motion was approved.

- **Agenda: Motion to Receive GSA Council Meeting Minutes**

- **GSA Council Meeting Minutes for March 5th**

The meeting moved to accept the GSA Council Meeting Minutes for March 5th.

A motion was made and seconded.

A vote was held, and the minutes were passed with a majority vote in favor.

- **Agenda: Motion to Receive GSA Executive Meeting Minutes**

- **GSA Executive Meeting Minutes for February 28th, March 18th**

The meeting moved to accept the GSA Executive Meeting Minutes for February 28th, March 18th.

A motion was made and seconded.

A vote was held, and the minutes were passed with a majority vote in favor.

- **Agenda: Motion to receive second awards committee meeting minutes**

The meeting moved to accept second awards committee meeting minutes.

A motion was made and seconded.

A vote was held, and the minutes were passed with a majority vote in favor.

- **Agenda: Motion to Establish a Task Force Committee for Childcare Implementation**

Purpose: To create a dedicated task force committee to oversee and implement GSA childcare initiative. Decision

Motion Statement: "I move that we establish a task force committee specifically for the implementation of childcare programs and initiatives."

Presenter: President David Ohene-Amoako

David Ohene-Amoako introduced the motion, highlighting the long-standing issue of securing childcare for graduate students. He explained that previous efforts had struggled due to the difficulty of obtaining space on campus. He noted that sources indicated that if an initial childcare initiative was launched, securing a permanent space in the future would become easier.

The proposed plan involves establishing a drop-in childcare service at the GSA Commons, where parents could drop off their children for a maximum of three hours in the morning and another session in the afternoon. A formal proposal, including a term of reference, has been developed with the goal of launching the childcare service by June of the following year.

David moved to establish a seven-member task force committee to oversee the implementation. The committee would include:

- GSA executives (President)
- One regular member
- One council member
- The GSA Office Manager
- The provost (or their representative) overseeing learning initiatives

The committee's mandate would be to ensure that the childcare initiative is successfully implemented within one year.

Sunny Bui (CKGS) asked for clarification on space availability challenges.

- David explained that graduate students currently lack dedicated childcare spaces, with the existing undergraduate USSU childcare center having a waitlist of approximately 700 students.
- He further noted that securing a new space on campus has been difficult, despite ongoing efforts and inquiries with the Vice Provost and university administration.
- While university officials have not explicitly refused space, they have cited a lack of availability.

Jordan Sherstobitoff (NGSA Principal Chair) inquired about the expected costs and services.

- David responded that the Student Wellness Center has identified potential financial partners to assist with setup costs.
- The task force will work with the Student Wellness Center to determine the final cost and operational details.
- The childcare service will operate on designated days rather than being a permanent facility, allowing the GSA Commons to continue its usual activities.

Sunny Bui (CKGS) asked if collaboration with USSU was considered and whether CGPS (College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies) would provide financial support.

- David clarified that while collaboration with USSU had not been a primary focus, the GSA had engaged with CGPS, which has provided individuals to assist in securing space.
- CGPS has committed human resources but has not yet provided financial support. However, they remain engaged in discussions and are aware of the initiative.

The motion to establish the task force committee was put to a vote. The majority of votes were in favor; the motion is carried.

- **Agenda: Appeal to GSA Council: Proposal to Remove the Governance Committee Policy**

Presenter: VP Student Affairs, Nickson Joseph

Nickson Joseph introduced the motion, explaining that the Governance Committee, as outlined in GSA policy 15.1.4, consists of the GSA President (Chair), VP Academic and Student Affairs, the GSA Chair, at least one council member, and one regular member. Under the current system, any amendments or changes to GSA governing documents must first go through this committee before being presented to the Council for a final decision.

While the committee was originally intended to add structure, the current executive team has found that it often causes delays in implementing meaningful changes. The timeline for forming the committee, usually towards the end of the fall term, places additional strain on executives and the Chair, making it difficult to recruit committed members with the necessary expertise. Additionally, the highly technical nature of the committee's work makes it unrealistic to rely on volunteers.

In the interest of efficiency and reducing bureaucratic delays, the executive team proposed removing the GSA Governance Committee policy and its terms of reference from the policy manual. This change would allow policy amendments to go directly from the proposer to the Council, streamlining decision-making processes.

David Ohene-Amoako (GSA President) supported the motion, adding that as a former committee chair, he experienced difficulties coordinating with members. A lack of commitment from volunteers often caused delays, preventing executives and the Council from proceeding with necessary changes. Removing the committee would help eliminate these obstacles and allow for more effective governance.

Jordan Sherstobitoff (NGSA Principal Chair) asked whether removing the committee would change the process for policy amendments.

- Nickson clarified that the only change would be that policy amendments would go directly to the Council without requiring prior approval from the Governance Committee.

The motion was put to a vote. The majority of votes were in favor; the motion is carried.

- **Agenda: Motion to approve Humaira Anjum in the Elections and Referenda committee**

Presenter: Shaily Tandekar

Shaily Tandekar introduced the motion to approve Humara Anjum as a member of the Elections and Referenda Committee. She explained that initially, Shamsuddeen Ma'aruf was considered for the position as a regular member. However, during the committee meeting, it was discovered that he is a council member representing the School of Public Health, which affected the committee's quorum.

To address this issue, Shaily reached out to students who had previously applied for the position and expressed interest. Humara Anjum agreed to step in, and Shaily sought the council's approval for her official appointment.

Shaily also informed the council that the committee had already ratified the election schedule and made the necessary announcements. Due to time constraints, they could not wait for a new member before proceeding, as ensuring an effective election process was a priority.

She opened the floor for questions and then called for a mover and a seconder to approve the agenda.

A vote was held in the chat box. The majority voted in favor; motion carried.

Graduate Students' Association

- **Agenda: GSA Executive Reports**

- **President**

David Ohene-Amoako briefly reported on his activities, stating that he attended the CFS National Graduate Conference from March 7th to 9th, where new executives were selected for the National Graduates Caucus. Additionally, he represented the Graduate Student Association at the BRT Nutrina Stakeholder Committee meeting on behalf of the VP Finance. During this meeting, discussions focused on the operational system of the new bus stop that the city is working on and ways to improve it. He also mentioned that updates on GSA childcare had already been provided. He concluded by noting that March was a significant month with several meetings and activities, which were highlighted in his report.

- **VP Finance and Operations**

Lindsay Carlson reported on her activities, noting that March was a particularly busy month. She collaborated with USSU to host a tax information session at the GSA Commons on March 18th, where a professor from the School of Business provided a presentation and spent an additional hour answering individual tax-related questions. She also co-led the elevator pitch competition with Nickson, with David assisting in coordination. While 26 students signed up, only 10 attended to present, despite the availability of cash prizes and food. She acknowledged the ongoing challenge of student engagement and suggested improving advertising efforts.

Lindsay also mentioned plans for a town hall on health and dental fee changes but stated that the announcement must wait until after the board meeting on April 16th. Additionally, she highlighted the extensive efforts put into hiring a new operations manager, formerly the office manager role. Seven candidates were interviewed, with two advancing to a second round. The selected candidate has formally accepted and will begin on April 14th. She expressed optimism that this hiring will allow executives to focus more on initiatives like conferences rather than daily operational tasks.

➤ **VP Academic and Student Affairs**

Nickson Joseph provided a brief report, first addressing the elevator pitch competition, with details included in his report and key points already mentioned by Lindsay. He then discussed the GSA Leadership Circle, noting that since the last discussion, he has received questions and feedback from students, staff, and counselors. He clarified that the Leadership Circle would not take away any decision-making authority from the GSA Council but is intended to preserve institutional knowledge for long-term projects. He plans to propose this initiative at the AGM, as it requires a bylaw change, and requested the support of all counselors.

Additionally, Nickson mentioned his involvement in the interview process for the new operations manager and referred to his report for details on other meetings he attended. He encouraged counselors to reach out with any concerns.

➤ **VP External Affairs**

Reza Golpayegani provided an update on the upcoming gala, announcing that the venue has been changed from the Exiter Room to the Gary Room in Marquis Hall. He noted that the new room lacks a built-in screen and AV system, requiring coordination with a contractor to provide these services, with cost details included in his report. The new venue accommodates 250 seats, allowing for three guest seats per awardee and five complimentary seats for the Advising Excellence Awardee. An additional 40 seats are available for purchase at a subsidized price of \$30 plus tax.

Reza also reminded Council members that he had sent calendar invitations two months ago and requested those unable to attend to notify him via email so their spots could be reassigned. He emphasized the importance of having sufficient Council representation at the gala. He concluded by directing members to his report for further details, including executive meeting minutes and the second awards meeting minutes.

- **Agenda: Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:53.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved by the majority of the council members.



