



University of Saskatchewan- Graduate Students' Association

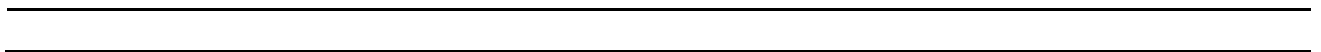
AGENDA PACKAGE

Council Meeting

Wednesday, November 26, 2025; 17:00-19:00

Meeting Location: Hybrid (GSA Commons + Zoom)

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



	ITEM	ACTION	PAGE
1	Call to order		
2	Approval of agenda	Decision	
3	Approval of GSA Council meeting minutes ➤ October 8	Decision	3-9
4	Motion to receive GSA executive meeting minutes ➤ October 8 & 14	Decision	10-15
5	Motion to receive first Diversity committee meeting minutes ➤ November 7	Decision	16
6	Motion to receive Bursary committee meeting minutes ➤ July 2025 ➤ Nov 7, 2025	Decision	16-17 17-19
7	Motion to Elect Council Chair and Vice-Chair	Decision	
8	Motion to ratify the GSA Academic council (Appendix B) ➤ Agricultural and Resource Economics Graduate Students' Society	Decision	29
9	Motion to approve Councilors for GSA Standing Committees (Appendix B)	Decision	29
10	GSA executive reports a. President b. Vice President Finance and Operation c. Vice President External Affairs d. Vice President Indigenous Engagement	Information	19-21 22-23 23-25 25-26
11	Other Businesses: Discussion on the tenure and upcoming departure of the University President Peter Stoicheff Description: Council will review the President's tenure, share perspectives on his contributions and challenges, and determine any next steps or positions the GSA may choose to take.	Discussion	
12	Adjournment		

October Council Meeting Minutes

University of Saskatchewan-Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

Wednesday, October 8th, 2025; 17:00-19:00

Meeting Location: Hybrid (GSA Commons & Zoom)

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

Attendance: See appendix A

Vice Chair: Clement Abdallah

Recording Secretary: Aiminayanate Pepple

(*this meeting was chaired by Vice Chair in presence of Council Chair Shaily Tandekar)

1. Call to Order

- Clement Abdallah welcomed every council member. The meeting was called to order at 5:15 PM.
- A land acknowledgment was observed, recognizing Treaty 6 territory and the Métis homeland.

2. Rules and Regulation

Clement Abdallah briefed council members of the:

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

3. Approval of Agenda

Clement Abdallah asked for the approval of the meeting agenda in the absence of any amendments.

Mover: Palash Roy

Seconded by: Lindsay Carlson

Yes: 18

No: 0

Abstention: 0

Motion carried.

4. Motion 1: Approval of GSA Council Meeting Minutes

- ✓ **June 2025 Council Meeting**
- ✓ **July 2025 Special Council Meeting**
- ✓ **August 2025 Council Meeting**

- Luke Dojack asked if the approval of all the meetings minutes would reflect updated election records on the GSA website and Shaily confirmed the question.
- Luke Dojack requested clarification regarding the disqualification of Emmanuel Aggrey as GSA President, noting it was not included in the meeting minutes.
- Shaily informed that the E&R Committee did not ratify Emmanuel Aggrey's election result due to a violation, and it was therefore excluded from the by-election results. The final results posted on the GSA website reflect the E&R Committee's decision, which was also communicated to all council members.
- It was further noted that Aggrey's result could only appear online with a statement indicating that it was never ratified.
- Lindsay Carlson stated that the omission of ratification of Emmanuel Aggrey's election result after appeals was due to the council decision by vote to not make further decisions regarding the by-election results.

Mover: Palash Roy

Seconded by: Lindsay Carlson

Yes: 18

No: 0

Abstention: 0

Motion carried.

5. Motion 2: To Receive GSA Executive Meeting Minutes

- ✓ **August 13, 2025**
- ✓ **September 3 & 19, 2025**

Mover: Portia Mohrbutter

Seconded by: Shaily Tandekar

Yes: 13

No: 0

Abstention: 0

Motion carried.

6. Motion 3: Ratification

a. Academic Councils

- Lindsay Carlson raised a concern regarding academic councils violating the by-laws and submitting names of more than two councilors. She reminded council

members of the by-laws which permits:

- i. One councilor and one alternate for each academic council with 99 members or less.
 - ii. Two councilors and two alternates for each academic council with 100 members or more.
- Kegan Lloyd suggested a modification on the ratification portal to avoid academic councils submitting the wrong number of councilors and alternatives.
 - Meaghan Boily suggested that GSA designs an accountability strategy to stop the submission of more than two councilors by certain academic councils.
 - Shaily Tandekar suggested an email to be sent by Mandela Alema (VP Academic and Student Affairs) to certain academic councils requiring a written agreement to adhere to GSA by-laws and submit the names of only two councilors for representation.

