



GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
Annual General Meeting



Notice of Meeting
Tuesday, 25 April, 2017, 5 – 7pm
GSA Commons

Agenda

	MEETING	Pages	Action
5:00	1. Call to Order		
5:05	2. Approval of the Agenda		Decision
5:10	3. Remarks from the Chair and Elections Report	Oral	Information
5:15	4. Approval of the Minutes from the 2016 AGM	(link)	Decision
5:20*	5. Presentation: University Library Master Plan	Oral	Input
5:50	6. Audit Update and Reappointment of Auditors.	2	Information / Decision
5:55	7. Appointment of External Director	Oral**	Decision
6:00	8. Annual Reports from the GSA Executive	(link)	Information
6:20	9. Q & A Period with the Executive <i>Topics for discussion (not exhaustive):</i> a) UPASS Renegotiation / Summer pass b) Activity in CFS	Oral	Discussion / Input
6:50	10. Other Business / Announcements		
7:00	11. Adjournment		Decision

**special order*

***materials available at meeting*

Note: A light meal will be served starting at 4:30pm.
Please [click here and RSVP to the GSA Facebook AGM Event](#).

Questions and comments should be sent to:
gsa.chair@usask.ca

5 April, 2017

Robert D. E. Henderson, Chair

Graduate Students' Association – U of S
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
25 April, 2017

Approval of Auditors

Motion:

Whereas the audit processes for years ending 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 are currently and actively in progress,
and,

Whereas Buckberger Baerg and Partners LLP have been previously retained and engaged for these audits, and,

Whereas it is the intention of management to continue with the audit process through the summer 2017 to
additionally complete the audit for the year ending 2017, and,

Whereas Section 149 of the Non-Profit Corporations Act of the province of Saskatchewan provides that the
membership approve the appointment of the corporation's auditors at each AGM, *no therefore be it*

Resolved, that the membership reappoint Buckberger Baerg and Partners LLP to be the GSA – U of S auditors
until the close of the next AGM.

Dear GSA Members,

It is my pleasure to provide you the annual report of my activities as the Vice President - Finance and to give you updated information on the finances and budget of the Graduate Students Association (GSA). I would like to thank our GSA Office Manager Sherri Rohovich along with all our wonderful co-ordinators, volunteers, and most importantly, you - the members for making this a very successful year at your Graduate Students Association. I want to offer my particular gratitude to the members of the Finance and Audit Committee for their assistance this year. I would also like to acknowledge Mr. David Benett for his generous assistance throughout the year in the matters of book keeping. The following is a highlight of the activities and tasks that took place under my portfolio:

Free Tax filing services:

I succeeded in collaborating with CFS and UFile to bring free tax filing services on campus. For the very first time, such a service was introduced wherein, a team of 14 graduate student volunteers were trained for this service, which successfully benefitted 126 students (with spouses) over a five-day period. The feedback received was extremely positive and encouraging. A request to continue this service for the next year was made by almost every student highlighting the need of such service through GSA.

Financial Literacy workshops:

With the collaboration of Royal Bank of Canada, GSA held a financial literacy workshop each term to bring awareness among graduate students about personal banking and effective money management. Topics like handling credit cards, student loans, Tax free savings account and GIC were discussed in detail. Each workshop had a turnout of about fifty students and the feedback received appreciated the initiative.

Academic council funding:

GSA Council funding was calculated based on a formula preset in GSA policies that states: Academic Councils may receive up to \$3.00 per full time student or \$1.50 per part time students according to the following formula: $c = [x \times (3.00) + y \times (1.50)] \times [a / b]$

, where c is the funding received by the Academic Council, x is the number of full time students, y is the number of part time students, a is the number of meetings attended by Academic Councillors and b is the possible attendance rate by the number of registered Academic Councillors. The cheques were prepared and made available to different academic councils in September 2016. The academic council attendance for 2016/17 was better than the previous year and hopefully will be even better in the coming year.

Student club funding:

In addition to the funding to Councils, GSA provided funding to around twenty-two student groups for various activities and initiatives like club socials, conferences, retreats, fundraising, and cultural events. This year we received an overwhelming response for student club funding from various student groups. Such funding helps in establishing a communication between GSA executives and its members. Hopefully, the response will be even more demanding next year.

RISE conference:

Along with VP student affairs, VP academic and aboriginal liaison, I attended 2017 RISE conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The conference highlighted many of the social issues related to minority communities with emphasis on racism and its adverse impacts. The conference also highlighted how to avoid the stigma associated with such issues. It was a three-day long conference packed with panel discussion, workshops, open and close discussions among other events. It was alarming to hear about the personal and professional problem faced by aboriginal students.

Committee appointment and meetings:

In addition to the awards committee, I also represented GSA at the University fee review committee. I was able to provide exact figures for GPass to University of Saskatchewan with the help of Saskatoon Transit Services. The GPass for 2017/18 fall and winter term will be \$108.44. I also raised my concern for increased University athlete fees which was reconsidered by the committee and the GSA president was in contact with the committee in this regard.

Scholarships and Awards:

A major part of my responsibilities as an elected Executive member is to attend various meetings representing the GSA. Funding and scholarships are obviously a major concern of virtually all grad students. I represented the voice of GSA in two different university scholarship and award committees (one is a sub-committee of University Council and the other is a sub-committee of the College of Graduate Studies and Research). I adjudicated 234 applications for various scholarships (49 University continuing scholarship, 132 Dean's round 1 and 59 Dean's round 2 including domestic and international applications). I am also representing GSA in University Graduate student awards which is happening on April 23rd. In all these committees, the number of scholarships have not been raised. CGPS is yet to decide where to put the million dollars that was reported last year.

GSA need based bursary committee:

I sat in this committee once each term for 2016/17 to evaluate applications from graduate students. The committee evaluated an average of 120 applications per term for the year 2016/17. GSA distributed 10 bursaries each term and CGPS contributed in providing an additional 30 bursaries in fall and winter terms. The rubric for evaluating the application needs to be defined where VP Operations is working in collaboration with university Officials. My sincere thanks to all committee members, VP academic and VP operations for arranging the meetings on time and in extending their help to evaluate the applications to the best of their efforts.

Insurance and ISC returns:

The GSA is mandated to file year-end financial returns and maintain up-to-date registry information with the Information Services Corporation (a government-approved body that manages all business and non-profit registered in Saskatchewan). The deadline for submitting this information every year is August 31st but the information that is being submitted represents the GSA's end of year financial position of April 30th. This was successfully completed. I submitted the annual returns for 2015/16 and the incoming VP

will be filing 2016/17 returns. Other insurances like non- profit Directors and officers and Commons insurance were also successfully completed ensuring safe GSA work practice. Worker compensation Board:

The WCB considers Executives who are paid honorariums to still be employees for their purposes of coverage. Our WCB premiums are currently up-to-date. Also of note, we received a Certificate of Achievement from the WCB for having a zero injury year again this year. My congratulations to the VP Operations, Office Manager and staff for ensuring a safe workplace! I should also note that the GSA has received a credit on our account from the Workers' Compensation Board in the amount of \$61.93.

GSA financial budgeting:

Along with the dedicated volunteers of the GSA's Finance and Audit Committee, I chaired this committee and together we crafted and presented an operating budget for the 2017-18 financial year. This budget is now available for any further amendments. A detailed report has been attached along with the descriptors. The committee carefully determined the pros and cons of various GSA services like Crisis Aid program, Campus Legal services and took decisions that support student success and sustainable spending.

An effective Important financial and administrative task that I accomplished this year include making monthly financial statements public to provide enhanced transparency. All monthly Statements were made available for public to look at. Due to the privacy concerns raised by governance committee members, these monthly statements were taken off from GSA website. These statements are available on demand. All book keeping was done using the accounting code structure developed by previous VP Finance.

Tech Venture Challenge:

Mr. Tedric Soh, a graduate student from U of S won TVC in 2016. With the help of University liaison office an agreement was made that laid the terms of loan amount i.e. \$10,000 for the recipient. This agreement was signed by Mr. Tedric Soh, GSA President

and GSA VP finance releasing an amount of \$8,000. Rest \$2,000 will be released upon providing satisfactory expense details.

Other updates:

Fundraising: I was successful in fundraising amount from Royal Bank of Canada this year. It was the first time when our banking service i.e. RBC was actively involved in GSA events and initiatives.

GPass: I was able to develop an excel sheet for calculating accurate GPass amount for each school term. The sheet now clearly accommodates the number of opt outs, opt ins and university cheque adjustments throughout the year.

Governance committee: I served as a member on governance committee which is introducing a new model for GSA governance for the upcoming year.



4/4/2017

ANNUAL REPORT

VICE PRESIDENT STUDENT AFFAIRS



SAPAL, SHAILZA

GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

INTRODUCTION

As vice president student affairs over the period of 2016-2017 I learned a great deal about how the university works on an administrative and operational level.

One of the learning experiences from this position was the opportunity to serve on various committees through-out university. Another important function of this position is the organization, fund raising and administration of social events. These events range the size of 40-50 people up to 1500 + people. In addition, part of my role was to recruit the council members from various departments on university campus. Another facet of this position that is close to my personal character is assisting students when they need help regarding consumer & residence services, cultural adjustments, with awareness of the rights of international students, issues regarding availability of basic-necessities and personal security concerns.

The remainder of this report will summarize all of the committees I sat on, the social events I organized, important & ongoing initiatives and the recommendations for the incoming VP student affairs.

COMMITTEES

Following is the list of committees that I served on throughout my 1 year term. I would like to acknowledge the efforts put by every individual of the committees, regarding the sensitive yet very important concerns regarding the meetings.

