Graduate Students' Association

We acknowledge that we live and work on Treaty 6 Territory and the homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

GSA Executives Meeting(s) on at GSA commons

Date: August 7, 2026
Time: Meeting adjourned at 2.30 PM
Attendance: Laila Valila, Hayley Pelletier, Rozars Faisal, Rupesh Acharya, Sunny Bui
Guests: None

1. Approval of Agenda

- Motion to approve agenda.
- First: VP Finance & Operations. Second: Rozars. Carried unanimously.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

- Future approval of Executive Meeting Minutes will primarily occur via email.
- Item deferred from meeting agenda.

3. Updates by Position

a. President (Sunny Bui)

Fundraising Initiatives

- Continued development of a fundraising campaign for both the Childcare Centre and GSA operations.
- Presentation materials and campaign slides have been prepared.
- Campaign will be rolled out in four phases and presented first to the executive prior to Council review.

GSA Commons Technology and Promotion

- Successfully configured the TVs and projector in the GSA Commons.
- Developed floor plans and room configurations to optimize conferencing and event layouts.
- TVs are now displaying promotional content continuously.
- Audio-visual consultation planned to support permanent slideshow functionality.
- Promotion system will be used for events, surveys, announcements, and other student engagement initiatives.

CGPS Funding Request

- Met with Debbie regarding GSA funding requests.
- Funding approved:
    - Gala: $12,000
    - Welcome Week: $500
    - Research Conference: $500
- Discussion occurred regarding potential student fee increases; executive position remains opposed to increasing graduate student fees.

Executive Coordination

- Individual meetings held with executive members to review priorities and planning.
- Continued focus on maintaining long-term planning timelines.

Health Sciences Building Restructuring

- Ongoing concern regarding restructuring of graduate student space within the Health Sciences Building.
- Administration proceeded with plans before meaningful consultation with graduate students.
- Previous advocacy communication to senior leadership did not receive a formal response.
- Additional advocacy response is being prepared to request greater innovation and consideration of graduate student needs.
- Executive will continue supporting affected graduate students where possible.

b. Vice-President Finance & Operations

Alumo Conference Report

- Conference report completed and approved by VP Academic & Student Affairs.
- Awaiting final review from Operations Manager.
- Notable takeaways included:
    - National data showing counselling and mental health supports as the most utilized student benefit services.
    - High utilization of mental health medications and related health supports.
    - Availability of legal consultation services through Alumo.
    - Introduction of a grant program of up to approximately $5,000 for student-focused wellness initiatives.
- Executive noted conference programming was less informative than anticipated.

Coordinator Hiring

- Coordinator applications remain open until Sunday.
- Approximately 40 applications received.
- Shortlisting expected to reduce pool to approximately 10-15 candidates.
- Interviews have already begun for strong applicants.
- Hiring considerations include:
    - Personality fit.
    - Availability.
    - Balanced scheduling coverage across office hours.

Expanded Coordinator Scope

- Proposal to assign coordinators additional project support responsibilities during slow periods.
- Potential responsibilities include:
    - Sponsorship outreach.
    - Event preparation.
    - Administrative support.
    - Preliminary research and background tasks.

c. Vice-President Academic & Student Affairs

Reduced Fee Initiative

- No major progress update.
- Project remains on schedule for September.

Welcome Week Planning

- Planning underway.
- Detailed discussion moved to Major Discussion section.

CFS Appreciation

- CFS sent a thank-you message to GSA executives regarding gifts received.

d. Vice-President External Affairs (Rozars Faisal)

Red Swan Pizza Partnership

- Initial discussions held.
- Sponsorship options may include funding support or discount coupons.
- Final support package will depend on event details and attendance estimates.

Social Media

- Ongoing promotion of hiring opportunities and GSA activities.
- Fall event promotion preparations underway.

Ministry Meeting

- No updates received.

e. Vice-President Indigenous Engagement (Laila Valila)

Community Outreach

- Contacted Gordon Oakes Centre regarding future collaboration.

- Awaiting response.
- Also coordinating supervisor-related engagement initiatives.