Mover: Lindsay Carlson

Seconded by: Portia Mohrbutter

Yes: 23

No: 0

Abstention: 0

Motion carried.

b. Social Clubs & Groups

Mover: Shaily Tandekar

Seconded by: Lindsay Carlson

Yes: 24

No: 0

Abstention: 0

Motion carried.

7. Motion 4: Approval of GSA Standing Committee (*Appendix B*)

- Lindsay Carlson asked if there was need for additional councilors to fill each role or if the list was complete.
- Shaily Tandekar stated that the list is not complete, but it contains the names of regular members who have applied for the position. She also stated that there is a reservation to hire new councilors.
- Luke Dojack asked if the reservation would be in the form of an email for potential councilors to sign up for.
- Shaily Tandekar clarified that the councilors can simply send their name and interested committee name to Chair email address.

Mover: Lindsay Carlson

Seconded by: Luke Dojack

Yes: 24

No: 0

Abstention: 0

Motion carried.

8. Motion 5: Review of Event Funding Application Procedure (Policy 10)

- Lindsay clarified the new procedure for funding:
 - i. For each academic year (September to August), individual social clubs or ratified groups can apply for up to \$750 from the GSA for event sponsorship with immediate effect from September 2025.
 - ii. Lindsay Carlson also stated that this policy was developed last year, and the application of the fund is flexible in any denomination for up to two events. She advised that the application sponsorship can be made for larger events which cost more to organize.
 - iii. Lindsay Carlson also added that the mode of application has been upgraded from email to providing a link called Academic Council/Social Group Event Funding Application on GSA website under the events section.
 - iv. Councils/clubs/groups are advised to submit applications before the event. Applications will be reviewed and decisions made in the next GSA executive meeting. Councils/clubs/groups will be notified when to submit a request for reimbursement.
- Shreya Tiwary asked for the timeline to apply for funding before each event.
- Lindsay Carlson did not give a specific timeline but advised that applications should be made before the event.

9. Motion 6: Decision on GSA owned BBQs

- Lindsay Carlson briefed the council on the state of the BBQs and storage. She stated that the shed for storing the BBQs was destroyed.
- Based on the fire code, the BBQ equipment cannot be stored in the fire exist.
- GSA was not given permission by the school facilities to build or purchase outdoor storage.
- GSA intends to sell BBQ equipment or purchase a storage unit at the cost of \$1,500 annually to store the BBQ equipment during off-season.
- Luke Dojack suggested giving academic councils and creating a procedure for application of the BBQs by the academic councils.
- Laura Dyson asked if GSA could make a good faith agreement with some departments for storage space.
- Lindsay Carlson stated the difficulty in getting a space within the school as well as abiding by the good faith agreement.
- Portia Mohrbutter asked if the big BBQs could be sold and small camping BBQs be purchased.
- Lindsay Carlson described the benefits of having the big BBQs for large events which include serving high numbers of people within a short time compared to the small ones.

- Lindsay Carlson also suggested using BBQs to cook and host events within GSA commons.
- Lindsay Carlson stated that a poll will be sent to councillors to make decisions regarding the state of the BBQs as well as indicate interest in purchasing the BBQs.

10. GSA Executives Reports

➤ President – Palash Roy

- GSA regained its non-profit status. The president appreciated the efforts of the VP Finance for her efforts through two terms.
- The president appreciated the VP Academic and Students Affairs, Mandela Alema and the GSA team for the successful coordination of the 2025 Fall orientation.
- The first feature of the Graduate Voice initiative was launched to share graduate student experiences, and the President hopes to ensure its continuity.
- The collaboration with the Vice President Research Office is still in progress. Plans are being made to support the research of graduate students within and outside the university campus.
- The GSA, USSU, and Student Health and Wellbeing are hosting an Anti-Racism Symposium on November 19 at the GSA Commons. Student feedback will be used to develop an MOU to improve protections against racism.
- Together with Mandela Alema, a meeting with the Director of Consumer Services was held to discuss parking security, mattress quality, and pest control, specifically at McEown Park Residences. The GSA is working to propose solutions.
- The launch of Supplemental Meal Swipe Program by Culinary Services to address food insecurity among students. Approved applicants receive three meal swipes, valid for three days, which can be used at the Culinary Centre like a regular meal plan.
- The final council meeting of the previous tenure was held with encouraging attendance. The president appreciated the previous council members for their dedication towards service.
- The GSA met with the MLA of saskatoon and related the concerns of students regarding tuition fee increases, childcare support, and public transit safety.
- The GSA hopes to begin the renegotiation of the GSA transit contract with important issues such as criteria for opting out of the transit pass as well as the possibility of introducing spring and summer bus passes to be included in the negotiation.