1.1.University Councils Committees:

- **International Activities Committee:**

1.2.CGPR Committees:

- **Equity and Interdisciplinary Committee**

1.3.Other Committees:

- **Student forum**
- **Alternative dispute resolution committee**
- **Fall and Winter Orientation Committee**
- **Parking and Transportation Committee**

- Survey committee
- GSA Gala Committee

SOCIAL EVENTS

Over the period of 1 year I have organized multiple events. The events along with the dates and approximate attendees is listed in the table below.

S.No.	Events	Date of event	Approximate Attendees
1.	Fall Orientation	September 6, 2016	1700
	Wine & Cheese	September 30, 2016	110
2.	Halloween Party	October 29, 2016	80
3.	Greet and Meet	November 25, 2016	80
4.	Holiday Party	December 16, 2016	60
5.	Winter Orientation	January 3, 2017	40
	Wine & Cheese	January 27, 2017	80
6.	Board Games Night	February 24, 2017	60
7.	Poetry Night	March 8, 2017	50
8.	Going Away Social	April 25, 2017	Estimated number = 80

GRADUATE STUDENT SURVEY

The grad survey was one of the biggest initiative that was taken forward last year, the survey committee comprised of grad students from various disciplines was formed, the goal of the committee was to come up with a questionnaire which can relate to the life of a grad student both on and off campus. The survey was successfully made with the help of college of grad and postdoctoral studies, Dr. Adam Baxter-Jones, Dean CGPS and Eleonore Daniel-Vaugeois, Executive assistant to the dean CGPS have given their inputs in the survey. Presently, the survey is with the ethics approval and need to be collected and run for collecting the data.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Orientation: The GSA Fall Orientation is one of the main and biggest event under this profile and the incoming the new executive should start working on it early summer as the planning and implementation takes a lot of time.

The winter Orientation is usually collaborated with the university as the incoming students are very few during that time. It is better to start planning for the winter orientation in late October or early November as various facilities are involved in planning and implementation during such weather.

- The recruitment of the council from various disciplines should be started in the beginning of the term.
- The survey needs to be collected from the ethics approval and need to be run to collect the data.
- The childcare facility for grad students could be worked on to know the slots availability, the registration could be done through GSA itself so that we can improve the facility in future.
- Residence: A good number of grad students live in university residence and there are some concerns that always come forward. It is important to have a good relation with consumer services in order to tackle the concerns in a strategic manner.

CONCLUSION

In the end, I would like to congratulate the incoming executive in his/her new job profile. I will be around to provide any information required regarding the profile of this position.

GSA Annual Report 2016-17

VP Academic

Ali Kiani

4 April 2017

Graduate Students' Association (GSA)



Content:

My Activities as a VP Academic

- 1. Social Media-Workshop**
- 2. SECC Industry Talk**
- 3. Digital Business Strategy**
- 4. Blanket Exercise at the GSA**
- 5. Anti-Racist Community Workshop**
- 6. Historicizing Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Understanding the Indian Residential School Settlement**
- 7. 3MT Information Session**
- 8. 2017 Three Minute Thesis and Graduate Student Research Conference- March 29,30 & 31/2017**
- 9. Committees**
- 10. Racialised and Indigenous Student Experience (RISE) Summit**
- 11. Hearing Boards and Student Advocacy**

It is my pleasure to bring this annual report to you. I have enjoyed dedicating my time to the concerns of graduate students at the University of Saskatchewan. The VP Academic position has taught me the importance of advocating for the rights of graduate students and how integral this is for a positive university experience. The position required my attendance and organization abilities of many committees, workshops and conferences. Moreover, I had the honour of interacting with university administration, graduate students, and external stakeholders. All of these experiences have further emphasized that the best way to advocate for the rights of graduate students is to have an open mind and treat everyone with a sense of humility and respect. In the following summary report I will outline the conferences, workshops I organized as well as the University Committees I attended. Once again, I appreciate the opportunity the graduate students at The University of Saskatchewan have given me in this vital advocacy role.

2016/2017 VP- Academic and Cultural Workshops

Social Media-Workshop

Tuesday, September 20th at 10:30 am-12:30 pm



It is part of the VP- Academic's role to equip students' with the latest technology and communication tools for their future success.

Specifically, this workshop on internet marketing and communication tools outlined the following:

According to CIUS survey 2012, 75% Canadians regularly use the internet, and the majority of Canadians have some sort of social media activity on the internet such as facebook, youtube, twitter, snap chat, etc. As social media have dominated the traditional methods of social interaction, people use social media for interacting with their loved ones, to find old and new friends, to remain in contact with their work colleagues, to advertise their services and products and much more. It is important to learn how to use social media tools effectively and efficiently instead of wasting time. In this workshop, students will learn the effective and productive use of social media, such as facebook, twitter, youtube, google+, etc.

SECC Industry Talk

September 30th 10:30am

The purpose the SECC Industry talks is to show students' how to apply the academic knowledge from both the theoretical and the practical to clarify some of the challenges of bridging the gaps between the academy and the broader working world.

Blanket Exercise at the GSA

Thursday Oct 27, at 4:30 PM

The GSA Commons



The Blanket Exercise is an interactive learning experience where participants are facilitated through the shared history between the Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people of Canada. Participants walk in the shoes of the Indigenous people of Turtle Island (Canada) and through factual story telling are role played through the actions the federal government of Canada had taken on to colonize and assimilate Indigenous people. Through directing and roleplaying participants will be introduced to some of the policies and efforts made to ensure Indigenous people were being assimilated and conformed into the European body of a newly developing country.

Ian Worme, a Teacher within the Greater Saskatoon Catholic School division and Master of Public Administration student at Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy has facilitated the Blanket Exercise numerous times. Ian is not only a teacher by trade, but also provides consultant work around treaties and residential school history.

SECC Industry Talk

November 4th/2016 10:30am

Digital Business Strategy

November 30th 5pm



It is part of the VP- Academic's role to equip students' with the latest technology and communication tools for their future success. Building on the previous Social Media Workshop held on September 20 this workshop shows students; more of the online tools at their disposal for the promotion of their personal and professional goals.

Specifically, this workshop on Digital Business Strategy outlined the following:

This workshop will help you to understand the basic concepts of web designing, domain name registration (.ca, .com, .org, .net, etc.), web hosting, internet marketing, social media marketing, and blogging. At the end of the workshop, you will be able to know what exactly you need to make an effective web presence and brand yourself / your products / your services. This workshop is very helpful for those who are interested in making a website for personal or commercial use, and also want to know how to market their brand name on the internet.

Anti-Racist Community Workshop

December 19, 2016 at 6.30 pm

Anti-Racist Community Workshop



Workshop facilitator:
Dr. Sheelah McLean

Organized by :
Ali Kiani, VP Academic, GSA,
McKeown Park Community
Garden,
Jebunnesssa Chapola

When: December 19, 2016

Time: 6.30 pm

Where: Play Room, Souris Hall, Saskatoon

Refreshment would be served.

If you have any question regarding workshop, please contact Email: gsa.acad@usask.ca

Workshop facilitator:

Dr. Sheelah McLean is an antiracist educator. She has been a high school teacher for 25 years in the Saskatoon Public School System, and currently works in adult education, and as an instructor at the University of Saskatchewan. Sheelah is also an organizer in the Idle No More movement and works as an antiracist mentor within the community through various research projects and committees which address racism, patriarchy, heteronormativity, and classism.

This interactive workshop will explore how unequal power relations are created and maintained in our institutions and community organizations. We will discuss the importance of using anti-racist anti-oppressive education in order to build spaces that can move towards more equitable practices.

SECC Industry Talk

January 20th 2017 10:30am

SECC Industry Talk

February 10th 10:30am

Historicizing Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Understanding the Indian Residential School Settlement

February 23/2017 1 PM

Understanding the Indian Residential School Settlement



Workshop Facilitator:
Dr. Verna St. Denis

Organized by:
Ali Kiani
VP Academic, GSA
Jebunnessa Chapola,
Community Garden
Coordinator

When: February 23, 2017
Time: 1:00 PM
Where: GSA Commons, U of S

Refreshment would be served.

If you have any question regarding workshop, please contact Email: gsa.acad@usask.ca

Dr. Verna St. Denis is Professor of Education at the University of Saskatchewan where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in anti-oppressive education in the Department of

Educational Foundations. She is both Cree and Metis and a member of the Beardsy's and Okemasis First Nation. Her research explores the experiences and knowledge of Indigenous teachers working in public education. She has won several awards, for her service to the profession, excellence in teaching and scholarship.

First 3MT Information Session

February 28/2017-1:30 PM

The Three Minute Thesis information sessions and workshops are held to give the potential and confirmed participants the opportunity for clarification and practice time on the rules and expectations of a successful Three Minute Thesis experience. These sessions were presented by Dr. Garrett Richards a Postdoctoral Student from SENS at The University of Saskatchewan.