Appendix A

Academic Council	Name of Councilors and (alternates)	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Mar 5, 2025	Mar 26, 2025	Apr 2025	May 2025
Biology Graduate Student Association	Portia Mohrbutter Ayicia Nabigon (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Chemistry Course Council	Marco Justino Loza Taghavi (Alternate) Ozra	P	A	P	A	A	A		
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Biochemistry, microbiology & Immunology	Andy Kim - Councilor Shirley Yu - Councilor Samiul Chowdhury - Councilor Sara Dalkilic - Councilor Rylan Bahrey (Alternate) Adrielle Souza (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)	Thulani Hewavithana Norah Ridley Mary Fidelma Ndupu Mumtahina Ahmed (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biological	Sumana Majumder Emmanuel Ezechinyelu (Alternate)	A	P	P	A	P	P		
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biomedical	Danyil Dmytriiev Bashu Gautam (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P	P		

Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Chemical	Parvaneh Koranian Sara Nath (Alternate)	A	A	P	A	A	P		
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Civil, Geological & Environmental	Anukul Basnet Bashu Gautam (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Electrical & Computer	Deepa Upadhyaya Subedi Bashu Gautam (Alternate)	A	P	P	A	P	P		
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Mechanical	Kiranbir Kaur Faizan Ansari (Alternate)	A	A	P	A	P	P		
English Course Council	Lydie Hua Gwen Rose (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Geography & Planning Graduate Council	Emily Ireland Prakash Sapkota (Alternate)	A	A	A	P	P	P		
Kinesiology Graduate Student Council	Matthew Chapelski Karissa Johnson (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P	A		
Nursing Graduate Student Association (NGSA)	Jordan Sherstobitoff Ewurabena Sacky-Forsen Hayen Chei Luri (Alternate) Stella Aluko (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P	P		

	Kristen Witter (Alternate)								
Plant Science	Luke Dojack	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS)	Patrick Janzen-Brown Taya Stang (Alternate)	P	A	A	P	A	P		
SENSSA	Jethro Opara Chelsea Ohenewaa Nyarko (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	A	A		
School of Public Health (SPHSA)	Wasim Al-Khanati Omar Bardouh Theresa Agbeyei Isfar Chowdhry (Alternate)	A	P	P	P	P	P		
Sociology GSA	Meaghan Boily Leah PHouseman (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Soil Science Graduate Student Association	Andrea Cline Chloe Canning (Alternate) Levi Lundell	P	P	P	P	A	A		
Animal and Poultry Science GSA	Megan Dubois Gus Halibert (Alternate)	P	A	P	P	P	P		

Toxicology Graduate Student Association (TGSA) Academic Councilor	Chantel De Lange Summer Selinger (Alternate)	A	P	P	A	A	A		
History Graduate Student Association	Kiegan Lloyd Catlin M. Woloschuk	P	A	A	P	A	P		
Physics & Engineering Physics (PEGASUS)	Jeisson A. Vanegas Carranza Nicholas Simonson	P	A	P	P	P	P		
Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy Student Association	Harjot Tur-harjot Bazal Khalid (Alternate)	A	A	A	A	A	A		

Executive member	Name of executive member	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Mar 5, 2025	Mar 26, 2025
Exec. President	David Ohene-Amoako	P	P	P	P	P	P
Exec. VP Finance and Operations	Lindsay Carlson	P	P	P	P	P	P
Exec. VP Academic and Student Affairs	Nickson Joseph	P	P	P	P	P	P
Exec. VP External Affairs	Reza Golpayegani	P	P	P	P	P	P
Exec. VP Indigenous Engagement	Jennifer Amarualik-Yaremko	P	P	P	A	P	A

University of Saskatchewan – Graduate Students' Association
Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2024, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm (Hybrid/in-person)
2024 – Fall Term

Members Present: Lindsay Carlson (VP Finance and Operations), Nickson Joseph (VP Academic and Student Affairs), Jessica Sharpe (Regular Member), Vincent Maranda (Regular Member), Meherun Nahar (Regular Member), Sara Dalkilic (Council Member), Portia Mohrbutter (Council Member), Leah Johnson (CGPS)

Regrets: Mary-fidelma Chioma Ndupu (Council Member)

The Vice President of Finance and Operations (VP Finance) expressed gratitude to the committee members for attending despite their demanding schedules and emphasized the importance of their role in distributing funds to students in need. She apologized for failing to provide snacks for the meeting.

Because the committee had new members, the Vice Finance provided an orientation (slides included in previous agenda package).

New attendees signed confidentiality agreements to safeguard the privacy of bursary applicants. The VP Finance anonymized applications, such that each application was identified by their NSID alone in the application, though supporting documentation did not have names redacted. Attendees agreed to report any conflicts of interest (if they knew the applicant or felt there were not able to impartially review an application for any reason), so another reviewer could be assigned.

Out of the 165 responses to the bursary application on Survey Monkey, 141 were completed. The committee agreed to disqualify candidates who had been awarded a GSA bursary in any of the previous three terms, per the bylaws. Six applicants fitting this category were removed.

The VP Finance shared the bursary selection rubric, which has been in use since 2016, and advised that the committee has the power to amend the rubric for future selections, and they should evaluate the utility of the process during this round. The VP Finance stated that she would have preferred to have revised it already but given late addition of council members to the committee and scheduling conflicts during the fall, it was not possible. The VP Finance asked the committee to evaluate which (if-any) categories they feel are overemphasized in the current rubric, and which categories (especially subjective) could be expanded into multiple categories or scored in a range rather than a binary. Committee members confirmed their understanding of the bursary selection rubric.

There was some discussion about whether it is reasonable to require a letter of support from faculty for a \$1000 bursary. The VP Finance agreed and stated that this should be evaluated in a future meeting.

The VP Finance had created an R code which automatically assigned points to the objective categories, based on the raw output from SurveyMonkey. The VP Finance asked the committee to verify the correct score was given, based on the response. The VP Finance had amended the survey slightly prior to this call and had not correctly updated the code to account for that change. S. Dalkilic found one error affecting a few applications, and the VP Finance flagged that it should be corrected in all applications and double checked this was corrected in all applications.

Applications were divided evenly among committee members, so 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 VP Finance. Committee members agreed to meet sometime in early winter to review the selection rubric prior to the next bursary call.

A few applications were missing at least one piece of supporting documentation, and there was discussion about whether those applications should be evaluated based on what was provided or completely excluded as “incomplete.” The committee voted (L. Johnson and the VP Finance abstained), but the vote was evenly divided. The VP Finance advised that the incomplete applications would be scored, and that if those applications were among the top, she would search for supporting materials in email (some faculty refuse to provide them to students but email the documents to her directly) or contact the student in the case where they had accidentally uploaded the same document in two different categories.

The VP Finance combined all scored applications and sorted from highest to lowest score. Only one individual with an incomplete application was among the top candidates, and supporting documentation was found in a second survey monkey submission from that student.

When the VP Finance sent the final list for checking by the VP Academic, he noted that a previous GSA executive was among the top candidates. According to bylaws, former executives are not permitted to apply/receive the GSA bursary. This individual was removed from the list.

Because there were many ties for applications ranked 37-45, the VP Finance and VP Academic selected the top 36 applicants. It was mentioned that there were many qualified and deserving applicants and those who didn't receive bursaries is due to the limited number of bursaries available.

Marc Usunier (CGPS) agreed to assist GSA by verifying enrolment, so that students did not have to submit a “confirmation of enrolment” letter, which costs \$10. One student was found to have not been registered during the fall semester and therefore was not eligible to receive the bursary and was removed from the list. Bursaries were distributed to 35 individuals during this call.

Drawing on previous precedent, only successful bursary applicants were notified of the committee's decision, unless they inquired about the results. It was recommended for those who were unsuccessful to apply again during the next call.

University of Saskatchewan – Graduate Students' Association
Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2025, 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm (Hybrid/in-person)
2025 – Winter Term

Members Present: Lindsay Carlson (VP Finance and Operations), Nickson Joseph (VP Academic and Student Affairs), Jennifer Amarualik-Yaremko (VP Indigenous Engagement), Jessica Sharpe (Regular Member), Vincent Maranda (Regular Member), Meherun Nahar (Regular Member), Mary-fidelma Chioma Ndupu (Council Member), Sara Dalkilic (Council Member), Portia Mohrbutter (Council Member), Leah Johnson (CGPS)

Regrets: None

Pizza dinner provided for committee members attending in person.