➤ Vice-President Finance and Operations – Lindsay Carlson

- GSA non-profit status was reinstated with Information Services Corporation as of September 1st, 2025. Efforts towards the process began in October 2024. GSA is approved to carry out fundraising initiatives such as grant applications and new revenue opportunities such as GICs.
- Academic year desktop calendar which included student photos, highlighting important

- university - GSA deadlines and events, describing GSA programs and benefits, was designed for the GSA 2025 fall orientation in place of the handbook. Adriana Noguera, Samantha Carley, Miranda Carley, Alana Muenchrath, Julia Tregobov, Ryan Newton, Mabiana Camargo, Riel Castro-Zunti, Anastasiia Nykonenko, and Brianne Symak were congratulated as the photo contest winners.
- Financial Literacy Series to be held at the GSA commons on the 22nd of October 2025, 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm.
 - The GSA together with USSU hopes to discuss important issues regarding campus safety in the next PEC meeting with University administrators on diversity, equity, inclusion initiatives and the role of student leadership.
- **Vice-President Student and Academic Affairs - Mandela Alema**
- The 2025 Fall Orientation was attended by 223 registered students and 102 unregistered students. Participants received GSA T-shirts, refreshment coupons, and prize draw entries. The VP Student and Academic Affairs thanked the GSA team, volunteers, students, and campus partners for their support.
 - The President and VP Finance were recognized for the new web-based ratification application. Ratification for academic councils and clubs began on September 5, 2025. Only 12 councils met the September 19 deadline, so it was extended to October 5, 2025.
 - The USSU and GSA hosted a workshop on September 12, 2025, where graduate students volunteered as peer mentors, guiding undergraduates on graduate studies and applications.
- **Vice-President External Affairs - Biraj Saha**
- The GSA Research Feature Series was Launched in September 2025; this series showcases graduate students' research and personal stories on a dedicated GSA website page.
 - The GSA team met with the MLA to advocate for the needs of graduate students.
 - A breakfast meeting was held with the university's VP of Research with students' progress highlighted. The initiative is proposed to connect students' research with the people and the communities it serves.
 - The GSA 2025 Fall Orientation was held with great success. Social media engagement was maximized before and after the events through the creation of short videos, posters, and live updates.
- **Vice-President Indigenous - Laila Valila**
- The former VP Indigenous, Jennifer Amarualik-Yaremko was met on the 9th of September 2025 to discuss benefits for Indigenous graduate students as well as her former commitments towards the GSA.
 - Aurora Wolfe, Indigenous Initiatives Coordinator at CGPS was met on the September 10, 2025. The VP Indigenous was introduced to different Indigenous supports such as

Cousins program as well as Kassidy Guy, who is working on a feature in the CGPS Indigenous Student Spotlight.

- Creation of folder for Indigenous student resources.
- Met with the with the coordinators for Cousins, USSU Food Centre, JSGS and BIRM to organize a potential “resource fair” to be held next semester for non-Indigenous students to learn about the culture in an accessible way.

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

➤ Nomination of Councilors/Alternate Councilors for GSA Standing Committee’s Vacant Position

- Shaily Tandekar announced the call for interested volunteers for the GSA Standing Committee. Three councilors are required for the bursary committee, and a minimum of one councilor is required for other committees.

➤ Halloween Party

- Palash Roy informed the council of the upcoming Halloween movie night and costume contest event to be held on 29th October at the GSA commons.

➤ Councilors’ Attendance

- Shaily Tandekar raised concerns about low attendance and early departures, which affect voting processes. She suggested taking attendance at the start and end of meetings.
- Luke Dojack and Mary-Fidelma Ndupu noted that graduate students have other responsibilities. Luke suggested placing important votes at the start of the agenda. Luke and Modupeoluwa Olakunle requested meetings end on time.
- Shaily emphasized the need for commitment during meetings with multiple votes. Lindsay Carlson echoed this, noting low attendance could reduce funds for academic councils, and reminded members about alternative councilors.
- Portia Mohrbutter suggested councilors notify the Chair if they need to leave early, which Shaily supported.

➤ Graduate Students Needs

- Mandela Alema urged councilors to contribute to meeting agendas by bringing the needs of graduate students within the various departments to the knowledge of GSA. This will assist the GSA in informing the university authorities on graduate students’ needs as well as the development of solutions and policies in this regard. Palash Roy supported this statement.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:46 pm, moved by Luke Dojack and seconded by Modupeoluwa Olakunle.