SECC Industry Talk

March 3/2017-10:30 AM

Second 3MT Information Session

March 7/2017-2 PM

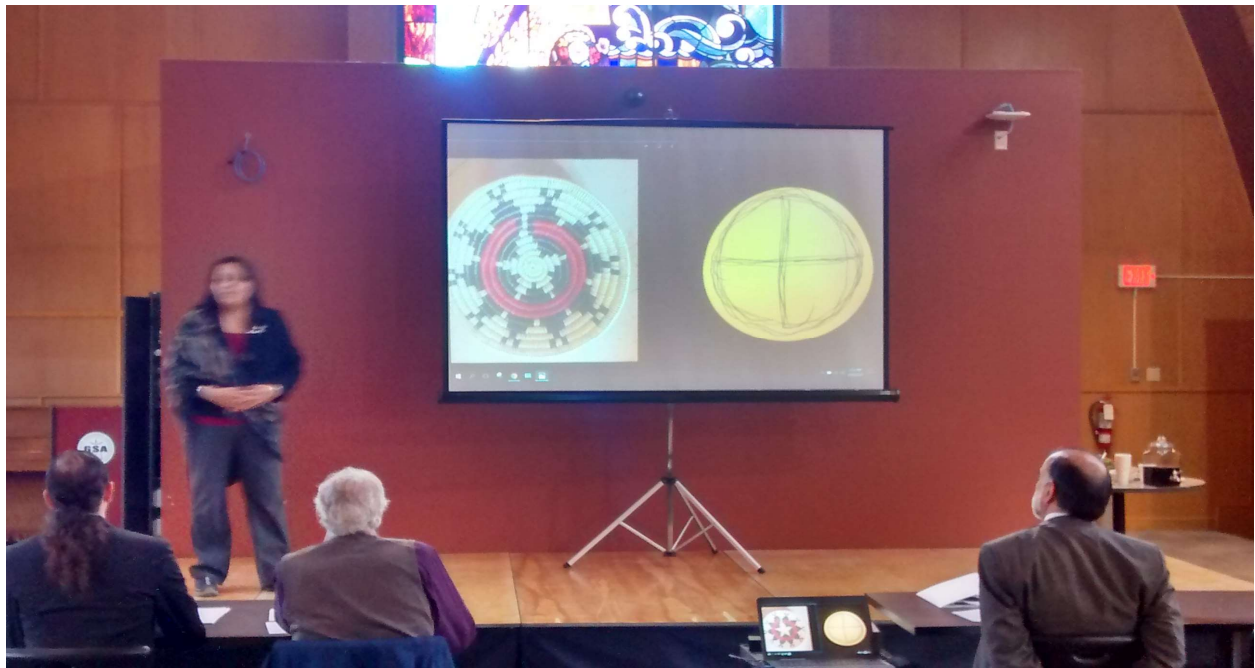
Third 3MT Workshop

March 15/2017-10:30 AM

Forth 3MT Workshop

March 21/2017-1PM

2017 Three Minute Thesis and Graduate Student Research Conference- March 29,30 & 31/2017







The 2017 process for The Three Minute Thesis began with the appointment of the 3MT and Graduate Student Research Conference Coordinator on January 16 /2017. This term two position was awarded to Derek Sutherland a Graduate Student at The University of Saskatchewan in the

Department of Philosophy. Derek was paid with the Graduate Service Fellowship from the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies at the end of every month until April 28/2017.

Derek Sutherland coordinated the events and raised funds from two colleges. The first was The College of Nursing in the amount of \$ 300 dollars. The second was The College of Pharmacy and Nutrition in the amount of \$ 400 dollars. Derek also sent e-mails to every college and various graduate chairs and deans on campus with letters of request for financial support for The Three Minute Thesis and Graduate Student Research Conference. There were a number of responses to these inquiries. These responses were positive but were nevertheless negative. The primary reason given for a lack of financial support was due to the impending provincial budget and the subsequent belt tightening approach of colleges and departments.

Despite the budgetary constraints, the primary goal of the 2017 Three Minute Thesis and graduate Student Research conference was to increase the standing of the Graduate Students' Association at the University of Saskatchewan and in the province of Saskatchewan. Thus, the actual spent budget was approximately \$ 7500 dollars. Though this amount is more than what was spent on previous 3MT's, it nonetheless, reflects the work done before and shows that the Graduate Students' Association is dedicated to continually raising the profile of the organization. The line by line break down of the spent amounts on the 2017 Three Minute Thesis and Graduate Student Research conference will be confirmed and presented to the GSA Executive and Council as soon as all the numbers are available. Some budget specifics, the budget contribution from the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies was: \$ 2000 for the prizes, 2 lunches at \$ 800 dollars each for March 29 and 30/ 2017, 2 Coffees at \$ 80 dollars each for March 29 and 30/ 2017, \$ 1004.60 for EMAP video recording and production, Judges gifts for \$ 500 dollars and \$ 250 dollars for printing. There is also \$ 5000 dollars available from the GSA budget for The

2017 Three Minute Thesis and Graduate Student Research Conference. The actual expenses for the entire Three Minute Thesis and The Graduate Student Research Conference equals dollars. The next paragraph will outline how the Three Minute Thesis and Graduate Student Research Conference transpired.

The 2017 Three Minute Thesis and Graduate Student Research Conference took place on March 29, 30 and 31/2017. There were fifty-eight participants registered for the Three Minute thesis which took place on March 29 and 30/2017. There was also a total of four panel judges. On the first day, the judges present were Dr. Robert Henderson, Dr. Jay Kalra, Jim Pulfer, University of Saskatchewan Senate Member and Danielle Chartier, MLA. The judges on the second day were Jim Pulfer, Dr. Robert Henderson and Dr. Jay Kalra. For the Graduate Student Research Conference on March 31 / 2017 there were twenty-three participants registered. For the Three Minute Thesis, there were two catered lunches offered from 12 Noon to approximately 1:15 PM on both March 29 and 30/2017. For the Graduate Student Research Conference, there was one catered lunch on March 31 / 2017 from 12:45 – 1:45 PM. The three-minute thesis had three winners. These winners received money prize and one free ticket to the 2017 GSA Gala held on April 1/2017 at The Delta Bessborough in Saskatoon. Specifically, the prizes for the top three finishers were 1st place \$ 1000 dollars, second place \$ 500 dollars and the third-place prize was \$ 250 dollars. There were also four honourable mentions who each received one free ticket to the GSA Gala on April 1/ 2017 at The Delta Bessborough in Saskatoon.

In summary the Three Minute Thesis and Graduate Student Research Conference was a rewarding and successful event. However, as with all events held at an institution as diverse and busy as The University of Saskatchewan there is room for improvement. There is no need at this time to go into an entire list of pros and cons of this experience, but one crucial recommendation

needs to be explained. It has been recommended that a key way to improve the Three Minute Thesis and the Graduate Student Research Conference is to have the college and departments hold their versions of the Three Minute Thesis and mini conferences. From this the colleges would have, for instance, the top three finishers, come to the University wide finals organized and held by The GSA. The GSA would then provide the winner for the regionals. This decentralization of the organizational aspects would ease the pressure on The GSA and also help to have a better account of the actual attendance and confirmation of the participants. The reason is that when the participants who come from the college or departmental level would be encouraged by their supervisors or department heads to attend. As it stands, the central organizational framework, though commendable, requires the VP – Academic and the Coordinator to spend too much time on persuading participants to come to the event. With this alternative approach the persuasive aspect for the VP- Academic and the coordinator would ease and allow them to continue to increase the professional aspect and University wide recognition of the event.

Committees:

Another rewarding part of the role of the VP – Academic is the attendance and participation on various committees over the year. These committees touched on many interesting aspects of the graduate student experience at The University of Saskatchewan. The diverse viewpoints given at these committees give me hope that the direction the university is traveling is one of inclusion, recognition, accountability and transparency to continue to develop The University of

Saskatchewan into one of Canada's premier academic institutions. The list of committees I attended are:

Academic Programs Committee

Teaching, Learning and Academic Resources Committee

Research, Scholarly & Artistic Work Committee

University Council

Graduate Academic Affairs Committee

External Conferences:

March 17-19, 2017

Racialised and Indigenous Student Experience (RISE) Summit



In keeping with the theme of racial recognition and the continuance of anti-colonization in the Academy I attended an important three day conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba titled RISE. At this conference I learned more about the multiple ways that indigenous groups, women and various minorities have and continue to experience ongoing explicit and subtle discrimination and racism. The following is from the rise media promotion and outlines the purpose of this vital conference:

Students at post-secondary institutions across Canada have been at the forefront of organizing against racialised and colonialist violence on their university and college campuses, as well as within their communities, for decades.

We are proud to announce that both the Canadian Federation of Students-Manitoba and Canadian Federation of Students – Saskatchewan will be hosting Prairie — Racialised and Indigenous Student Experience (RISE) Summit in Winnipeg. The Prairie RISE Summit will be a life changing opportunity for students to develop a common vision to combat racism and colonialism. The event is a closed space for students that identify as Racialized and/or Indigenous.

Hundreds of students from Manitoba and Saskatchewan will gather together for a weekend of workshops, speakers, storytelling, sharing, and action planning, with the theme of healing and empowerment. Come be a part of this important event!

Hearing Boards and Student Advocacy:

Once per month I had the honour to be a part of the Hearing Boards. These meetings were both rewarding and challenging. The rewarding aspect is to see that the University is aware of the needs of students as they navigate their graduate experience. The challenging aspect is that at times the outcome of these boards seems to take time that many students' and administrators do not have time to properly address the complexity of these difficult issues. However, I found the experience to still be one of humility and respect and learned a lot about how Universities work in Canada.

2016-2017 REPORT

Carolyn M. Gaspar

VP External Affairs

Graduate Students' Association

University of Saskatchewan

April 2017

Welcome Note

Thank you to all the members who supported me during my time as VP External. This year has been highly productive to the GSA internally and externally. I have worked on many of the initiatives to provide sustainability to the association. The GSA has grown a positive reputation over the past two GSA executive terms and I await the growth of the association in the future to come.

Many thanks to the council members for being critical and providing important insights to the association. We have been able to accomplish a lot this year and it's because of your dedication and hard work, so thank you.

A huge thank you goes to the Office Manager, Sherri Rohovich! Thank you for always being there to help the team.

1. Lobbying/Day of Action

The CFS-SK component lobbied the provincial government with three asks: 1. Eliminate tuition fees; 2. Increase non-repayable, up-front grants for Indigenous learners. 3. Sustainable and stable mental health funding. Further, we partnered with Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP)-Northern Professional Access College (NORPAC) is an education institute in Northern Saskatchewan. The provincial government signed a 5-year agreement in 2015 to fund NORTEP-NORPAC and is no longer upholding this agreement. NORTEP-NORPAC is in the best years of it's program with the highest enrolment rate. The provincial government has asked NORTEP-NORPAC to consolidate with another post-secondary institute in the province.