Following discussion at the previous meeting regarding dissatisfaction with the binary nature of scoring following the previously used rubric, the Vice President of Finance and Operations (hereafter, VP Finance) sent a questionnaire/survey to all committee members asking them to evaluate which aspects of the rubric they thought should be valued more or less, other ideas for scoring that take nuance into account, and whether any categories should be removed/changed. In the communications, she shared the GSA policy related to bursary selection, which states:

12.1. The GSA Need-Based Bursary fund will provide assistance to those graduate students who are ineligible for other awards and who demonstrate:

12.1.1. Difficulties in acquiring funding.

12.1.2. Community involvement.

12.1.3. Good academic standing.

12.9. The Bursary Selection Committee shall select recipients using an established rubric based on the following criteria:

12.9.1. Students who are ineligible for major scholarships.

12.9.2. Students who have exhausted the funding for their program.

12.9.3. Students in need of childcare services.

12.9.4. Students who have demonstrated financial need.

12.9.5. Students with good community involvement.

12.9.6. Students with strong academic performance.

12.9.7. Students who are expecting a baby

The meeting resulted in discussion including:

1. Designating a certain subset of awards for Indigenous students. Though the committee felt it would be ideal to set aside awards for Indigenous students, the reality is that it is difficult/not necessary for all Indigenous students to be verified by deybwewin | taapwaywin | tapwewin and so not all are. This may create more/unnecessary barriers. However, the committee agreed that special consideration should be made for self-declared Indigenous students.
2. Whether international student status should be considered. The committee decided that because international MS students pay higher tuition and international students are not eligible for many major scholarships, there should be some consideration.
3. How to reward MS vs PhD students, and how to consider time in program. Most agreed that we should place more emphasis on time in program (points to students reaching the end of their degree to assist with the final push) rather than differentiating between MS and PhD.
4. Weight given to academic average/GPA. All agreed that academic achievement should be rewarded (especially given language in GSA policy), but some discussion especially given that students struggling financially may have less time to devote to their studies due to work hours, etc. We also discussed best way to calculate/standardize academic average and what to do when students have not completed any coursework at Usask.
5. How to quantify “need” given students’ varying financial situations. One member found a scholarship application on the university’s website which provides a financial need calculator. Most liked the format of this and thought this may be a simpler way to ask for financial information than has been used in previous applications. Everyone agreed that this should be a major component of the score, even though it is subject to honesty in reporting incomes and expenses. There were well-devised ideas presented on how to incorporate this into the rubric.
6. Consideration for community involvement and volunteerism. Most thought volunteerism should be rewarded, but some also noted that students experiencing financial difficulties/students with children may not have as much time to dedicate to volunteerism/involvement categories. For that reason, most thought this should be a low contribution to the overall score. There was discussion about how best to include this information, and I updated the application based on this feedback. There was discussion about how to score in a less binary manner.
7. Which “supporting documents” to require. It was proposed that we should provide a location to explicitly provide these details about extenuating circumstances, rather than requiring a cover letter and supervisor letter. Additionally, most agreed that a supervisor support letter for a \$1000 bursary is unnecessary and may disadvantage students with bad supervisors or students unwilling/unable to talk about their financial difficulties with their supervisor. It was proposed to require a supervisor support letter only when the student stated that they had exhausted all program funding. This is an additional category based on the GSA policy. There was discussion about continuing to require a printed/screenshotted record of that term’s tuition in lieu of confirmation of enrolment given CGPS can verify for us, and whether we should request an unofficial transcript to verify GPA.

Based on this feedback from the committee, the winter 2025 GSA-CGPS Need-Based Bursary application was updated.

The VP Finance expressed gratitude to the committee members for attending despite their demanding schedules and emphasized the importance of their role in distributing funds to students in need. She expressed that improvement of the selection process will help funds reach students in greatest need.

University of Saskatchewan – Graduate Students’ Association
Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2025 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm (Hybrid/in-person)
2025 – Winter Term

Members Present: Lindsay Carlson (VP Finance and Operations), Nickson Joseph (VP Academic and Student Affairs), Jessica Sharpe (Regular Member), Vincent Maranda (Regular Member), Sara Dalkilic (Council Member), Portia Mohrbutter (Council Member), Mary-fidelma Chioma Ndupu (Council Member)

Regrets: Meherun Nahar (Regular Member), Leah Johnson (CGPS)

Coffee and pastries were provided for in-person attendees.

Following the excellent discussion in February, there were still decisions to be made about exactly how to score different categories and point values associated. The Vice President of Finance and Operations (VP Finance) sent out a fillable Excel file to all members to “vote” on the value of each category and propose additional methods to award point values based on applicant responses prior to the meeting.

The details of decisions made cannot be shared due to confidentiality of the process to promote fairness of applications into the future, but all committee members agreed on the decisions made during the in-person meeting and were pleased with the outcome of the updated rubric.

Because the committee had had two meetings in the Winter term already, VP Finance proposed to evaluate applications on your own time rather than in a meeting, and all agreed. The VP Finance expressed gratitude to the committee members for attending despite their demanding schedules and emphasized the importance of their role in distributing funds to students in need. She provided all members with a thank you note and a \$10 coffee gift card in appreciation.

We received a record number of applications to the winter bursary call. Out of the 318 responses to the bursary application on Survey Monkey, 247 were completed. The committee agreed to disqualify candidates who had been awarded a GSA bursary in any of the previous three terms, per the bylaws. Nine applicants fitting this category were removed.

The VP Finance anonymized applications, such that each application was identified by their NSID alone in the application, though supporting documentation did not have names

redacted. Attendees agreed to report any conflicts of interest (if they knew the applicant or felt they were not able to impartially review an application for any reason), so another reviewer could be assigned.

Qualifying applications were divided evenly among committee members. The VP Finance had created an R code which automatically assigned points to the objective categories, based on the raw output from SurveyMonkey. The VP Finance asked the committee to verify the correct score was given, based on the response. Then, 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 VP Finance via the shared folder, at which time VP Finance removed shared folder access.

Marc Usunier (CGPS) agreed to assist GSA by verifying enrolment, so that students did not have to submit a “confirmation of enrolment” letter, which costs \$10. All 43 of the top-ranked applicants were eligible 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. It was recommended for those who were unsuccessful to apply again during the next call.

GSA Awards Gala Report

Dear GSA Councilors,

Graduate Students' Association

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the final report for the GSA Gala 2025. This report outlines the key financial details, sponsorships, costs, and guest seating arrangements for the event, which was a significant success in celebrating the achievements of our graduate student community.

The Gala would not have been possible without the incredible support from our sponsors, university partners, and the dedication of the GSA staff, executives, and volunteers. Through careful planning and collaboration, we were able to host an event that truly reflected the spirit of excellence and community at the University of Saskatchewan.

I hope this report provides a clear and comprehensive overview of the event. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to making the GSA Gala 2025 a memorable occasion for all attendees.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement with the GSA.

Best Regards,

Reza Golpayegani He/Him

Vice-President of External Affairs

M.Sc. Student, Department of Computer Science

Table of Contents:

Sponsorships/Budget.....	2
Costs & Reimbursements	3
Guests Seating	4

Sponsorships/Budget

Title of the Budget/Sponsorships	Amount	Invoice sent?	Payment?
GSA GALA Budget 2024 - 2025	CAD 5,000.00	-	-
CGPS - GSA GALA Budget 2025	CAD 12,000.00	Confirmed by Lori	Confirmed by Lindsay
VP External Discretionary Fund		-	-
Ali Versi (Student Care) (Seats donated to GSA)	CAD 1,000.00	Yes	Confirmed by Lindsay
Hilary Balaberda (College of Engineering)	CAD 1,000.00	Yes	J0528744 (Confirmed by Lindsay)
Prof Jenkins and Arinjay and Lana Abrey (One Health)	-	-	-
Tera Ebach (WCVM)	CAD 3,000.00	Paid directly to Marquis	Shandra confirmed on March 26

Angela Jaime (OVPIE)	CAD 2,000.00	Yes	J0528430 (Confirmed by Lindsay)
Patrusia Rudy (Office of President) (Seats were donated to GSA)	CAD 2,000.00	Yes	Confirmed by Lindsay
Erin Wrubleski (College of Pharmacy and Nutrition)	CAD 500.00	Yes	CP-701490 (Confirmed by Lindsay)
Amber McCuaig (Johnson Shoyama Graduate School)	CAD 2,000.00	Yes	Confirmed by Lindsay
Danette Stang (Vice-Provost, Students and Learning)	CAD 1,000.00	Yes	Confirmed by Lindsay
Carrie Vassilakopoulos , Josh Andal (College of Agriculture and Bioresources)	CAD 1,000.00	Yes	Confirmed by Lindsay
Reba O'Watch (Sasktel)	CAD 500.00	Yes	Confirmed by Lindsay
Ashley Mcmillan and Julia Paulson (College of Education)	CAD 1,000.00	Yes	Confirmed by Lindsay
Jordan Robertson (School of Environment and Sustainability)	CAD 1,000.00	Yes	Confirmed by Lindsay
Smita Garg (Edwards Buisiness School)	CAD 2,000.00	Yes	Confirmed by Lindsay (JV067422)
Shawn Anderson (College of Arts and Science)	Rejected to Sponsor	-	-
Isabella and Saalimah(ISSAC)	Rejected to Sponsor	-	-
Dr. Wendy James (Gewnna Moss)	Rejected to Sponsor	-	-
Vince (VP Academic)	CAD 2,000.00	Yes	Confirmed by Lindsay
Ticket Sale (29 at 30+tax)	CAD 965.70	Charged with POS	-
Total Budget	CAD 37,965.70	-	