*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 Meetings on Oct 08, 2025

Time: 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM

Attendance: Palash Roy, Lindsay Carlson, Mandela Alema, Biraj Saha, Laila Valila

Guests: None

All executives approved all of these actions.

President

1. Halloween Event Planning

Palash provided an initial overview of the Halloween Event to be held at the GSA Commons. Early projections suggest approximately 40 participants. The maximum budget for food and décor was confirmed at \$300. Plans include popcorn, candy, and decorations.

2. Sponsorships Request

Palash emphasized that future sponsorship proposals should reflect a higher level of professionalism to strengthen GSA's public image. He noted that the organization should actively seek external sponsorships rather than relying solely on internal sources and committed to preparing an updated proposal template to support this effort upon Lindsay's request.

He also initiated a discussion on pursuing additional support from CFS and RBC as potential long-term partners. All executives agreed that expanding sponsorship outreach to these organizations would be beneficial for GSA.

3. Event Scheduling and Coordination

Palash requested that executives prepare ideas and select dates for events not only limited to their portfolio but also the new initiatives, so that GSA can proceed with a complete event programming schedule. This includes finalizing dates for multiple events discussed in previous meetings.

Vice-President Finance and Operations

1. GSA Banking and Investment Policy

Lindsay updated executives on communication with RBC concerning GSA investment planning. She presented a questionnaire provided by the RBC investing managers and asked the executives for assistance with answering some of the company values and decision-making strategy.

Lindsay explained the concept of GICs to the executives, and all agreed that these no risk, but low-return investments are a better use of money than letting funds sit in chequing or savings accounts with little to no interest accruing.

2. Financial Literacy Series

Lindsay will plan the Financial Literacy Series with one event per term. The first event is scheduled for October, focusing on budgeting topics.

3. Professional Headshots

Lindsay will organize free professional headshots for graduate students before the November convocation. She will reach out to photographers for quotes.

Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs

1. Graduate Talks and Town Hall Meetings

Mandela presented a plan to host Graduate Talks/Town Hall Meeting per term, focusing on student-supervisor relations, departmental issues, and policy clarity.

2. Holiday Hangout

Mandela proposed a Holiday Hangout for December 26-27 to promote graduate student engagement during the winter break. Further details will be discussed at subsequent meetings.

3. Intramural Sports Coordination

Regarding Ernest Leung, the MBA Candidate proposal to introduce the intramural sports team for graduate students under the GSA Palash requested that Mandela connect Biraj to Ernest Leung to coordinate the organization of the winter intramural sports. The winter team registration deadline is January 13, 2026, with a \$75 fee for indoor teams (within the \$210 allocated budget). VP Academic and Student Affairs will assist with preparation when needed.

Graduate Students' Association

Vice-President External Affairs

1. Board Game and Movie Events

Biraj proposed organizing a Board Game or Movie Night during the winter term to foster informal networking and social engagement among graduate students.

2. GSA Soccer team

Following interest from the VP Finance and the President, prompted by emails from a graduate student willing to take the lead on forming a soccer team, the majority of executives agreed to move forward with the initiative. The responsibility falls under the VP External's portfolio, and he was asked to coordinate the process. The VP Academics was requested to share the necessary contacts with the VP External so he can proceed with organizing the team.

3. Website Update

The President showed his dissatisfaction with the website updates and said the expectation was not met, and suggested VP External to correct it on the GSA newsletter section of the website. VP External agreed to make the changes.

4. Graduate Voice Update

Biraj inquired about the change to the Graduate Voice submission contact in the newsletter and asked why his name had been removed without prior confirmation. Lindsay noted that she had reached out earlier regarding potential submissions and that no updates had been entered into the document for some time. As a result, the President prepared the full Graduate Voice content to ensure completion. Given this context, Lindsay updated the contact information to the gsa.pres email address for clarity and continuity. The President added that he will follow up with the VP External through an official communication.

Vice-President Indigenous Engagement

1. Indigenous Resource and Intercultural Exchange Fair

Laila announced that the Indigenous Resource and Intercultural Exchange Fair will be held in late January 2026 at the GSA Commons. The event aims to educate international students about Indigenous culture and introduce Indigenous students to university and community resources.

2. Gordon Oakes Soup and Bannock Event

Laila proposed GSA co-hosting the Gordon Oakes Soup and Bannock event on February 25, 2026, with a GSA financial contribution of \$200.

3. Executive Retreat Planning

Laila took the initiative to explore options for an executive retreat at the Western Development Museum. Potential dates discussed included October 18 or 19, 2025.

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GSA Executives Meetings on Oct 14, 2025

Time: 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM

Attendance: Palash Roy, Lindsay Carlson, Mandela Alema, Biraj Saha, Laila Valila

Guests: None

All executives approved all of these actions.