At the National Graduate Student Caucus, graduate student leaders from the nation gathered to discuss pertinent issues to our members and how to move forward. The three top areas of concern across the nation were: 1. A Mental Health Strategy for Graduate Students; 2. Beyond Child-Friendly Campuses; 3. Student and Worker Solidarity. We also shared best-practices around governance structures and member engagement.

This year the GSA undertook a huge commitment to mobilize students on November 2nd for the National Day of Action against tuition. We had the most successful event in the province with 75 to 100 students attending. We also had media coverage with 4 different broadcasters. We had endorsement from the Faculty Association, CUPE Local, and the Saskatchewan Labour Board.

2. GU15

The U15 is, since 2011, a group of 15 research intensive universities in Canada who meets twice per year to exchange common concerns, best practices and to provide political views. The GU15 on the other hand, is an informal meeting of but not-exclusively, associations representing the graduate students of these 15 universities. This group of graduate students now meets twice per year at different locations to also discuss best practices.

In August of 2016 I travelled, with VP Operations & Communication, to Hamilton, Ontario to attend the second annual GU15 meeting at McMaster University.

At this meeting we talked about getting student representation on TRI-Council's governing bodies. Further, it was discussed that having student representation on the Board of Governance of universities is 'best practice' amongst the U15.

However, a lengthy discussion by McMaster, Waterloo, UBC, and University of Montreal was around incorporation of GU15. A vote of 7 to 9 participating graduate student leaders voted for incorporation. The new identity of GU15 was to have a think tank, ThinkGRAD Graduate Research and Development), for graduate students across the nations to come together and share best-practice and set lobbying priorities for federal governments. It was decided that the University of Saskatchewan would host the first ThinkGRAD conference in April 2017. This decision was made by the previous VP External and VP Finance when they attended the GU15 meeting in April 2016.

3. ThinkGRAD

ThinkGRAD is scheduled to occur April 19th to 21st at the time of writing this report I have little information about the conference to share. The agenda item deadline is April 17th and registration is open until April 14th. Thank you Naheda for your help in planning this initiative.

4. STUDENTCARE

I worked with STUDENTCARE representative (Colten Yamagishi & Kirstin Foster) on the negotiation of the health and dental plan for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. The Health & Dental committee of council made a recommendation to increase our health and dental plan by 5% to ensure we will not over spend the money in the reserve. It was also suggested that we work with the post-doctoral fellow (PDF) union to have PDFs automatically enrolled in our health and dental plan to help subsidize the cost. Currently we have approximately 100 PDFs enrolled in the plan which affects the overall claims made. This is something the VP Finance & Operations should continue to work on with the Health & Dental committee of council.

5. Board of Governance

I have worked with the GSA President on this initiative meeting with the leader of the opposition, Trent Wotherspoon NDP to discuss the importance of having student representation on the Board of Governance. This would require the University of Saskatchewan 1995 Act and it was important to have provincial government support. Further, I helped in the development of the GSA President's presentation for the Government in Regina, due to my class schedule I was unable to attend. Further, I met with the Governance committee and Board of Directors of the University to discuss the importance of student representation.

6. GSA 5th Annual Awards Gala

This year I planned the 5th Annual Awards Gala on April 1st, 2017 at the Delta Bessborough. We had approximately 270 guests in attendance (including the honorable Mayor, Dean and Associate Dean of College of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies, Faculty Association, Alumni Association, Associate Dean of Arts and Science, Senate and Board members of the university) with many compliments on the decoration and theme “Great Gatsby”.

This task was a huge undertaking as it required fundraising the entirety. I was successful to get sponsorships from the different associations, colleges, and units on campus as well as securing off-campus sponsors. Thank you to the GSA Gala coordinator Kereen Morrison-Spence for her help, to our MCs, and to the photographer who helped captured a memorable night.

7. Misc. Initiatives

- I worked on a garden for the GSA with the office of sustainability. This is an initiative I hope the Sustainability Committee of council continues to work on.
- I also worked on the Health Chat initiative and am currently working with VP Operations & Communication to create a sustainable plan for this initiative as mental health is a concern for our members.
- I worked on the GSA Survey proposal with College of Graduate Students and Post-doctoral studies and the development of the final draft. It is unfortunate that ethics was a barrier and hope to see this initiative move forward next year. Thank you VP Student Affairs for organizing the survey committee.
- I coordinated the GSA Guppies for the Campus Rec intramural teams.
- Helped with the GSA website
- Participated in the REACT campaign on sexual assault.
- Worked on the student-supervisor agreement
- Worked on a U of S universal volunteer registry
- Created the GSA Annual Academic year planner
- Helped with orientation
- Press release on Travel Band
- Press release on Budget

8. Committee Participation

GSA Council Committee's:

Health & Dental Committee (Chair)

Gala Committee (Chair)

Health & Wellness Committee (Co-chair)

Finance & Audit Committee

Governance Committee

College of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Fellow Committee's:

College of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Fellow Council Member

Interdisciplinary Committee

Earned Degrees

University Committee's:

Teaching, Learning and Research Committee

Planning Advisory Committee (delegate Isaac Pratt)

Fee Review Committee

External Committee's:

Canadian Federation of Students' National Committee

Canadian Federation of Students' National Graduate Caucus

Campus Rec Committee, College of Kinesiology

9. GSA Meetings

Meeting	Date
GSA Annual General Meeting	April 27 th , 2016
President Executive Committee Breakfast	April 29 th , 2016
Lunch with CGPS	May 5 th , 2016
Office of Sustainability Meeting	May 6 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	May 10 th , 2016
CGPS Council Meeting	May 10 th , 2016
GSA Executive Retreat	May 15 th , 2016
Graduate Student Convocation Rep	June 1 st , 2016
CFS Semi-Annual Meeting	June 5 th – June 9 th , 2016 (Ottawa)
University Secretary Meeting	June 17 th , 2016
Executive Meeting (sent regrets)	June 21 st , 2016
University Secretary Meeting	July 11 th , 2016
Website Committee	July 11 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	July 19 th , 2016
Survey Committee	July 29 th , 2016
UofS volunteer database	August 8 th , 2016
GU15 conference	August 9 th – 12 th (Hamilton)
Survey Committee	August 15 th , 2016
Trent Wotherspoon Meeting	August 16 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	August 16 th , 2016
CFI Day of Action Meeting	August 17 th , 2016

CFS Provincial Meeting	August 22 nd , 2016
GSA Council	August 23 rd , 2016
CFS Meeting	September 1 st , 2016
President Executive Committee Breakfast	September 6 th , 2016
Orientation	September 6 th , 2016
Executive Committee Meeting	September 8 th , 2016
GSA Survey Meeting	September 12 th , 2016
Campus rec Meeting	September 12 th , 2016
REACT Campaign	September 13 th , 2016
University Council	September 13 th , 2016
CFS Meeting	September 13 th , 2016
David Suzuki Lunch	September 19 th , 2016
College of Arts and Science Dean Meeting	September 20 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	September 20 th , 2016
Interdisciplinary Meeting	September 26 th , 2016
Dean of Library Lunch Candidate	September 29 th , 2016
Dean of Library Lunch Candidate	October 4 th , 2016
Provincial Government Meeting (sent regrets)	October 5 th , 2016
TLARC Meeting	October 6 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	October 11 th , 2016
President Executive Committee Breakfast	October 11 th , 2016

Survey Meeting	October 12 th , 2016
President's Appreciation Dinner	October 13 th , 2016
Health & Dental Meeting	October 13 th , 2016
CGPS Dean Meeting	October 13 th , 2016
GSA Council Meeting	October 18 th , 2016
Student Health Meeting	October 18 th , 2016
Provincial Lobbying	October 19 th & 20 th
Executive Meeting	October 25 th , 2016
Vice-President of Research	October 26 th , 2016
TLARC	October 27 th , 2016
CFS Meeting	October 27 th , 2016
CFS Meeting	October 30, 2016
Interdisciplinary Meeting	October 31 st , 2016
CFS Meeting	November 1 st , 2016
Day of Action	November 2 nd , 2016
Executive Meeting	November 8h, 2016
Positive Space Training	November 16 th , 2016
TLARC	November 17 th , 2016
CFS Semi-Annual Meeting (proxy votes to FNU Local 9)	November 18 th - 22 nd , 2016
Interdisciplinary Meeting	November 28 th , 2016
President Executive Committee Breakfast	November 29 th , 2016
GSA Council	November 29 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	December 6 th , 2016

Academic Misconduct Policy Training	December 6 th , 2016
TLARC	December 8 th , 2016
Fee Review Committee	December 9 th , 2016
GSA Governance Committee	December 12 th , 2016
GSA Council	December 13 th , 2016
GSA Governance Committee	December 13 th , 2016
GSA Health & Dental Committee	December 14 th , 2016
Fee Review Committee	December 15 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	December 20 th , 2016
Fee Review Committee	December 22 nd , 2016
TLARC	January 5 th , 2017
Fee Review Committee	January 6 th , 2017
Executive Meeting	January 10 th , 2017
President Executive Committee Breakfast	January 10 th , 2017
Gala Committee Meeting	January 16 th , 2017
Governance town hall	January 17 th , 2017
GSA Governance Committee	January 17 th , 2017
Executive Meeting	January 24 th , 2017
Faculty Association	January 24 th , 2017
Interdisciplinary Meeting	January 30 th , 2017
GSA Council	January 31 st , 2017
Executive Meeting	February 7 th , 2017
CGPS Council	February 7 th , 2017

TLARC	February 9 th , 2017
CFS	February 12 th , 2017
Finance and Audit Committee	February 13 th , 2017
President Executive Committee Breakfast	February 14 th , 2017
Executive Meeting	February 21 st , 2017
CFS National Graduate Caucus	February 23 rd – 27 th
Interdisciplinary Meeting (sent regrets)	February 27 th , 2017
GSA Council	February 28 th , 2017
TLARC (sent Delegate)	March 2 nd , 2017
Executive Meeting	March 7 th , 2017
President Executive Committee Breakfast	March 14 th , 2017
Faculty Association	March 14 th , 2017
Student Forum	March 14 th , 2017
Finance and Audit Committee (sent regrets)	March 16 th , 2017
Board of Directors Network	March 20 th , 2017
Executive Meeting	March 21 st , 2017
TLARC	March 23 rd , 2017
Interdisciplinary Meeting	March 27 th , 2017
GSA Council	March 28 th , 2017
Finance and Audit Committee (sent regrets)	March 29 th , 2017

GSA Governance Committee	April 4 th , 2017
Executive Meeting	April 7 th , 2017
TLARC	April 13 th , 2017
Executive Meeting	April 21 st , 2017
GSA AGM	April 25 th , 2017

To whom it may concern:

It has been my pleasure to be in the role of Aboriginal Liaison for the Graduate Students' Association since mid-January. The purpose of this report is to provide you with an update of my activities throughout the year.