Balance	CAD 5,818.37	-	
Roxanne Cossette (College of Nursing)	250 Mugs		

Costs & Reimbursements

Title of expense for GALA 2025	Amount	Payment Method	Reimbursement needed?
Pens (500 GSA Pens)	CAD 1,102.54	Payment confirmed by Lindsay	No
Marquis Hall Total Cost	CAD 17,260.50	Confirmed by Shandra	No
Photography	CAD 888.00	Confirmed by David Stobe	No
MC Gift	CAD 100.00	GSA Credit Card	No
Printing the Certificates	CAD 19.71	Reza's Credit Card	Yes
Certificates Frames + Uber for delivery to GSA	CAD 124.73	Reza's Credit Card	Yes
Awardees Cash Gift	CAD 9,000.00	GSA Direct Deposit	No
CANVA Premium Subscription	CAD 39.00	Reza's Credit Card	Yes
Screen & Projector & AV	CAD 2,633.48	confirmed by Mitchell	No
Indigenous Elders honoraria	CAD 750.00	Confirmed by Lindsay	No
Gift Bags	CAD 194.94	Confirmed by Lindsay	No
Fuel Reimbursement	CAD 34.43	Confirmed by Lindsay	No
Total Cost	CAD 32,147.33	-	-

Guests Seating

Group	Number of Seats
President Executive Committee (PEC)	5
Awardees: 4 Complementary seats, except for Advising Excellence, who received 6. (There were a few overlaps between awardees gueststand sponsors' guest which is why fewer number of seats are used here)	31
GSA Staff and Executives: 10 seats for President guests, 4 seats for VP Academic and Student Affairs guests, 1 seat for VP indigenous Affairs guests, 5 seats for VP External guests. The rest of the staff did not receive any personal guests. (VP Finance did not use her complimentary seats.)	33
GSA VP Indigenous Affairs Special Guests	15
GSA Executives Board 2023 - 2024 (Previous group of GSA Executives)	4
GSA Awards Committee 2025	8
GSA Council Members	19
Photographer and MC (A MC from Career Services was invited however they could not MC the event because of family emergency due to the short notice about their absence I was unable to allocate two of these seats to someone else)	3
CGPS	10
College of Agriculture and Bioresources Sponsor 1k	4

OVPIE Sponsor 2k	7
Johnson Shoyama Graduate School Sponsor 2k	7
WCVI sponsor 3k	11
Vice Provost Students and Learning sponsor 1k	4
College of Education sponsor 1k	4
SENS sponsor 1k	4
Vice President Academic sponsor 2k	7
Edwards School of Business sponsor 2k	7
College of Engineering sponsor 1k	4
ISSAC	2
USSU 2024 -2025 Executive Board	4
GSA Volunteers Graduate Students' Association	8
Ticket Sale	29
Extra/Unused Seats in the Venue	20
Total	250

Proposed GSA Budget 2025-26

EXPENSES		
	GSA STUDENT SUPPORT	2025-2026 Fiscal Year
51500	GSA Bursary Expenses	70,000
51551	U of S Travel Award Contribution	8,500
51552	U of S Crisis Aid Program Contribution	10,000
51553	USSU Food Bank Contribution	10,000
51610	Ratified Student Club/Group Event Funding	10,000
	BANKING, DEBIT, AND CREDIT FEES AND CHARGES	
52200	Banking and Credit Fees and Charges	245
	GSA OFFICE OPERATIONS AND EXPENSES	
52300	Office Stationery and Supplies	500
52301	Office Electronic Equipment, Software, and Batteries	3,893
52303	Printer Toner/Cartridges	125
52310	Postage, Courier, and Freight	84
	GSA COMMONS OPERATIONS AND EXPENSES	
52320	Commons Supplies	800
52321	Coffee/Tea Bar Supplies and Expenses	934

52322	<i>Commons Renewal, Repair and Maintenance</i>	1,400
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	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>	1,969
52550	<i>IT/ICT Technical Support</i>	470
	PROFESSIONAL FEES AND EXPENSES	
52601	<i>Legal Expenses</i>	2,000
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>	975
52800	<i>Office Staff and Coordinator Salaries</i>	81,500

	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>	2,500
52930	<i>Executive Training and Professional Development</i>	525
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>	2,000
52904	<i>GSA Committees Food and Beverage</i>	1,000
52905	<i>Town Hall Food and Beverage</i>	250

	GSA EVENTS	
53300	GSA Awards Gala	2,000
53301	3MT or GSA Conference	500
53302	Fall Orientation	7,000
53304	Campus Rec./Intramural Sports	210
53305	GSA Health Chats	500
53306	GSA Social Events	2,000
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
55130	Leasehold Annual Charges	20
61001	Financial and Legal Contingency Fund Contribution	2,500
	Total	356,540

Graduate Students' Association

	REVENUE	
	ACCRUED REVENUE	2025-2026 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	350,379

GSA 2024-25 Budget actuals

<i>Line-Item Description</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>24-25 Budgeted Amount</i>	<i>Estimated Incomes May 2024-April 2025</i>	<i>Notes</i>
UPASS	12225		FT	
Health and Dental	12226		FT	
CFS Membership	12227		FT	
GSA Membership Fees (grad)	41200	280000	258000	Estimate, final fees collected will not be remitted by Usask until mid-May
GSA Membership Fees (non-grad)	46500	1089	1845	
UPASS Administration Fees	41301	10054	9500	Estimate, final fees collected will not be remitted by Usask until mid-May
GSA Commons Rental	46100	20900	18095	Estimate based on credit transactions - postdoc GSA memberships and UPasses sold
GSA/CFS Handbook Advertisement Sales	46200	500	500	
Orientation Fundraising/Support	43801	FT	0	
3MT and Conference Fundraising/Support	43802	FT	1000	
Sustainability/Diversity Fundraising/Support	43803	FT	0	
Awards Gala Fundraising/Support	43804	FT	37000	Details published in Gala Awards Report
Health Chats Fundraising/Support	43805	FT	0	
Social Event Revenues	43806	FT	0	
Awards Gala Ticket Sales	44104	FT	965	
Miscellaneous Revenues	46900	1000	0	
Health and Dental Continuum Revenues	46903	250	736	
Cash Donations/Contributions	43800	3000	0	

Interest and Investment Income	46800	29400	11880	No investment plan adopted due to delay in 2024 audited financial statements, only interest income from savings account was earned
TOTAL INCOMES		346193	339521	
<i>Line Item Description</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>24-25 Budgeted Amount</i>	<i>Estimated Expenditures May 2024-April 2025</i>	<i>Notes</i>
GSA Bursary Expenses	51500	70000	70000	110 bursaries of \$1000 awarded thanks to \$40,000 contribution by CGPS
U of S Travel Award Contribution	51551	8500	8500	Paid to ISSAC Fall 2024
USSU Food Bank Contribution	51553	10000	10000	Paid to USSU Fall 2024
U of S Crisis Aid Program	51552	10000	10000	Paid to Crisis Financial Aid Program Fall 2024
Ratified Student Club/Group Events Funding	51610	10000	3947	Some approved events have not yet submitted reimbursements
Banking and Credit Fees and	52200	1179	244	
Office Stationery and Supplies	52300	500	120	
Office Electronic Equipment	52301	3893	2887	
Printer Toner/Cartridges	52303	328	701	
Postage, Courier, and Freight	52310	84	48	
Commons Supplies	52320	800	658	
Coffee/Tea Bar Supplies and	52321	934	722	
Commons Renewal, Repair and Maintenance	52322	1400	69	
Expenses for Digital and Print	52330	250	224	
GSA Liability Insurance	52400	4761	5393	Renewed November 2024
GSA D&O Insurance	52401	1587	1401	Renewed November 2024