President

1. Halloween Event Final Planning

Palash confirmed details for the Halloween Event at the GSA Commons, projecting approximately 40 participants. Plans include popcorn, candy, and decorations. Biraj inquired about gifts for children attending. Lindsay discussed decoration arrangements. The budget remains at \$300 for food and décor. Laila indicated she would not email for headcount confirmation.

2. Anti-Racism Symposium

The Anti-Racism Symposium was confirmed for November 19, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the GSA Commons. Palash and Lindsay noted that the Standing Committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion should be involved, as their engagement will support both coordination and outreach efforts for the event.

3. GSA Gala Planning

The President requested an update from the VP External regarding any progress or ideas for the GSA Gala. Following the discussion, Biraj agreed to take the lead in organizing the event for March. Initial conversations were held around the overall scope of the gala and the key requirements needed to begin planning.

4. CFS Membership and Collaboration Discussion

Palash discussed concerns about limited services from CFS relative to the financial contribution provided by GSA. He referenced Mary's email and emphasized that the association's funds should result in tangible benefits such as student-service initiatives and advocacy tools. Palash noted that CFS provides student tax filing services, but GSA paid for the annual calendar independently. He explained that the VP External should work on external affairs matters related to these partnerships.

5. Event Scheduling - Final Confirmations

Prior to the meeting, it had been requested that each executive prepare ideas and select dates for events within their portfolio that they are planning, so that GSA can proceed with a complete event programming schedule. The executives finalized event dates for the upcoming academic year to minimize scheduling conflicts across portfolios. Confirmed events include:

- Financial Literacy Series: October 22
- Anti-Racism Symposium: November 19, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at GSA Commons
- Soccer Team coordination
- Graduate Talks/Town Hall meetings: 2x per term
- Professional Headshots: November 25

- Holiday Hangout: December 26-27
- GSA Gala: March
- Indigenous Resource and Intercultural Exchange Fair: January 21, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Indoor Game Night: February 27
- Health Chat events to be planned for next meeting

Vice-President Finance and Operations

1. Event Funding Applications

The executives reviewed and approved two event funding applications: one from the College of Kinesiology GSA and the other from the WildEcol social group.

2. Financial Literacy Series Update

Lindsay reported that the October Financial Literacy Series event (budgeting) has been planned. There will also be two workshops during the winter term: one on banking basics and savings strategies, and another on tax information. GSA will try to collaborate with USSU on these events to improve turnout and potentially secure financial contributions for food.

3. Meeting with City UPass - Report

Lindsay reported to the executives on the meeting with City of Saskatoon representatives regarding UPass negotiations. The city expressed openness to exploring potential enhancements to the UPass program while noting that certain changes would require coordination with other stakeholders. Discussions also touched on the structure of current agreements and rate considerations. The city indicated they are reviewing various aspects of the program, which may present opportunities for broader discussions in the future.

Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs

1. Graduate Talks and Town Hall Meetings

Mandela confirmed plans to host two Graduate Talks or Town Hall Meetings per term, focusing on student-supervisor relations, departmental issues, and policy clarity. Planning for the first session will commence in November.

2. Holiday Hangout

Mandela confirmed the Holiday Hangout for December 26-27 to promote graduate student engagement during the winter break. Details regarding activities and logistics will be discussed at the next meeting.

3. Intramural Sports and Soccer Team Coordination

Mandela indicated that he has reached out to Ernest Leung, and upon his reply, he will connect Biraj with him to pick it up from there.

Vice-President External Affairs

1. Social Media Engagement

Lindsay suggested Biraj regularly post ALUMO content. Biraj agreed to post those in a timely manner.

2. Board Game and Movie Event

Biraj confirmed organizing a Board Game and Movie Night on February 27, 2026, aimed at fostering informal networking and social engagement among graduate students. He noted that this event would provide a relaxed environment for peer interaction and community building. The executives also recommended that Biraj plan at least one Health Chat event per term.

3. GSA Gala

Biraj agreed to organize the GSA Gala in March. Palash asked Biraj to prepare a presentation with a comprehensive event plan. Lindsay recommended that a date be chosen and a venue be booked before the holidays, as weekend dates fill far in advance.

Vice-President Indigenous Engagement

1. Indigenous Resource and Intercultural Exchange Fair - Confirmation

Laila confirmed that the Indigenous Resource and Intercultural Exchange Fair will be held on January 21, 2026, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the GSA Commons. The event aims to introduce international students to Indigenous culture and university/community resources.

2. CFS Discussion and Debrief

Laila took notes for the CFS conference and discussed future collaboration. Other executives shared their opinions on CFS membership and services. Laila also shared her preparation for the conference.