Through my short tenure in this position (less than three months at the time of writing), I have pursued many endeavors on campus. I have attended all GSA council meetings and town halls since mid-January, and learned a great deal about the GSA and the greater graduate student population. I have the privilege of meeting with the president and other high ranking administrative members monthly during our 'breakfast with the president' sessions, during which I raised issues of reconciliation and Indigenous student organization. I have focused on the institution's path to Indigenization, working with students to discuss the meaning of Indigenization from our perspective, and providing guidance to various committees on the topic (e.g., the Teaching, Learning and Academic Resources Council, the Learning Charter Revisions Committee, and the Governance Committee). I have also worked to represent graduate students in general at events (such as the Reconciliation Forum in early March and the Aboriginal Achievement Week event) and on committees.

I have also been involved with events taking place in the GSA, by attending social events to get to know graduate students, and helping to select recipients of the GSA awards to be given at the annual GSA Gala (organized by Carolyn Gaspar). I work closely with the Indigenous Graduate Students' Council (IGSC), and much of our work is directly related to Indigenous graduate student experience. With the IGSC, we have given out two \$500 bursaries, hosted a craft fair to showcase local Indigenous talent, organized an extremely successful Aboriginal Achievement Week event, and are in the process of organizing an Annual Steak Night Fundraiser to fund our bursaries for next year.

The work that I do to support and advocate for graduate students seems to permeate most of what I do here at the University of Saskatchewan. I hope that Indigenous graduate students feel well represented. I am working on getting to know the Indigenous graduate student better over my stay in this position. I welcome any questions.

Ja háw'aa,
(Thank you very much)



University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students'
Association

GSA PRESIDENT ANNUAL REPORT

ZIAD GHAITH

FY 2016/17

The focus of 2016/17 was to improve the graduate students' representation and to engage our organization on and off-campus in any important decision/discussion related to the students.

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GSA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

GSA President's message

It is my great pleasure to provide to the Graduate Students' Association general members, GSA council members, and all GSA stockholders my annual report on the GSA activities and initiative in 2016/17 academic year.

The GSA had a very successful year in terms of advocating for graduate students' strategic needs internally and externally. We have been working hard to develop cooperation with university stockholders to raise awareness for the need of better engagement and representation of the graduate students in the decision-making process at the University of Saskatchewan for the ultimate benefit of our university as a research-intensive university.

The GSA undertook many significant projects initiatives this year that I will list later in this report, but as part of my message I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the significant initiatives of the GSA, which I personally consider the most important GSA initiatives at least in recent memory. The GSA has been working on ensuring graduate students representation on our University Board of Governance, and to advocate for developing compulsory supervisor-student guidelines highlighting both the supervisors and their students' responsibilities.

These significant projects which are reflected directly on the graduate student academic and non-academic experience were addressed at three levels: university administration, the provincial government and broader university stakeholders. The efforts I have made in

GSA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

advocating for these strategic changes were well-received by both the provincial government and the university administration. To date, these projects have crossed a critical threshold, where the GSA has managed to build internal and external trust and a strong network with all stakeholders and to successfully seed and advocate for the change.

This report includes only a short summary of the GSA various activities and by no means exclusive. The GSA success wouldn't be possible without the hard-work and commitment of the GSA executives, staff, GSA Chair, coordinators, and the Council members I feel honored that I had the opportunity to work with this great team in serving the GSA members and representing them.

Ziad Ghaith

President, University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association

April 4, 2017

GSA OFFICE MANAGER'S MESSAGE

GSA Office Manager's Message

Once again we are very close to completing our 2016-2017 academic year. The GSA had another very busy and successful year. The GSA commons hosted many well attended events, workshops, symposiums and socials.

This year the Computer Science department generously donated a ping pong table to the GSA. It was great to see it get so much use and to observe students enjoying some healthy competition. It is always very rewarding for us to see the GSA commons being utilized to bring graduate students together to network and socialize.

As always, it is inspiring to observe an energetic team of executives collaborate and unify to bring unique ideas, initiatives and goals to the GSA. I see first-hand the hard work, long hours and dedication it takes to juggle both academics and the demands of a busy executive portfolio. The success of our many GSA events, initiatives and committees solidified how that hard work always brings forth excellent results.

I would like to thank the GSA coordinators, Bassey Bassey, Qi Guo, Varun Gaur and Yina Liu for their cheery dispositions, friendly attitudes and flexibility in an ever-changing environment. Our coordinators are always willing to lend a hand and are often seen volunteering and helping out after their official shifts have ended.

GSA OFFICE MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Thank you to the graduate students who give of their valuable time to sit on a variety of committees and to the many volunteers who help us ensure that our events run smoothly. Your time and efforts are truly appreciated.

The GSA executives are always eager to add services that enhance the student experience and to offer support where needed. This year the executive team enabled me to attend a two-day Mental Health First Aid Training seminar. The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course was developed to help people provide initial support to someone developing a mental health problem or is experiencing a mental health crisis. This course is aimed to improve the mental health knowledge and reduce stigma. The philosophy behind MHFA is that a mental health crisis may be avoided through early intervention. The topics covered: Mental Health and Mental Health Problems, Substance-Related Disorders, Mood-Related Disorders, Anxiety and Trauma Related Disorders, Psychotic Disorders

I feel very fortunate to have attended this course. It was extremely detailed and well put together. I look forward to the next year and all that it has to offer and I hope you all enjoy a warm and sunny summer!

Warmest regards

Sherri Rohovich

Graduate Students' Association Office Manager

GSA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2016/17

GSA Executive Committee 2016/17



Ziad Ghaith

Graduate Students' Association President



Nafisa Absher

*Graduate Students' Association Vice President
Operations and Communications*



Carolyn Gasper

*Graduate Students' Association Vice President
External Affairs*

GSA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2016/17



Kusum Sharma

*Graduate Students' Association Vice President
Finance*



Ali Kiani

*Graduate Students' Association Vice President
Academic*



Shailza Sapal

*Graduate Students' Association Vice President
Student Affairs*



Illoradanon Efimoff

*Graduate Students' Association Aboriginal
Liaison*

Office Staff and Events Coordinators

Sherri Rohovich- Office Manager

Robert Henderson – GSA Council Chair

GSA Coordinators:

Basseyy Basseyy

Qi Guo

Varun Gaur

Yina Liu

Derek Sutherland – 3MT Coordinator

Kareen Morrison – Gala Award Coordinator

PRELUDE

Prelude

This report is divided into five main sections. Each section extends thoroughly on one major general theme. The order of the sections as follows:

- Internal developments and improvements
- External initiatives
- Strategic initiatives
- GSA Services/ongoing services
- GSA Events

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Internal developments and improvements

The GSA has undertaken substantial initiatives for internal improvements. The goal of these initiatives were initiated to improve the GSA strategic long term planning, enhance internal accountability, enhance GSA financial practice, and to improve the GSA service for the members.

1.1. Governance documents

Significant changes in GSA By-laws have been approved this year - March 13, 2017 in the GSA Special General Meeting. The GSA has created a new governance body (Board of Director)

The Board is to manage the business and affairs of the GSA, approve the GSA corporate or internal policies and procedures, and be responsible for strategic direction and planning of the GSA. The Board is composed of:

- GSA President and Vice President Operations and Finance;
- Two members of the GSA Council;
- Three graduate students elected by the general members; and
- Two alumni of University of Saskatchewan graduate programs.

The GSA has also merged four executive positions into two positions: VP Operations and Communications and VP Finance in one position, and VP Academic and Student Affairs in one position. This merge was based on a thorough review of the Graduate Students Associations

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

structure in U15 in Canada. The goal of this merge is to enhance and ensure the GSA representation on different university important committees, to reduce the day to ensure that their work is more focused on high level planning rather than on day to day work (this will be done by hiring a bookkeeper and coordinators to handle part of the executives' work.)

The changes in the GSA governance documents were done by months of hard work of the GSA Governance Review Committee as well as some consultation with governance experts on and off campus.

1.2. Internal review and audits

The GSA contracted KPMG as a professional service company to review the GSA internal documents, internal control, and finance practice. A large part of the historical audit has been done as well, and a temporary book keeper was hired to help in providing the required documents to the auditor.

This initiative was based on the GSA Governance Review Committee recommendations and with a generous support from the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

1.3. GSA strategic plan

The GSA formed a working group to start drafting a strategic plan for the GSA over the coming 5 years. The goal of this strategic plan is to keep the GSA on one track in terms of addressing the graduate students' needs. The GSA has a full-time office manager who handles a large

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

diverse workload, however the continuous change of executives each year and lack of continuity and training tend to create gaps in procedures. These gaps result in unresolved matters that carry over from year to year. We feel it is a crucial necessity to create a strategy for the GSA to go forward with sustainable growth. This goes together with the decision of creating a board of directors which will have a longer term (some of the board members will have 2 years term) and the plan that the board will oversee and ensure the process of the strategic planning.