Telephone, Facsimile,	52500	1969	1524	
IT/ICT Technical Support	52550	2170	0	
Legal Expenses	52601	2000	2322	Contracted lawyer incurred legal fees associated with personnel changes
Internal Auditing/Consulting	52603	450	0	
Financial Auditing and taxes	52604	16200	19805	Over budget because audit not completed in 2023-2024, this accounts for two fiscal years' audits which was not spent last year
Bookkeeping	52650	14000	14958	Over budget because of >6 month bookkeeping backlog catch-up from 2023-2024, most of budget from last year not spent
President Fee	52701	12000	10330	
VP External Fee	52702	12000	10204	
VP Operations and Finance Fee	52703	12000	10204	
VP Student Affairs Fee	52704	12000	10204	
VP Indigenous Engagement Fee	52705	12000	10204	
Chairperson / CEO Fee	52707	2175	2128	
Election and Referenda Expenses	52708	350	143	
Recording Secretary Fee	52709	1250	1105	
CPP and EI Employer Contribution	21501	975	691	
Office Staff and Coordinator Salary	52800	81500	75900	Previous office manager salary + EI contribution= \$33,350, Manager health coverage = \$1,450, Coordinator hourly wages + EI contribution = \$36,500, HR Consultant = \$4,600

Executive Meeting and Retreat	52900	365	630	Meeting and educational tours at Wanuskewin
Executive Meetings with External	52910	252	598	
Executive Business Cards, Pictures	52333	107	95	
Executive Travel	52920	2500	1465	GSA President traveled to multiple CFS Meetings - most expenses covered by CFS
Executive Training and Professional Development	52930	525	0	
President's Discretionary Fund	62701	1000	224	
VP External Discretionary Fund	62702	1000	0	
VP Fin Discretionary Fund	62703	1000	622	
VP Student Affairs Discretionary	62704	1000	124	
Indigenous Engagement Discretionary	62705	1000	316	
Academic Council Funding	51600	10000	8598	Includes additional funding delivered in spring, such that councils funded at increased rate of \$6/student
Academic Council Foods and Beverage	52903	2000	694	SGM and AGM food and beverage
GSA Committees Food and Beverage	52904	1000	493	Snacks or meals provided for Budget Committee, Bursary Selection Committee
Town Hall Food and Beverage	52905	250	0	
GSA Awards Gala	53300	5000	0	Costs fully covered by fundraising, \$0 spent by GSA
GSA 3MT and Conference	53301	500	0	Costs fully covered by fundraising, \$0 spent by GSA
GSA Fall Orientation	53302	7000	5812	Includes GSA T-shirts given to all attendees of both orientations
GSA Winter Orientation	53303	2000	2832	Details published in VP SA reports

GSA Campus Rec./Intramural Sports	53304	210	0	
GSA Health Chats	53305	500	0	
GSA Social Events	53306	4750	1000	Shared costs of Holiday Hangout with Student Wellness Center
GSA Sustainability/Diversity Initiative	53307	500	0	
GSA Workshops/Initiatives	53308	1800	148	Shared costs of Tax Information Session with USSU
GSA New Initiatives	53309	2000	0	
UPASS USSU Administration Fees	51301	10054	8450	Paid to USSU to operate UPass loading to Transit App and process opt-outs
WCB Expenses	52810	600	242	
ISC and Incorporation Costs	52811	90	40	
GSA Handbook Expenses	52340	2255	2470	
Leasehold Annual Charges	55130	20	13	
Miscellaneous Expenses	61000	500	0	
Financial and Legal Contingency Fund	61001	2500	0	
Notary Services	46901	50	325	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		369583	319827	Under proposed budget by ~\$50k
				~\$20k unspent funds despite incomes lower than budgeted
*Values are not finalized due to a delay in bookkeeping, small expenditures may change before audited financial statements are published				
Large ticket items are finalized (highlighted in blue)				

Proposed Amendments in Bylaws

Amendment 01

Original bylaw:

5.5.1 The President shall receive a yearly fee to be paid monthly in equal amounts by cheque.

5.5.2 The Vice-Presidents shall also receive a yearly fee to be paid monthly in equal amounts by cheque. The Vice-Presidents shall receive the same yearly fee as each other.

Amended bylaw:

5.5.1 **The Executives** shall receive a yearly fee to be paid monthly **in 13 equal amounts. Incoming and outgoing Executives will both receive fee payments during the month of May to promote a smooth transition of office. If the outgoing Executive does not maintain their commitment to passing information on to incoming Executives and assisting with training/onboarding, they will not be paid their final fee as per a majority decision of all other incoming and outgoing Executives. If an Executive is elected to the same position during two consecutive years, they should not be paid double during the transitional month, as no additional transition duties are required.**

Rationale: Firstly, 5.5.2 should be removed as all Executives are now paid at the same rate. Additionally, due to difficulties during previous years with outgoing executives refusing to turn over information or contribute to training of incoming executives, we added this clause to tie a financial incentive to cooperating with the transition of office. Rather than increasing the Executive fee, we propose to divide the fee into 13 equal increments, rather than 12.

Amendment 02: Bylaw Amendment Proposal: GSA Leadership Circle

1. Establishment

1.1 The GSA Leadership Circle (“the Circle”) is hereby established as an advisory body to the Executive Committee of the Graduate Students’ Association (GSA) with the purpose of offering strategic guidance on the long-term goals and direction of the GSA.

1.2 The Circle shall function as a consultative group and not as a decision-making body. The GSA Council remains the primary decision-making authority of the GSA.

2. Membership

2.1 The Circle shall consist of the following members:

- All current members of the GSA Executive Committee; and
- All members of the GSA Executive Committee from the immediately preceding academic year.

2.2 Membership is voluntary for former executives and contingent upon their availability and willingness to participate.

2.3 In the event that no current or former Vice-President Indigenous Engagement is available to participate, the GSA Executive Committee shall invite appropriate Indigenous representation from within the graduate student community to ensure the Circle reflects the values of equity, inclusion, and Indigenous engagement.

3. Meetings

3.1 The Circle may meet no more than once per academic term.

3.2 Meetings shall be called by the GSA President or by a consensus of at least three (3) current executive members.

3.3 The Circle may invite non-voting observers or advisors, including GSA Council members or staff, at the discretion of the presiding officer.

4. Mandate and Functions

4.1 The primary mandate of the Circle is to provide advice to the GSA Executive Committee regarding the long-term goals and strategic planning of the Association.

4.2 The Circle may propose changes to long-term goals. Such changes shall require a majority vote of the Circle members present and voting.

4.3 Any recommendation or proposed long-term strategic direction made by the Circle must be submitted to the GSA Council for review.

5. Oversight and Limitations

5.1 The Circle does not possess legislative or decision-making authority.

5.2 The GSA Council has the authority to override any decision or recommendation made by the Circle with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of Council members present and voting.

Terms of Reference: GSA Leadership Circle

Purpose:

To serve as an advisory forum to support the strategic planning of the GSA and continuity of institutional knowledge across executive teams.

Composition:

- All current GSA Executives
- Executives from the immediately preceding academic year
- Optional: Invited guests (non-voting)

Frequency of Meetings:

Once per academic term (maximum), unless otherwise approved by the current GSA Executive Committee.

Chairing:

The GSA President shall chair the meeting. In the President's absence, a member of the current Executive Committee shall be designated to chair.

Responsibilities:

- Review and assess the strategic direction of the GSA.
- Advise on long-term goals and initiatives.
- Promote knowledge transfer between past and present leadership.
- Identify risks and opportunities relevant to the future of the GSA.

Voting:

- Decisions on recommendations require a simple majority of present and voting Circle members.
- The Circle's decisions are advisory and non-binding unless approved by the GSA Council.

Reporting:

- Recommendations or proposals developed by the Circle must be submitted to the GSA Council via a written report or presentation by the President or a designated Executive member.

Amendments to Terms of Reference:

- May be proposed by the Circle but must be approved by a majority vote of the GSA Council.

Rationale:

The GSA Leadership Circle is envisioned as a forum for continuity, institutional memory, and strategic foresight. It brings together current and former GSA executives to collaborate and advise on the long-term direction of the Association.

The transition between executive teams often results in a loss of valuable insights, experiences, and strategic momentum. The Circle serves to preserve that knowledge and ensure smoother transitions year over year.

By formalizing a structure for consultation with past executives, the GSA aims to benefit from a more holistic understanding of its historical goals, challenges, and successes.

The Circle is established purely as an advisory body with no legislative power. All decisions remain under the purview of the GSA Council, in accordance with the democratic principles that govern the Association.

This ensures that while the Circle contributes to vision and strategy, it does not override the authority of elected student representatives.

The GSA operates in an evolving academic, political, and financial environment. The Leadership Circle provides an opportunity for thoughtful long-term planning that is less constrained by the operational demands of daily executive duties.

The Circle can propose revisions or enhancements to the GSA's long-term goals, which must be approved by majority vote within the Circle and subsequently reviewed by Council for legitimacy and implementation.

To maintain democratic oversight, any recommendation from the Circle may be overridden by the GSA Council with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, reaffirming Council's role as the ultimate decision-making authority.