3. Executive Retreat - Final Arrangements

Laila finalized arrangements for the executive retreat at the Western Development Museum. The date was confirmed as November 8, 2025. She discussed the location and plans for the day.

University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association
GSA Diversity Committee Meeting

November 7th, 2025

Zoom, 5pm-6pm

Attendance

Members Present: Mandela Alema (VP Academic and Student Affairs; Chair), Laila Valila (VP Indigenous Engagement), Arash Amanlou (Regular Member), Farnoosh Tabatabaiean (Regular Member)

Guest: Palash Pial (President)

Regrets: Kaushal Ashvinkumar Patel (Regular Member)

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Terms of Reference
 - a. Membership, purpose, EDI strategy framework
3. Anti-Racism Symposium and Anti-Racism Training
 - a. Symposium on November 19th
 - b. Training will be for GSA Executive and Committee Members
4. Questions
 - a. Confidentiality Form

Meeting Adjourned: 5:48pm

Graduate Students' Association

University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association
Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes

July 2025 – Asynchronous adjudication

2025 – Spring-Summer Term

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

Regrets: None

Because many members of the committee, including the VP Finance, were traveling during the summer term and not able to attend in person, and members had been oriented to the rubric, the committee voted unanimously via email to adjudicate the spring-summer term bursary call on their own time (asynchronously).

Out of the 228 responses to the bursary application on Survey Monkey, 197 were completed. The committee agreed to disqualify candidates who had been awarded a GSA bursary in any of the previous three terms, per the policy. Two applicants fitting this category were removed.

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

Qualifying applications were divided evenly among committee members. The VP Finance had created an R code which automatically assigned points to the objective categories, based on the raw output from SurveyMonkey.

Each committee member double checked the scoring of non-subjective categories, then scored applicants in subjective categories based on provided responses and supplemental materials. Committee members then totaled the objective category score + subjective category score and returned all application materials to the VP Finance via the shared folder, at which time VP Finance removed shared folder access.

The VP Finance combined all scored applications and sorted from highest to lowest score. The top 34 applications were selected (~36 dispersed each term), due to the relatively low uptake in applications during the spring/summer term vs fall and winter.

Marc Usunier (CGPS) agreed to assist GSA by verifying enrolment, so that students did not have to submit a “confirmation of enrolment” letter, which costs \$10. All 34 of the top-ranked applicants were eligible and were awarded a \$1000 bursary via their student account.

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

University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students’ Association
Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes
November 7, 2025 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm (In-person)
2025 – Fall Term

Members Present: Lindsay Carlson (VP Finance and Operations), Mandela Alema (VP Academic and Student Affairs), Mary-fidelma Chioma Ndupu (Council Member), Jessica Sharpe (Regular Member), Denise Balogh (Regular Member), Hamid Yari (Council Member), Julia-Rose Miller (Council Member), Leah Johnson (CGPS Representative)

Regrets: None

The Vice President of Finance and Operations (VP Finance) expressed gratitude to members for attending and volunteering for this committee and emphasized the importance of their role in distributing funds to students in need. Coffee and donuts were provided for the committee.

Because the committee was mostly new members, the Vice Finance provided an orientation (slides excluding rubric information included in this package).

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

Out of the 299 responses to the bursary application on Survey Monkey, 241 were completed. The committee agreed to disqualify candidates who had been awarded a GSA bursary in any of the previous three terms, per the policy. Seven applicants fitting this category were removed from the pool.

Qualifying applications were divided evenly among committee members. The VP Finance had created an R code which automatically assigned points to the objective categories, based on the raw output from SurveyMonkey. The VP Finance asked the committee to verify the correct score was given, based on the response. No errors were found, but a question was raised about students who report no income at all, or very low income. A suggestion to possibly include parental support as an income source in the next application cycle was made. The committee will revisit this idea and issue but agreed to keep the rubric scoring as-is for this round.

Then, each committee member read application supplemental materials and scored applicants in subjective categories. Various questions and discussions were had about how to score subjective categories, and the requirements of the support letters. A question was raised about whether it should be allowed for a student to submit an older support letter from their supervisor, and the committee agreed that as long as it was within the last year, that it would be accepted. Committee members then totaled the objective category score + subjective category score and returned all application materials to the VP Finance via the shared folder, at which time VP Finance revoked shared folder access.

The VP Finance combined all scored applications and sorted from highest to lowest score. The top 34 applications were selected, due to ties between the 35-39 ranked applications. Because 34 bursaries were dispersed in the spring-summer call and now 34 in fall, 42 awards will be available in winter. Winter term typically gets the highest number of applications.