1.4. GSA Council

This year was outstanding in-terms of GSA Council engagement, and participation. The GSA Council size exceeded 40 students representing most of the departments on campus, with new academic units registered for the first time as an academic council in the GSA. The engagement of the Council had great positive impact on decision making and communication with the university administration.

The GSA standing committees were formed in November 2017 and since then have been engaged actively in GSA planning, the Council as well approved two ad-hoc committees (Health and Wellness Committee, and Sustainability Committee). The composition of the standing committees as follows:

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Committee	Members
Governance Review Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Robert Henderson, GSA Chair (ex officio) - Carolyn Gaspar, VP External (ex officio) - Kusum Sharma, VP Finance (ex officio) - Ziad Ghaith, President - Brenda Byers (councilor, IGSC) - Jaylene Murray (councilor, SENS) - Isaac Pratt (councilor, Medicine) - Naheda Sahtout (councilor, Chemistry)
Finance and Audit Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kusum Sharma, VP Finance (ex officio) - Carolyn Gaspar, VP External (ex officio) - Ziad Ghaith, GSA President - Robert Henderson, GSA Chair - Logan Pizzey (councilor, Agri. & Resource Econ.) - Tonny Kar (councilor, Computer Science) - Josh Thomas (councilor, IGSC)
Bursary Selection Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kusum Sharma, VP Finance (ex officio) - Ali Kiani, VP Academic (ex officio) - Lindsay Goodwin (councilor, Physics) - Iloradanon Efimoff (councilor, IGIC) - Naheda Sahtout (councilor, Chemistry)
Gala Award Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shailza Sapal, VP Student Affairs (ex officio) - Carolyn Gaspar, VP External (ex officio) - Tonny Kar (councilor, Computer Science) - Iloradanon Efimoff (councilor, IGSC)

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Health and Dental Committee

- Carolyn Gaspar, VP External (ex officio)
- Ziad Ghaith, GSA President
- Chris Maierhoffer (councilor, MBA)
- Morgan Kirzinger (councilor, Computer Science)

Code of Ethics and Discipline

Committee

- Robert Henderson, GSA Chair (ex officio)
- Morgan Kirzinger (councilor, Computer Science)
- Steve Fraser, (councilor, IGSC)
- Mackenzie Fulton (GSA member at large, MechEng)
- Adil Afzal (GSA member at large, Sociology)
- Michelle Wauchope-Thompson (member at large, SENS)
- Diane Adams (member at large, Public Health)
- Katherine Ford (member at large, Nutrition)

Election Referenda Committee

- Robert Henderson, Chief Electoral Officer, Chair (ex officio)
 - Jaylene Murray (councilor, Env. & Sustainability)
 - Afolabi Ayeni (councilor, EGCC)
 - Josh Cronmiller (councilor, Geography & Planning)
 - Naheda Sahtout (councilor, Chemistry)
 - Achint Rastogi (member at large, Public Policy)
 - Kereer Morrison-Spence (member at large, Education)
 - Olufemi Ajiboye (member at large, Sociology)
 - Bethany Penn (member at large, MPA)
-

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

The GSA would like to thank all the council members and in particular the standing committees' members for the efforts, commitment, and hard work shown by them in working towards a stronger GSA

1.5. GSA Town Halls

The GSA organized four town halls this year to enhance the graduate students participation in decision making and engage them in the important discussion. In November we hosted a tuition consultation town hall where we invited the Dean of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and the Integration and Planning Assessment to meet with the graduate students, hear from them, and inform them how the University set up the tuition. This town hall was one of the most successful town halls where the engagement of the students in the discussion was remarkable. Following this town hall I sent a letter to the Board of Governance members highlighting the graduate students perception of the tuition and informing the board members that a general feeling following the town hall was that graduate students have a very high sensitivity to any increase in tuition, and further that the IPA 3-Pillars are not the actual tool used in making the tuition recommendation rather the general financial conditions in the province and the projected governmental support for the University budget. Furthermore, students are hopeful that, in light of the fact that many are paid a stipend for their research, tuition could become a non-issue so long as the focus turn to average funding net of tuition (and that that figure allow an average student to pay for living expenses in Saskatoon).

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Two town halls were hosted in February and March to discuss with the students the proposed governance changes in the GSA, the town halls were well attended and GSA member's inputs were well taken by the Governance Review Committee.

1.6. GSA representation on University committees

The GSA representation on the University Council, Senate, University Council Sub-committees, College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS), and different Search committees was remarkable. The University Secretary office and the CGPS office provided the GSA President with the Executives attendance on different committee ever three month to ensure that the GSA voice is heard in different important discussion. The representation as following:

Committee	GSA Representation
University Senate	Ziad Ghaith
University Council	Ziad Ghaith and Ali Kiani
Planning and Priority Committee (council)	Ziad Ghaith
Teaching, Learning and Research Committee (council)	Carolyn Gasper
Academic Programs Committee (council)	Nafisa Absher
International Activities Committee	Shailza Sapal
Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work Committee (council)	Ali Kiani
Scholarship and Awards Committee (council)	Kusum Sharma

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Teaching Learning and Academic Resources Committee (council)	Carolyn Gasper
Governance Committee (council-for the first year)	Iloradanon Efimoff
Interdisciplinary Committee (CGPS)	Carolyn Gasper
Equity and International Committee (CGPS)	Shailza Sapal
Executive Committee (CGPS)	Ziad Ghaith
Graduate Academic Affair Committee (CGPS)	Ali Kiani
Graduate Programs Committee (CGPS)	Nafisa Absher
Earned D.Sc / D. Litt (CGPS)	Carolyn Gasper
Awards & Scholarships Committee	Kusum Sharma
Dean Scholarship Committee (CGPS)	Kusum Sharma
Dean, Arts and Science Search Committee	Ali Kiani
Dean, University Library Search Committee	Ziad Ghaith
Dean and Vice Provost, College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Search Committee	Ziad Ghaith
Associate Vice President Research Search Committee	Ziad Ghaith
Student Forum	Ziad Ghaith and Shailza Sapal
Student Forum Executive	Ziad Ghaith and Shailza Sapal
President's Executive Committee	Ziad Ghaith
Images of Research Judging Pane	Ziad Ghaith
SENSA Director Search Committee	Delegated to Graduate Students from SENSA
CGPS Council	All Executives

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Fee Review Committee

Ziad Ghaith, Carolyn Gasper, and Kusum
Sharma

Executive Director Search Committee, School of Public Health

Nafisa Absher

Copy rights Advisory Committee

Nafisa Absher

Wellness Strategy team

Nafisa Absher

VPTL Review Committee

Ziad Ghaith

Provost's Awards Selection Committee

Ziad Ghaith

New and Distinguished Researcher Awards Selection committee

Ziad Ghaith

Distinguished Supervisor Selection Committee (CGPS)

Ziad Ghaith

EXTERNAL INITIATIVES

External Initiatives

The GSA was heavily involved in student politics at both provincial and national levels. The GSA participated in various initiatives to show solidarity with other students in the province and at the national level.

2.1. GSA Student Campaigns

The GSA had a very successful year in-terms of campaigning, the GSA leadership was acknowledge by other colleges in other universities. The GSA took many initiative to increase the students' awareness of the importance of having a more accessible post-secondary education system in the province. Mobilizing the students to demand change becoming more vocal to align with other Canadian provinces. The GSA was proud to be the leading student body at the University of Saskatchewan to take this concept a step for-ward. This will reflect positively on our University and the future of the post-secondary education in our province.

Our mobilization efforts included: our Day of Action on November 2, 2016. Where the students alongside the workers, the University of Saskatchewan Faculty Association and Saskatchewan Federation of Labour stood together to request for more accessible post-secondary education in Saskatchewan. Our event was well covered by the local media and we feel we sent a clear message to all post-secondary education stakeholders in Saskatchewan, requiring a more accessible and just system.

EXTERNAL INITIATIVES

GSA has also actively participated in lobbying the provincial government with three asks: 1. Eliminate tuition fees; 2. Increase non-repayable, up-front grants for Indigenous learners. 3. Sustainable and stable mental health funding. The GSA has as well support Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP)-Northern Professional Access College (NORPAC) in their campaign to ask the provincial government to keep funding this institute.

2.2. GSA Press Releases

The GSA has engaged very well in students politics and has actively took many initiatives to in response to some changes impacted directly the graduate students.

The GSA had a press release regarding the travel ban into the United States and it is potential consequences on graduate students at our University. As many of the graduate students are citizens of countries included in the ban. The GSA also worked with other graduate leaders in other Universities in Canada, consulting with our members, and the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies to investigate the potential consequences on our members' participation in conferences and other academic events.

In response to the provincial budget, the GSA worked with the University of Saskatchewan Faculty Association to try to minimize the impact of the changes in the budget on the graduate students, the GSA and USFA had a joint press release which was well received by the student, community members and the university and very well covered by the media. In the press release the GSA and USFA expressed deep concerns about the dramatic reduction in operating

EXTERNAL INITIATIVES

funds after multiple years of provincial government cut backs and claw backs is jeopardizing the quality, affordability and accessibility of advanced education in Saskatchewan. And we further made a clear statement that Our Universities and post-secondary institutions serve the public good, add to the economy and are cherished by the people of the province. They must be appropriately funded to maintain and grow what we have. Media coverage is available via these links:

Cuts within 'tolerable limits'

There was some variation in the impact to different colleges but the university tried to keep cuts "within tolerable limits," Atkinson said.

"Some of our colleges have more surplus on hand than others, some of them are receiving funds year over year that they still have on hand," he said.

"We looked at that and we wanted to make a bit of an adjustment to allow for the fact that some of the colleges could probably handle the burden a little bit easier than others."