The Circle is an innovative step toward sustainable leadership in graduate student governance. It enhances transparency, encourages mentorship across executive cohorts, and strengthens the GSA's capacity for long-term advocacy and planning.

Ultimately, this initiative will help ensure that the GSA remains student-centered, strategically focused, and resilient over time.

Amendment 03

Original bylaw: 2.6 Vice-President Indigenous Engagement 2.6.1 The duties of the Vice-President Indigenous Engagement shall include, but are not limited to:

Recommended changes: 2.6 Vice-President Indigenous Engagement 2.6.1 Anyone wishing to run for the Office of the Vice-President Indigenous Engagement shall be verified by the University of Saskatchewan deybawin | taapwaywin | tapwewin policy.

2.6.2 The duties of the Vice-President Indigenous Engagement shall include, but are not limited to:

Rationale: This position exists because Indigenous people have historically been underrepresented in Canadian governance. This is an attempt to include Indigenous Canadian voices in decision making bodies. The office, the resources that go to supporting it, and its benefits, are specifically meant for Indigenous students. Ensuring that any candidate who runs is verified through deybawin | taapwaywin | tapwewin will help to prevent these resources and benefits from being misused.

Amendment 04

Original bylaw: 2.6 Vice-President Indigenous Engagement

Recommended changes: Add additional bylaws: 2.6.X Keep up to date with current Indigenous issues as they relate to the Indigenous student community on campus and provide culturally relevant supports where needed. 2.6.Y Shall be responsible for coordinating with the Office of the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement each year to determine the eligibility of future candidates for the office as per 2.6.1.

Rationale: Changes recommended based on review of duties by current VPIE.

Amendment 05

Original bylaw: 4.8.3.10 A Nominee must provide a twenty-five (25) dollar cash deposit, upon submission of the nomination form, which is refundable unless the Nominee has violated procedures or caused damage to university property, as determined by the Elections and Referenda Committee. The Elections and Referenda Committee may choose to waive this deposit.

4.8.6.1.4 The Nominee has submitted the deposit, if deemed necessary, and attended the mandatory Orientation and Procedures Meetings, or made alternate arrangements with the Chief Electoral Officer.

Recommended changes: Remove subsection 4.8.3.10.

4.8.6.1.4 The Nominee has ~~submitted the deposit, if deemed necessary, and~~ attended the mandatory Orientation and Procedures Meetings, or made alternate arrangements with the Chief Electoral Officer.

Rationale: This bylaw has not been enforced for some years, is time and labor intensive, and there is no real rationale provided as to why the cash deposit was required initially.

Amendment 06

Original bylaw 1.7: Council Chair

1.7.1. Must be a Regular Member of the Association.

1.7.2. Cannot be a member of Council, Executive or the Association's Staff.

1.7.3. The Council Chair shall:

1.7.3.1. Be familiar with all governing documents, including, but not limited to, the Saskatchewan Non-Profit Corporation Act, 1995, Robert's Rules of Order, and the Association's Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies.

1.7.3.2. Preside over all Council and General Meetings.

1.7.3.3. Conduct an orientation for all Councillors, which shall include a description of their responsibilities as Councillors and the mechanics of Robert's Rules of Order.

1.7.3.4. Maintain an updated list of Voting Councillor Allocation.

1.7.3.5. Serve as Chief Electoral Officer and perform all associated duties

Addition to the bylaw:

17.3.X Conduct a structured orientation and comprehensive training for the Vice Chairperson, ensuring they have the opportunity to chair at least one meeting during the term. This will facilitate a smooth transition and effective leadership in the Chairperson's absence.

Rationale: Vice Chairs do not have the opportunity to chair meetings or undergo structured training until the Chair resigns or hands over. This lack of preparation affects council meetings and the efficient functioning of the association. For instance, the current Chair faced significant challenges in learning the process after taking over, and a similar situation is expected with the upcoming transition to the Vice Chair.

Amendment 07

Original bylaw 4.1: Definitions for this Bylaw

4.1.7 Third Party - a person or group besides those primarily involved.

Recommended changes:

4.1.7 Third Party refers to any individual, group, organization, or entity that is not a registered candidate, an official representative of a registered candidate as recognized by the Elections and Referenda Committee, or a member of the Elections and Referenda Committee. This includes, but is not limited to, university departments, student groups, external organizations, and individuals acting independently. Departments and university-affiliated bodies are explicitly prohibited from participating in any form of campaigning or election-related activities.

Rationale: The addition of a definition for "third party" ensures clarity and consistency in the interpretation of election rules. It distinguishes between authorized campaign representatives, who act on behalf of registered candidates, and unauthorized individuals or entities, such as departments or external groups, whose involvement could compromise the fairness and neutrality of the election process.

Amendment 08

Original bylaw 4.1 Definitions for this Bylaw

4.1.9 Representative - a representative of a candidate in an Election/By-Election or representatives of a campaign committee in a Referendum. A Representative is someone acting on behalf of a candidate with the candidate's overt/written permission.

Recommended changes: 4.1.9 Representative - a representative of a candidate in an Election/By-Election or representatives of a campaign committee in a Referendum. A Representative **is a regular graduate student who acts** on behalf of a candidate with the candidate's overt/written permission.

Rationale: There is not description of representative in the original by law.

Amendment 09

Original bylaw 4.3 Elections and Referenda Committee

Addition to the bylaw:

Representative:

A Representative is a Regular Member (graduate student) selected by a registered candidate to assist in campaign activities during the official campaign period.

- Each candidate may appoint up to five (5) Representatives.
- The candidate must submit the full name and NSID of each Representative to the Chief Electoral Officer prior to the start of the campaign period.
- Representatives may assist in distributing campaign materials, engaging with students, and promoting the candidate's platform, but only during the official campaign period.
- Representatives shall not use their personal or organizational social media accounts for campaigning.
- Representatives must adhere to the same poster limits and campaign material restrictions as the candidate.
- Any misconduct by a Representative will be considered the responsibility of the candidate they represent and may result in penalties.

Rationale: Currently, the by-laws provide a vague definition of campaign representatives, which can lead to confusion, inconsistent enforcement, and potential unfairness.

Amendment 10

Original bylaw 4.8 Elections and By-Elections

4.8.3.3.2 The full name, NSID, and student number of at least one (1) Nominator who is a Regular Member.

Addition to the bylaw:

4.8.3.3.2 The full name, NSID, and student number of at least five (5) **Nominator** who is a Regular Member.

Rationale: Requiring at least five (5) nominators enhances the representativeness and credibility of the nomination process. It demonstrates that the candidate has broader support among Regular Members, which contributes to a more democratic and participatory election.

Amendment 11

Original bylaw: 4.8.3.4 A Nominee

4.8.3.4.5 President Nominee must have past professional experience as either GSA Council Chair, GSA Vice-Chair, GSA Executive, GSA Councillor, GSA Recording Secretary, member of GSA standing committee, member of University of Saskatchewan search committee, Executive member of Academic Council unit or GSA Ratified Social Group, executive experience at any University of Saskatchewan undergraduate student society or union.

Recommended changes:

4.8.3.4.5 President Nominee must have past professional experience as either GSA Council Chair, GSA Vice-Chair, GSA Executive, GSA Councillor, GSA Recording Secretary, member of GSA standing committee, member of University of Saskatchewan search committee, Executive member of Academic Council unit or GSA Ratified Social Group, executive experience at any University of Saskatchewan undergraduate student society/union or **have volunteer experience with GSA confirmed by VP External Affairs.**

Rationale: The inclusion of volunteer experience with the GSA in Bylaw 4.8.3.4.5 is essential, as volunteers often contribute meaningfully to GSA activities and, in some cases, work directly alongside executives. Recognizing their involvement ensures that their efforts are acknowledged and that they are given fair consideration when applying for positions or participating in GSA elections.

Amendment 12

Original bylaw: 4.8.3.4 A Nominee:

4.8.3.4.6 Executive nominee is preferred to have associative experience as described in the bylaw 4.13.3.4.5 or significant volunteer experience pertaining to the University of Saskatchewan community, or any other educational institute, or local/provincial/federal level experience.

Recommended changes:

4.8.3.4.6 Executive nominee (**except President**) is preferred to have associative experience as described in the bylaw **4.8.3.4.5** or significant volunteer experience pertaining to the University of Saskatchewan community, or any other educational institute, or local/provincial/federal level experience.

Rationale: By specifying “except President,” the bylaw distinguishes the President’s role from other Executive positions and there was a misprint in this bylaw where **4.8.3.4.5** was printed as **4.13.3.4.5**.