Leah Johnson agreed to assist GSA by verifying enrolment, so that students did not have to submit a “confirmation of enrolment” letter, which costs \$10. All 34 of the top-ranked applicants were registered and were awarded a \$1000 bursary via their student account.

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

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

President:

Dear GSA Councilors,

I am pleased to provide you with an update on my activities as President over the months of October, and Nov, highlighting recent initiatives, accomplishments, and upcoming priorities.

GSA Partnerships for SSRH Research Grant Application

The GSA recently participated as a partner in the SSHRC-funded proposal *Building Inclusive Housing Infrastructure (BIHI): A Multi-Scalar Rights and Responsibilities Approach to Housing for and with International Students*. This initiative focuses on improving the housing experiences of international students through collaborative research across universities and community partners. As part of the application, the GSA provided a letter confirming our support and outlining our role in offering student perspectives, assisting with outreach, and contributing to project activities. This partnership aligns with the GSA's ongoing advocacy on graduate student housing needs.

Through this partnership, the GSA aims to strengthen efforts to address housing challenges affecting graduate students and to ensure that student experiences inform broader policy discussions.

GSA Childcare Initiative

The GSA has begun exploratory conversations with the provincial government to identify pathways that would allow graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty members to more easily access the ten-dollar-a-day childcare initiative. Given the province's recent investment in expanding subsidized childcare spaces at Saskatchewan Polytechnic and other campuses, we are assessing whether similar support could be extended to the University of Saskatchewan. Our goal is to help ensure that campus community members with young families have fair access to affordable, high-quality childcare.

In parallel, the GSA is outlining a proposal for the development of a GSA-operated childcare centre. This work includes identifying the need created by existing waitlists, reviewing projected costs, and assessing operational models that could complement provincial programs. Once complete, the proposal will help guide discussions with both the university and the province about future opportunities for investment and collaboration.

We are also seeking a volunteer with experience in preparing business proposals for childcare or related facilities. Support from a Council member or someone recommended through Council would be greatly appreciated as we continue building this proposal.

Residence Living Experience

In a recent meeting with the Director of Consumer Services and the University Residence team, we had a very productive discussion that led to several positive outcomes for students. Two major issues we raised were acknowledged and addressed, with commitments made for implementation. First, Consumer Services agreed to replace all low-quality mattresses over the upcoming year, and this update will be reflected in the new residence budget. Second, they confirmed that security in the parking lot will be strengthened in response to ongoing concerns about hit-and-run incidents. In addition, all security cameras across residence areas will be upgraded to high-definition models to improve monitoring and safety.

These changes represent meaningful progress toward improving the overall residence living experience for grad students.

GSA News Submission Portal

We are pleased to announce the launch of the new GSA News section on our website. This platform provides Graduate Council members, social clubs, and graduate students with a dedicated space to share updates on upcoming events, new initiatives, research surveys, and other relevant announcements. The submission portal is available within the GSA News section under “[Submit an Article](#).” All councilors are encouraged to utilize this resource to enhance the visibility of your activities and contributions across campus.

Anti-Racism Symposium – Event Report

We recently hosted the Anti-Racism Symposium at the GSA Commons, and it was a highly successful event with strong participation. Thank you to all the graduate students who attended and contributed to the discussions. An MOU between the University, GSA, and USSU is currently in development. Through this agreement, the GSA and USSU aim to collaborate on creating policies that address anti-racism and oppressive situations on campus. During the symposium, it became evident that while students may have places to report concerns, power dynamics and other barriers often make it difficult for them to come forward. Student leaders also expressed challenges in navigating these situations.

We will continue working toward the MOU and will keep Council informed about the progress and the outcomes we are able to achieve through this partnership.

GSA Halloween Event – Event Report

The GSA Halloween event was a great success, especially considering it was our first time hosting it. The family-friendly activities and movie night were well received, creating an enjoyable atmosphere for everyone who attended. While we had a strong number of RSVPs, our steady attendance throughout the event was approximately 30–35 participants, with additional guests dropping in over the course of the evening.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to Laila and Shaily for their valuable contributions. Their support played an important role in making the event a success.