4. Major Discussion Items

a. Alumo Conference Recap

- Executive reviewed major takeaways from conference report.
- Discussion focused on:
    - Mental health service utilization data.
    - Legal consultation services.
    - New wellness grant opportunities.
- No action required at this time.

b. Coordinator Hiring and Expanded Scope

- Executive discussed hiring strategy.
- Interest expressed in encouraging Indigenous student participation where possible.
- Availability and skill balance remain important considerations.
- Expanded coordinator responsibilities broadly supported.

c. Ratified Group Funding Requests

Nepalese Students Association

- Requested $500 for a graduate student networking picnic event.
- Application met funding requirements.
- Motion to approve funding request.
    - First: Indigenous Engagement. Second: VP External Affairs. Carried unanimously.

Plant Sciences Association

- Requested $250 for Field Day programming.
- Application submitted after event due to transition issues within the association.
- Supporting documentation and receipts were complete.
- Motion to approve funding request.
    - First: President. Second: VP Academic & Student Affairs. Carried unanimously.

d. GSA Commons Operating Hours

Daytime Hours

- Executive agreed to maintain office hours of **8:00 AM to 4:00 PM**.

Evening Pilot

- Approved trial of extended hours.
- Monday and Tuesday:
    - Coordinator coverage from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM.
- Objective is to assess student demand for evening access and provide additional coordinator work hours.

e. Ratification Period

Ratification Timeline

- Ratification period approved:
    - Opening: September 1, 2026
    - Closing: September 26, 2026

Communications

- Existing student groups will be notified of ratification requirements.
- Outreach will also occur to programs without currently ratified groups.

Governance Clarification

- Groups do not need to have newly elected executives before ratifying.
- Executive membership composition may be updated later.

f. Welcome Week Planning

September 2 Orientation and Barbecue

- Executive setup begins at 8:00 AM.
- Orientation scheduled from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM.
- Lunch service from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM.
- Event concludes at approximately 4:00 PM.

Bingo Night

- Setup begins at 4:00 PM.
- Registration opens at 5:00 PM.
- Bingo begins at 5:30 PM.
- Food service scheduled from 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM.
- Event expected to conclude around 8:30 PM.

Pub Crawl

- Planned for evening programming.
- Exploring partnership with CKGS and transportation options.

Family Day

- Setup begins at 9:00 AM.
- Public programming from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM.
- Food service expected from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM.

Family Event Enhancements

- Petting zoo option reviewed:
    - Approximately $500.
- Bouncy castle rental reviewed:
    - Approximately $50 rental or $200 purchase.
- Further budget review required.

T-Shirts

- Approximately 300 shirts ordered.
- Costs exceeded original estimates.
- Budget adjustments may be required.

g. Health Chats and Wellness Engagement

October Wellness Event

- Tentatively scheduled for October 7.
- Mental health identified as primary theme.
- Potential collaboration opportunities:
    - Isaac/Mental Health Services.
    - Student Wellness resources.
    - Additional funding partners.

h. Annual Calendar Review

December Initiative

- Approved concept for holiday bingo event featuring:
    - Turkeys.
    - Hams.
    - Holiday meal packages.
- Coordinators will begin donation outreach efforts.

Research Conference

- Research Conference date moved to February 5.

Indigenous Programming

- Future Indigenous-focused events to be added once details are finalized.

i. Executive Discretionary Funds

Parking Pass Request

- Request submitted by Rupesh for parking expenses exceeding $800.

Motion: Approve use of $500 from VP Academic & Student Affairs discretionary funds toward parking costs.

- First: VP Finance & Operations. Second: Indigenous Engagement. Carried unanimously.

Tuition Assistance Request

- Request submitted by Rozars to use discretionary funds toward tuition expenses.

Motion defeated.

- Executive determined tuition expenses did not align with the intended purpose of discretionary fund guidelines.
- Executive may revisit the matter in the future if additional rationale is presented.

5. Other Business

Jumpstart

- Executives confirmed participation discussions are ongoing.
- Presentation materials continue to be developed.

Welcome Week Responsibilities

- Executive members confirmed availability and scheduling considerations.
- Individual conflicts noted and will be accommodated where possible.

6. Upcoming Meetings and Dates

- September 1-26, 2026: Ratification Period
- September 2-6, 2026: Welcome Week
- September 10, 2026: Executive Meeting / PMB 238 Event

7. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn

- Carried unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:22 PM, August 7, 2026.

Approved by: President, VP Academic & Student Affairs, VP Indigenous Engagement, VP Finance & Operations