- **'They shouldn't have to suffer': Government changes funding for special needs daycare workers**
- **Sask. budget hikes sales tax to 6%, kills provincial bus company**

Atkinson said the student body was unlikely to notice any difference in programming in the short term, adding that the university would take measures to ensure the cuts did not impact student services.

Also on Wednesday, the U of S Graduate Students' Association expressed what it called "deep" concerns about the provincial budget cuts, saying they could jeopardize the quality, affordability and accessibility of advanced education in Saskatchewan.

"The elimination of tax credits for education, the cut in scholarship funding and the suspension of the Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings will further impoverish students," said association

CBC: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/university-of-saskatchewan-budget-cuts-plan-1.4046755>

EXTERNAL INITIATIVES



The Interim Provost and Vice-President Academic sent out an email to the University of Saskatchewan students and staff to keep everyone abreast of how they will be dealing with the budget cuts from the province.

Michael Atkinson says the overall provincial funding cut was approximately 5.6 per cent.

If the cuts are approved by the Board of Governors, they would include an 11 per cent cut in funding for the College of Agriculture and Bioresources.

That's the largest cut of the Colleges.

The next largest is a drop of 9.6 per cent in the College of Engineering.

Atkinson says the reduction to support centres comes after years of staff reductions and other operational budget cuts.

The University will look for alternative revenue sources and for cost saving measures.

You can see click on this link for the rundown of the College cuts:

<http://www.usask.ca/ipa/resource-allocation-and-planning/Resource-Allocation-2017-18.php#RevenueCentrePreliminaryResourceAllocation>

Students and faculty at the University of Saskatchewan are united in their concern over budget cuts from the province.

Both the Graduate Students' Association and the U of S Faculty Association say the reduction in operating funds after many years of government cut backs will jeopardize the quality, affordability and accessibility of advanced education in Saskatchewan.

The average tuition at the U of S has increased more than 18 per cent since the 2012-13 academic year, according to Statistics Canada.

The President of the Graduate Students' Association, Ziad Ghaith, says this year it was the highest in Western Canada and next year it will increase again by another 2.3 per cent.



[< PREV](#)

[NEXT >](#)

SaskNow: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/university-of-saskatchewan-budget-cuts-plan-1.4046755>

STRATEGIC GSA INITIATIVES

Strategic GSA Initiatives

The GSA undertook very important strategic initiatives, which I personally consider as the most significant GSA initiatives at least in the recent memory. The GSA has been working on ensuring graduate students representation on our University Board of Governance, and to advocate for developing compulsory supervisor-student guideline highlighting both the supervisors and their students' responsibilities.

3.1. Graduate Students representation on the University Board of Governance, University Council, and the University Senate

The GSA has been working on a very important initiative this year to have graduate students representation on the University Board of Governance. Huge efforts have been done toward this initiative. Where the GSA addressed this at the provincial government level, the university administration, and broader University stockholders. The GSA met with the Human Services Caucus Policy Committee (Legislative Assembly) to highlight this request by the graduate students' in the University of Saskatchewan and to address the importance of improving the representation for the Graduate Students in the University Council and to have at least one Graduate Students to sit on the Board of Governors, further the GSA addressed this need in almost every meeting of the University Council and Senate, many of the University faculty members and Senate members expressed their support for our genuine request.

The position of the GSA is that there is great potential benefit at the University and the Provincial level by having graduate students on these important committees. These benefits include but are not limited to:

STRATEGIC GSA INITIATIVES

- **At the University level:**

1. Better representation of the graduate students on the Board of Governors and the University Council, will ensure having graduate student (17% of total student population) insight into the University strategic and academic planning.
2. The graduate students' insights will ensure support of the university efforts in fulfilling its mission and vision as a leading research University.

- **At the Provincial level:**

1. The University of Saskatchewan is the leading research University in the province, improved graduate representation will support the University research portfolio as graduate students are part of research production at the university.
2. The University of Saskatchewan is part of U15 universities (intensive research universities) improved representation of the graduate students will ensure the university position on the U15 list, and hopefully improve the university current rank

At this stage of our advocacy to improve our representation, I would like to invite the incoming GSA executives and board to continue keeping this initiative as one of the GSA priorities as this initiative has crossed very important threshold in-terms of implementations.

In the same vein, I would like to draw our members attention to the fact that the University of Saskatchewan is the only University among the U15 where Graduate Students are unrepresented on the Board of Governors. The GSA believes that our institution needs to be on the same page in terms of governor's practice with other GU15. See the Table below for more details.

STRATEGIC GSA INITIATIVES

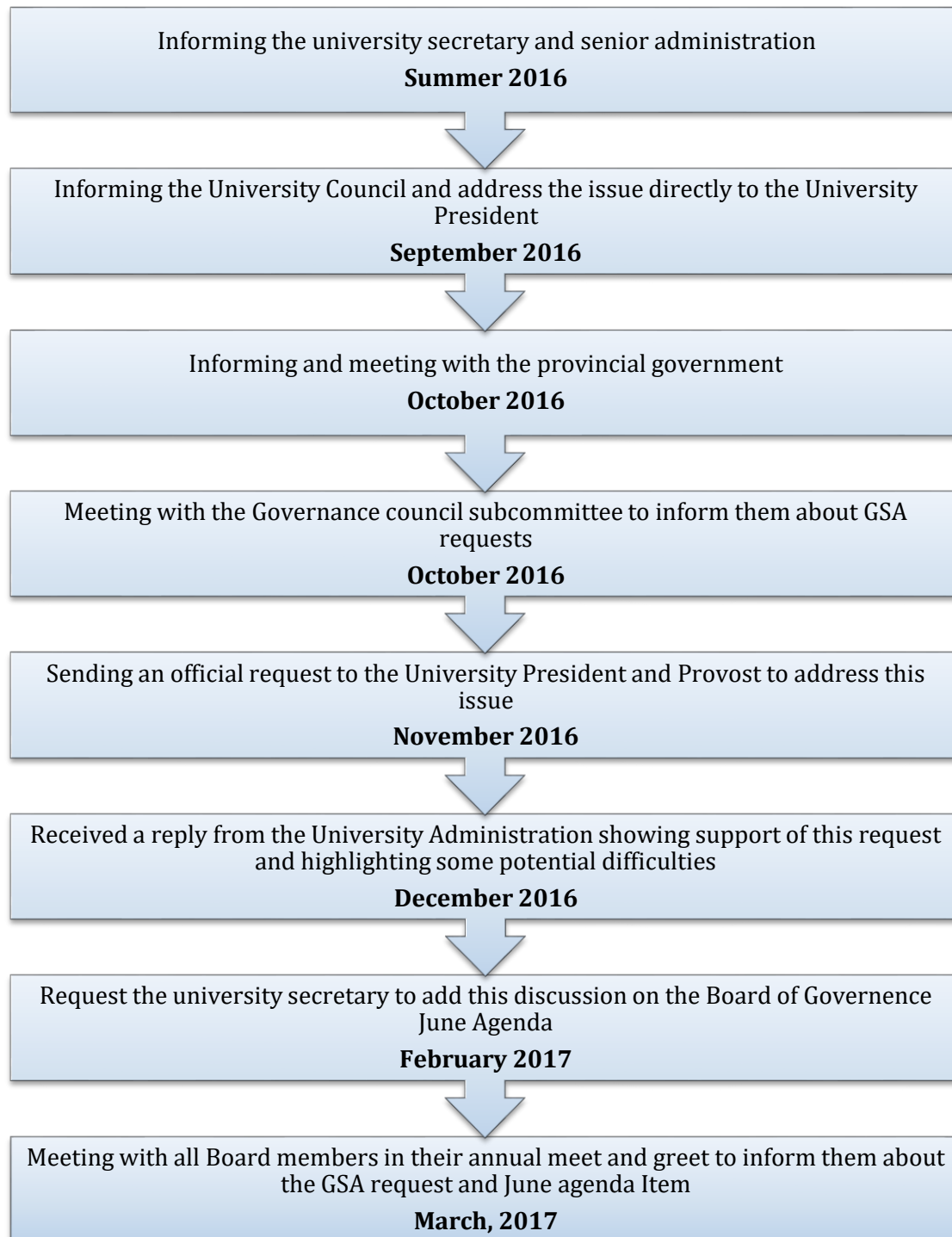
Graduate Students Representation in the Board of Governors – U15 Universities

U15 University	% of Graduate Students	Representation on the Board of Governors
University of Alberta	19	Yes
The University of British Columbia	18	Yes
University of Calgary	19	Yes
Dalhousie University	18	By-elections
University Laval	12	Yes
University of Manitoba	12	Yes
McGill University	24	Yes
McMaster University	14	Yes
University de Montreal	26	By-elections
University of Ottawa	15	Yes
Queen's University	17	Yes
University of Saskatchewan	17	No
University of Toronto	19	Yes
University of Waterloo	14	Yes
Western University	17	Yes

A proposal was sent as well to the Senate Membership Committee addressing the important of having more graduate students on the Senate, and a presentation was delivered to the Council Governance Committee addressing the same request.