Amendment 13

Original bylaw 4.8.6: Ratification

4.8.6.1.2 The Nominee has met all the requirements as outlined in the Bylaws 4.13.3.4.5 – 4.13.3.4.7

Recommended changes:

4.8.6.1.2 The Nominee has met all the requirements as outlined in the Bylaws **4.8.3.4.5 - 4.8.3.4.7**

Rationale: There is a misprint in recent version of bylaw.

Amendment 14

Original bylaw 4.8.7.5: Candidates/Representatives

4.8.7.5.3 May use their own websites, social media (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok and Instagram) and may send mass emails for campaign purposes. Each Candidate is responsible for learning and following applicable University rules, regulations, and policies regarding electronic communication. These websites, social media platforms and email lists must be the Candidates own and not provided or belonging to others. WhatsApp and other phone-associated platforms (such as Telegram, Signal, Facebook Messenger, etc...) are strictly prohibited. At the discretion of the Elections and Referenda Committee, other restrictions may apply.

Recommended changes:

4.8.7.5.3 Candidates may use their own websites and public social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram), **as well as their email accounts, for campaign purposes.**

Representatives may also use their own websites and public social media platforms for campaigning (emails are not permitted), **only at the discretion and with the explicit permission of the candidate** they are supporting.

Each candidate and representative are responsible for understanding and adhering to all relevant University rules, regulations, and policies regarding electronic communications. **All digital platforms and email lists used for campaigning must be the candidate or representative personally and must not be borrowed, shared, or provided by others.**

The use of direct messaging applications including, but not limited to, WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal, and Facebook Messenger is strictly prohibited for campaigning. Candidates are not permitted to use phone numbers or personal messaging to contact students individually for campaign purposes, including texting or messaging through any private or group chat.

At the discretion of the Elections and Referenda Committee, additional restrictions may be imposed, or existing prohibitions may be lifted, as needed to ensure fairness and protect student privacy.

Rationale: This amendment clarifies and strengthens the existing bylaw by explicitly defining the role of campaign representatives, which was previously unaddressed. It ensures that representatives are held to the same standards as candidates regarding the use of digital platforms, thereby maintaining fairness and accountability in campaign practices. The revision also clearly prohibits the use of emails by representatives and reiterates the ban on direct messaging platforms to further protect student privacy and prevent unsolicited personal contact.

Amendment 15

Original bylaw 4.8.3: Nominations and Nomination Period

4.8.3.3.3 A letter from the Nominee's department secretary or graduate chair confirming that the nominee will be registered in a graduate program for the following fiscal year (May 1 to April 30), or in the case of course-based/project-based students (September 1 to April 30).

Recommended changes:

4.8.3.3.3 Letter of confirmation of enrolment (COE) for both spring and summer term is required. If a COE cannot be provided, a letter from the Nominee's department secretary or graduate chair confirming that the nominee will be registered in a graduate program for the following fiscal year (May 1 to April 30), or in the case of course-based/project-based students (September 1 to April 30).

Rationale: This addition is proposed because obtaining a letter from a department secretary or graduate chair is not always feasible. In contrast, the Confirmation of Enrollment (COE) offers a more accessible and flexible alternative, as it can be easily downloaded by students from their own devices.

Amendment 16

Original bylaw 4.11: Review

Addition to the bylaw:

Respect and Protection of the Elections and Referenda Committee

The Elections and Referenda Committee is entrusted with conducting all elections and referenda in a fair, impartial, and transparent manner, upholding the highest standards of integrity. All students, including candidates and voters, are expected to respect the decisions and processes carried out by the Committee.

Any student who has concerns, questions, or feedback regarding the elections or referenda may submit an inquiry, comment, or formal complaint. However, such communication must be conducted in a respectful manner, free from derogatory language, personal attacks, unfounded accusations, or threats. Harassment or disrespect towards members of the Committee will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action under the applicable policies of the Association or institution.

Rationale: The Elections and Referenda Committee plays a crucial role in ensuring democratic processes within the organization. Given the sensitive nature of elections and the potential for strong emotions among candidates and voters, it is essential to establish clear expectations for respectful conduct. This bylaw aims to affirm the Committee's commitment to fairness and integrity, while also protecting its members from harassment, threats, or disrespect. It encourages a culture of accountability, open communication, and civility, ensuring that concerns or complaints can be raised appropriately without undermining the dignity or safety of those administering the process.

Introduction

On behalf of the 2024-2025 Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Executive Body and Staff, I extend warm greetings to all members. The 2024-2025 GSA Executive Team comprises the following dedicated individuals:

- David Ohene-Amoako – President
- Lindsay Carlson – Vice President, Finance and Operations
- Nickson Joseph – Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs
- Reza Golpayegani – Vice President, External Affairs
- Jennifer Amarualik-Yaremko – Vice President, Indigenous Engagement

This executive team has achieved significant milestones despite the challenges encountered throughout our tenure. Though we come from diverse backgrounds, we remain united by a shared vision: to foster an inclusive and supportive GSA where every student's voice is heard.

This report highlights our collective journey celebrating our successes, reflecting on the obstacles we have overcome, and providing actionable recommendations to strengthen the GSA for future leaders.

Student Orientations

The GSA organized two major student orientations during the academic year, one in the Fall and one in the Winter. The Fall Orientation, held on September 11, 2024, was among the most well-attended events of the year, welcoming over 160 students throughout the day. The event created a meaningful impact, as students had the opportunity to engage with guest speakers and receive direct responses to their questions and concerns. Unfortunately, the Winter Orientation had to be cancelled due to severe weather conditions. Despite this setback, the success of the Fall event highlights the importance of such gatherings in fostering student engagement and community building.

Blanket Initiative

The GSA created a blanket as a part of the USask Blanket Project, with the help of volunteers. The material for the blankets, as well as the ways in which they were made, honour Residential School survivors. In acknowledging the difficult truths surrounding the experiences of children in residential schools. Our Vice President Indigenous Engagement ensured that the GSA played a visible and respectful role in the Day of Celebration. Through this involvement, we reaffirmed our commitment to reconciliation, cultural awareness, and community engagement.

Bursary Distribution

With the support of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS), the GSA successfully distributed \$110,000 bursaries directed towards students in need. Prior to our tenure, students receiving bursaries needed to pick up a physical cheque from our office, which many students expressed dissatisfaction about. We collaborated with CGPS to distribute bursary funds directly to student accounts, a process which allows students to get the funds more quickly, and also saves GSA thousands of dollars in bookkeeping expenses associated with T4A filing.

Student Support Initiatives (Clothing & Bread)

Under the leadership of the GSA President and the support of Lecia Ellis of Admissions and partner Fray Ellis, the GSA launched several support initiatives aimed at easing the financial burden on graduate students and fostering a sense of community. These included the distribution of free warm clothing during the winter months, as well as children's clothing for graduate students with families and members of the wider community. Additionally, a weekly "Free Bread Friday" initiative was introduced, providing fresh bread to students at no cost. Although the bread distribution has been temporarily paused, efforts are underway to revive the program. Altogether, these initiatives positively impacted the lives of over 200 graduate students, offering both practical assistance and a sense of belonging during challenging times.

Childcare/Daycare Facility

The childcare facility initiative was introduced by the GSA President and supported by the Vice President Indigenous Engagement. It began through consultations with key individuals, as advised, and has made significant progress by gaining support from administrators across the University. The GSA Council has approved the establishment of a dedicated committee to ensure the continuity and advancement of this initiative.

While identifying a suitable location remains a challenge, efforts are ongoing, and we remain optimistic about positive developments soon. This initiative, originally launched by the previous administration, has been carried forward with the shared hope that future leadership will continue to champion and realize this important vision.

OneDrive Storage Capacity

Recently, the OneDrive storage capacity for USask students was reduced. Under the leadership of the Vice President Finance and Operations, the matter was formally presented at the President's Executive Committee (PEC), emphasizing the critical need for adequate storage to support graduate students' academic and research activities. As a result of this advocacy, the storage capacity of 1TB was successfully restored for graduate students, ensuring that student researchers continue to have the necessary digital resources to support their work.

Committee Participation and Student Advocacy

During this period, the GSA actively participated in numerous University Committees (e.g., University Council, Awards and Scholarships Committee, Planning and Priorities Committee, BRT Nutana Stakeholder Committee, Fee Review Committee, etc.) and convocation ceremonies, ensuring that graduate student perspectives were effectively communicated and aligned with institutional structures. Throughout our tenure, we remained accessible to students. Some approached us in confidence to discuss personal concerns, while others were referred to the appropriate offices for further support and resolution.

Raising of the Métis Flag on Indigenous Veterans Day

The GSA was able to participate in organizing a Métis flag-raising event on November 8, in honour of Indigenous Veterans Day. The weather was not entirely friendly, but the event was successful regardless, and the flag stayed up in Nobel Plaza for quite a while. Contara Bueckert sang a beautiful rendition of the Métis Anthem. The GSA would like to thank Elder Norm Fleury as well as the Office of the Vice Provost of Indigenous Engagement for ensuring the event ran smoothly and providing resources as needed.