STRATEGIC GSA INITIATIVES

This initiative in-terms on implementation time, can be summarized in the graph below:



STRATEGIC GSA INITIATIVES

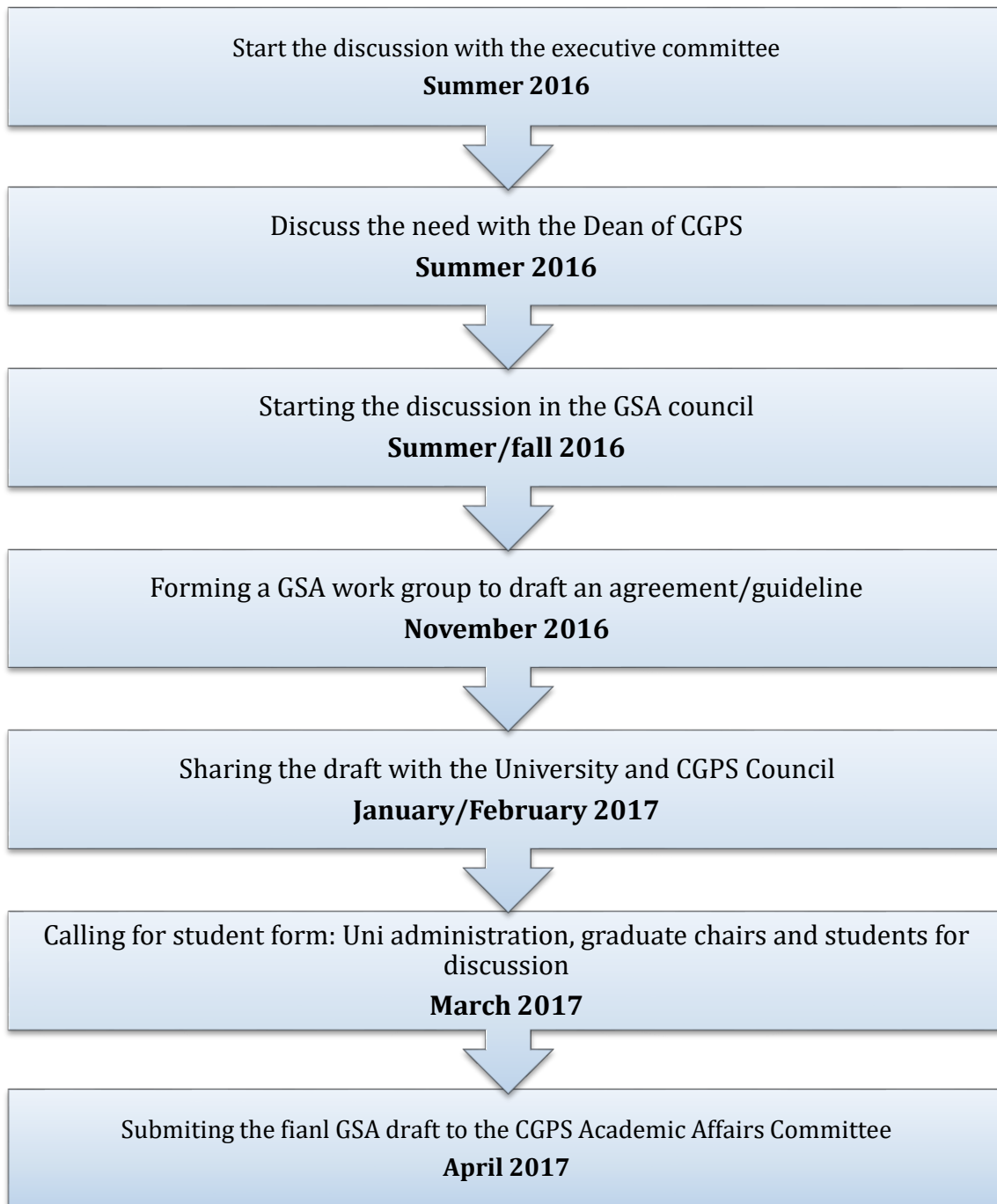
3.2. Student Advisor Guideline

The GSA has started an initiative to draft a guideline to be as used between supervisors and their students as a mandatory agreement as the students begin working on their research. This has been a growing issue that the graduate students have addressed many times to the GSA executives.

The GSA formed a working group including some Council members to work on this agreement, and consulted with the CGPS and different colleges, students, and graduate chairs in developing the draft. The draft document was presented in the University Council, the CGPS Council, and in cooperation with the CGPS associate Dean and the Office of the Vice Provost Teaching and Learning, the GSA had a meeting where more than 15 graduate chairs along other university unit directors were invited to discuss the proposed agreement and to give their inputs.

This initiative was well received by the University Administration, the CGPS Dean and Associate Dean, and many graduate chairs and Faculty members. The final document has been recently sent to the CGPS Academic Affairs Committee for their review. The time line of this initiative is illustrated below.

STRATEGIC GSA INITIATIVES



GSA SERVICES

GSA Services

The GSA has continued its every year services to the graduate students, and added many new services as part of its internal improvements.

4.1. Ongoing Services

- UPASS – A plan to add UPASS over summer has been initiated, and is on the GSA table (will be part of the transition plan for the incoming executives)
- Health and Dental plan
- ISIC cards

4.2. New Services

- Tax filing
- GSA Mobile App.
- GSA New website
- GSA Crisis Aid Program
- Notary Service
- Graduate-Undergraduate Mentorship Program
- Campus Legal Service

GSA SERVICES

4.3. GSA Bursaries

The GSA for the first time gave 60 bursaries to graduate students in with generous support from CGPS. GSA has received more than 800 applications in total for the Summer, Fall, and Winter bursary application. The GSA Bursary Committee had done great job and spend long hours in processing the applications, and some recommendations have been done including developing the selection rubric and increasing the number of the bursaries, these important recommendations that will be transferred to the incoming executives.

4.4. GSA Communications

The GSA has significantly improved its social media communications with its members. New social media accounts have been created including the mobile app., Instagram, and Twitter. The level of engagement with the students has doubled in comparrison to last year with more than 1500 followers on our different social media accounts.

GSA EVENTS

GSA Events

The GSA has organized social events and workshops on the monthly basis, the attendance and engagement by the graduate students was remarkable. A list of all GSA Events over 2016/17 are illustrated below

Event	Date
GSA Orientation	September 6, 2016
GSA Meet and Greet	September 11, 2016
Financial Workshop	September 13, 2016
Health Chat	September 14, 2016
Social media management workshop	September 20, 2016
Consent Culture workshop	September 29, 2016
GSA Social	September 30, 2016
Blanket Exercise (with IGSC)	October 27, 2016
Movie Screening	October 28, 2016
Tuition Consultation Town hall	November 29, 2016
Digital Business Strategies workshop	November 30, 2016
Health Chait	December 1, 2016
Maternal Mental Health Chat	December 1, 2016
U of S International Blueprint Town hall	December 13, 2016
Anti-Racist Community Workshop	December 19, 2016
Health and Dental Plan Info. Session	January 12, 2017

GSA EVENTS

GSA Governance Town Hall	January 17, 2017
Health Chat: Stay Active in Grad School	January 24, 2017
Copyrights Info. Session	January 26, 2017
Effective Communications Workshop	January 27, 2017
GSA Social	January 27, 2017
Health and Dental Plan Info. Session	January 24, 2017
GSA Governance Town Hall	February 7, 2017
Health Chat	February 8, 2017
Financial Workshop	February 9, 2017
Historicizing Truth and Reconciliation	February 23, 2017
Health Chat	February 24, 2017
GSA Social Event	February 24, 2017
3MT Information Session	February 28, 2017
3MT Information Session	March 7, 2017
Poetry Night: International Women Day	March 8, 2017
GSA Special General Meeting	March 13, 2017
3MT Information Session	March 15, 2017
GSA Elections Orientation	March 16, 2017
3MT Information Session	March 21, 2017
GSA Elections Candidate Forum	March 27, 2017
3MT Thesis Competition	March 29, 2017
Sustainability Slam	March 29, 2017
GSA Award Gala	April 1, 2017

GSA EVENTS

5.1. GSA Fall Orientation

The GSA Fall Orientation happened on September 6th, 2016 with more than 1700 in attendance. Our members were well received and accommodated during this big event with a huge efforts by the GSA VP Student Affairs. The GSA executives highly appreciate the university administration cooperation and the logistic support during the orientation.

On another note, the GSA executives were honored to participate in different college orientations, where they had the opportunity to talk to the new graduate students in the university and inform them about their GSA services and benefits.

5.2. Graduate Achievements Week

The GSA is organized its annual graduate achievement week to celebrate the achievements of its members. This took place from March 28-April1st. The GSA Achievement week is an annual week organized by the GSA and dedicated to celebrate and appreciate the academic and leadership achievements of the graduate students at the University of Saskatchewan.

This year, the GSA along with the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies is organized and will organize the local 3 Minutes Thesis (3MT) competition and the academic where 60 Graduate Students from all departments in the University participate in the 3MT and showcased their innovative research work that is being done at the University of Saskatchewan in a 3-minute showdown of straightforward yet sophisticated speeches. The achievement week

GSA EVENTS

concluded by a grand celebration on April 1st, 2017, where the GSA holds its prestigious annual Award Gala to appreciate the research, teaching, and leadership achievements of the graduate students and faculty members.

The Graduate Achievement Week was a big success this year in-terms of participation and engagement. The GSA Achievement week was organized with a huge efforts of the GSA VP Academic and External supported by the two events coordinators.

5.3. ThinkGRAD

ThinkGRAD, a graduate student think tank; an official group of Graduate Student Association's (GSA) from all universities in Canada focused on graduate research and development. This group of graduate student leaders will meet for the first time in our University, to discuss content regarding graduate student issues, best practices and provide overall support for graduate student life across Canada. The outcome of this think tank was not to infringe on the governing practices of each GSA but rather supplement efforts, provide input and be the voice of graduate students across Canada. Each year, a discussion on graduate student themed concerns have occurred and best practices were shared to strengthen GSA's across Canada. It was clear that this think tank was the next step to allowing GSA's from coast-to-coast to communicate with each other.

On April 18-21, 2017, the University of Saskatchewan GSA will be hosting ThinkGRADD, for the first time. We welcome this as an opportunity to strengthen our ties with other GSA's across

GSA EVENTS

Canada, to learn from other graduate student leaders from across Canada and to voice the concerns of graduate students from the University of Saskatchewan. No doubt, this conference will provide us with an opportunity to discuss issues of utmost importance such as indigenization, student-supervisor relationships and university administration-GSA relations. Being the host of this conference, we plan to take every opportunity to examine areas of concern that our graduate students are facing.

THANK YOU

Thank You