Black History Month

The Graduate Students' Association (GSA) actively participated in the 2025 Black History Month celebrations, contributing meaningfully from the official opening to the closing events. The GSA President, David Ohene-Amoako represented the association on several planning and organizing committees to ensure the success of the month-long observance. Through this engagement, the GSA played a vital role in shaping inclusive and impactful programming. One of the notable highlights of the month was the GSA's instrumental involvement in the premiere of the UBUNTU film, which celebrated themes of unity, resilience, and cultural identity. In addition to this, the GSA contributed to various other activities that honoured the legacy and achievements of Black communities in Canada and beyond. The association remains committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion within the university community and looks forward to continued collaboration in future cultural initiatives.

Holiday Hangout

In collaboration with the Student Wellness Centre and International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC), the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) successfully organized a Holiday Hangout in December 2024 for graduate students who remained in Saskatoon over the fall break. The event was held across three days December 27, 28, and 30 and aimed to provide a space for relaxation, connection, and community-building for students and their families who did not travel during the holiday season. The initiative brought together over 150 graduate students, offering a warm and inclusive atmosphere filled with games, food, and well-focused activities. It served as an opportunity for international and domestic students to celebrate the season together, combat isolation, and foster mental well-being during the cold months. This collaborative event reflects the GSA's commitment to supporting the social and emotional needs of graduate students beyond the classroom.

Tax Information Session

The VP Finance and Operations collaborated with USSU to host a Tax Information Session at GSA during the month of March. Dr. Devan Mescall presented a wide variety of helpful information to more than 50 attendees, then spent nearly 90 minutes answering individual questions over pizza.

GSA Awards Gala 2025

The Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Gala Night spearheaded by VP External was successfully held on Saturday, April 12, 2025, at Marquis Hall on the University of Saskatchewan campus. The event witnessed an impressive turnout of over 200 participants, including GSA members, faculty and staff, award recipients, and their families. The evening was a celebration of excellence and community, highlighted by the recognition of ten outstanding individuals for their remarkable contributions. The event was a memorable and resounding success.

Elevator Pitch Competition

The VP Finance and VP Student and Academic Affairs hosted an Elevator Pitch Competition to give students a chance to present their research and win cash prizes. We had 26 students register for the event, and we distributed \$350 in cash prizes to the winners.

Career Readiness Event

The Graduate Students' Association (GSA) is pleased to announce its collaboration with Career Services to organize a Career Readiness Event specifically tailored for graduate students. This initiative aims to equip master's and PhD students with practical tools and knowledge to enhance their transition into the workforce. The event will focus on employer expectations, industry insights, and career planning strategies, all designed to prepare graduate students for a

competitive job market. By addressing the unique challenges faced by graduate students in securing meaningful employment, this collaboration seeks to improve employment outcomes and support career success beyond academia.

Completion of 2022–2023 Audit

The Vice President Finance and Operations worked closely with GSA's contracted auditor and bookkeeper to complete the fiscal year 2023 audit, covering the period from May 1, 2022, to April 30, 2023. This was only possible thanks to the hiring of a new bookkeeping firm, who assisted us in catching up with outstanding bookkeeping left uncompleted after the abrupt departure of the previous firm. To improve efficiency of our bookkeeping and auditing going forward, we transitioned from a paper-based ledger system and outdated Quickbooks platform to a digital ledger system and Quickbooks Online. These changes we believe will increase efficiency and enhance transparency and accessibility within GSA's financial operations. The fiscal year 2024 audit is also nearly completed, an important step toward getting GSA's financials up to date.

Operations Management

GSA was without an Office Manager for approximately 6 months, which presented notable challenges in maintaining day-to-day operations. Despite this gap, the executive team and GSA's part-time student staff demonstrated resilience and commitment by working collaboratively to maintain the association's activities and services. We are pleased to announce the appointment of Brenna Maxwell as our new Operations Manager. Her addition to the team marks a positive step forward in restoring operational stability and enhancing the overall effectiveness of the GSA office.

GSA Standing Committees

The GSA's standing committees including the Budget and Finance Committee, Bursary Selection Committee, Governance Committee, Awards Committee, Election and Referendum Committee, Code of Ethics Committee, and Sustainability Committee have all contributed significantly to the progress and effective functioning of the association. Each committee played its role in upholding the GSA's mandate and supporting student needs throughout the year. Currently, the Election and Referendum Committee remains active, overseeing the electoral processes to ensure transparency and accountability within the organization.

Social Media and Branding Initiatives

Under the leadership of Vice President External, GSA successfully regained access to all GSA social media accounts including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter (X), and LinkedIn which had previously been inaccessible to the former administration. These platforms were revitalized, optimized for functionality, and made more accessible to enhance student engagement. Additionally, we continued the tradition of producing the GSA Daily Planner Handbook and branded T-shirts for the academic year. These materials were completed on schedule and

distributed during the Graduate Student Orientation. The GSA also recently underwent a logo redesign to present a refreshed visual identity that offers a more authentic and direct representation of the Association. This new logo has been in use for a couple of months and is now recognized as the official logo of the GSA. The updated design reflects the evolving values and vision of the Association, while also strengthening its brand presence across platforms and communications.

Establishment of the Leadership Circle

Under the leadership of V.P Academic and Student Affairs, the GSA has established a Leadership Circle aimed at ensuring the continuity and successful completion of projects. This initiative was introduced to address the recurring issue of projects being left unfinished as new executives introduce additional initiatives. The Leadership Circle fosters collaboration, shared responsibility, and sustained engagement among all members involved in project implementation. It serves as a strategic framework to keep ongoing initiatives on track and to uphold the long-term vision and goals of the GSA.

National Representation at CFS Events

The GSA actively participated in Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) events held in Regina and Ottawa, representing the University of Saskatchewan at the provincial and national level. These engagements provided opportunities to discuss pressing issues affecting students across the country and to contribute to decision-making processes that support and advocate for the interests of member universities. Through these travels, the GSA strengthened its voice within the broader student movement and reinforced its commitment to national collaboration and student advocacy.

CFS Visit to USASK briefing

The Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) operates through three main pillars: Campaigns, Services, and Research & Government Relations to advocate for the rights and well-being of students across Canada. Its major campaigns include “Fight the Fees,” “Education for All,” “Fairness for International Students,” and “No Means No,” all aimed at promoting equity, accessibility, and safety in post-secondary education. These initiatives focus on addressing systemic challenges and pushing for key policy reforms to improve the student experience nationwide; CFS also offers a range of services, including campaign and event support, free sexual health products, ISIC discounts, leadership training, and tax filing assistance. It organizes national conferences and caucus meetings to empower student voices. In government relations, CFS advocates on key issues such as housing, mental health, and international student support, while engaging with various student constituency groups. The National Graduate Caucus has notably championed increased funding for graduate students. Officers in attendance at a recent CFS visit included Mary Ojewole, Jawad Chowdhury, and Rukky Erifeta.

Reflections on the 2024–2025 GSA Executive Term

While we take pride in the many successes achieved during our 2024–2025 leadership year, we acknowledge areas that could have been improved. The transition and training for incoming executives did not proceed as planned, resulting in a steep learning curve that impacted on the early stages of our work. Additionally, we assumed office without an approved budget, which delayed the commencement of key initiatives. The prolonged absence of an office manager further stretched our capacity, placing significant demands on the executive team. Despite these challenges, we advocated successfully for a variety of initiatives, hosted successful events, and worked to find new ways to support our graduate student community. We are proud of our contributions and optimistic that these efforts will continue to benefit graduate students and future GSA leadership.

Appreciation

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the dedicated staff of the Graduate Students' Association (GSA), the President's Executive Committee (PEC) led by President Peter Stoicheff, and the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) under the leadership of Dean Dr. Debby Burshtyn and her exceptional team. Your unwavering support has been instrumental to the success we are proud to celebrate today. We also acknowledge the contributions of our predecessors, with special appreciation to Abbas Fazel Anvari Yazdi, former VP External, for his unwavering dedication and collaboration throughout our tenure. To the GSA Council members, committee members, volunteers, sponsors, and partners, thank you for your continued commitment and service. Together, you have shaped the GSA into a vibrant and supportive community for graduate students at the University of Saskatchewan.

“Life's most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Thank you all for choosing to serve.

Graduate Student Association (GSA) University of Saskatchewan

- David Ohene-Amoako – President
- Lindsay Carlson – Vice President, Finance and Operations
- Nickson Joseph – Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs
- Reza Golpayegani – Vice President, External Affairs
- Jennifer Amarualik-Yaremko – Vice President, Indigenous Engagement