Meetings Attended as President

1. October 6, 2025 Governance Officer, Hearing & Appeals
2. October 6, 2025 MSL & GSA Project Catchup
3. October 8, 2025 GSA Executive Meeting
4. October 9, 2025 Saskatoon Transit
5. October 10, 2025 USSU President
6. October 5, 2025 GSA executive Meeting
7. October 16, 2025 India Advisory Committee
8. October 17, 2025 CGPS Professional Development Fee Consultation
9. October 20, 2025 Liz Duret for Anti Racism Training
10. October 22, 2025 CGPS – (Lori)
11. October 22, 2025 GSA & residence
12. October 22, 2025 CGPS Dean
13. October 22, 2025 CFS Representative
14. October 23, 2025 University Council
15. October 24, 2025 Senate Reception
16. October 25, 2025 Senate Meeting
17. October 28, 2025 GSA Staff Meeting
18. October 30, 2025 Faculty Council Meeting
19. November 3, 2025 Former GSA Chair Dr. Robert
20. November 4, 2025 University Governance Committee
21. November 6, 2025 Monthly PEC
22. November 7, 2025 Referendum Questions with GSA Chair & VP Finance
23. November 7, 2025 GSA Diversity Committee
24. November 8, 2025 Executive Retreat
25. November 10, 2025 Childcare Discussion with Dr. Helen
26. November 12, 2025 Student Policy Navigator
27. November 12, 2025 Fall Convocation
28. November 13, 2025 CGPS Executive & Coordination Meeting
29. November 14, 2025 GSA Special Executive Meeting
30. November 20, 2025 University Council

The GSA is strongest when we work together with respect for both our shared goals and our diverse perspectives. My commitment is to lead with transparency, act with fairness, and ensure that every effort we make leaves graduate students in a better position than before.

Thank you for your collaboration and trust as we continue to work together to strengthen the GSA and the graduate student experience. Lastly, please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns.

Regards,

Palash R. Roy (he/him)

President, Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

PhD Student, Department of Computer Science, University of Saskatchewan

VP Finance and Operations:

Dear GSA Councilors,

I am writing to provide you with an update on my October and early November activities as the Vice-President Finance and Operations.

1) Low-Cost Professional Portrait Event

The results from our graduate student interest survey conducted over the summer indicated that a free professional headshot event was the most popular among graduate students. We hired Dave Stobbe (professional photographer who has photographed the GSA Gala in previous years) and will host the event at the GSA Commons on November 25 from 3:00 – 6:00 pm. Though we wanted to keep this event as low-cost as possible, we also wanted to make sure students who sign up for the event actually attended, so we decided to charge \$10 upon registration. GSA is covering the remaining cost. We had a limited number of photo slots (80) available during the three-hour event, and the event sold out completely. Each student will receive an edited, digital copy of 1-2 portraits that they can use on their LinkedIn profile, website, etc. We used a new (to us) platform to [sell a specific number of tickets per time slot](#). The platform is free for us to use, minus the credit card transaction fee (ticket purchasers can choose to cover this nominal amount, or not). This event was open to graduate students and postdocs only.

2) Budgeting 101 Event Report

The first event in our Financial Literacy Series was held on October 22, and Susan Winnill (Student Finance Coordinator at USask) presented a very informative presentation on budgeting and a pizza lunch was provided. Though nearly 40 students registered for the event, only four students attended. On the interest survey, the financial literacy series was the third most popular event. Despite advertising on social media, on campus screens, in our newsletter, and with physical posters around campus, we did not get a good turnout. We will try hosting future events in this series during a different time window/day of the week.

3) New Event Funding Submission Procedure

We launched a new web form for collecting event funding requests from ratified groups this fall. The [form](#) can be found under the Academic Councils section of the Governance tab on the GSA website. This form can be used by both Academic Councils and Ratified Social Clubs to request event funding up to two times per academic year. Approval decisions will be communicated to the individual who submitted the application after the executive committee votes on the request. Following the event, receipts can be submitted to gsa.fin@usask.ca for reimbursement up to the approved amount. All reimbursements are now made via direct deposit to the ratified group's official bank account rather than by cheque.

4) Fall Need-Based Bursary Distributed

I would like to thank the newly convened Bursary Selection Committee, who will serve through August 2026, as well as CGPS for their contribution of \$40,000 for this academic year. The committee met on November 7 to complete an orientation and adjudicate the fall bursary. We received 299 applications, and a \$1,000 bursary was distributed to 34 successful applicants via their student accounts.

VP Finance Meetings Attended

10/8/2025	GSA Executive Meeting
10/9/2025	Meeting with City of Saskatoon
10/14/2025	GSA Executive Meeting
10/16/2025	Fee Review Committee Orientation
10/17/2025	CGPS Professional Development Fee Consultation
10/21/2025	Auditor Meeting
10/21/2025	USSU Student & City Connections
10/28/2025	GSA Staff Meeting
10/29/2025	D&O Insurance Meeting
10/30/2025	Fee Review Committee Meeting
10/30/2025	NSERC CGRS-D Adjudication Meeting (Awards Committee)
11/6/2025	President's Executive Committee
11/7/2025	Referendum Questions Meeting
11/7/2025	Bursary Selection Committee Meeting
11/8/2025	GSA Executive Retreat and Meeting
11/14/2025	Fee Review Committee Meeting
11/17/2025	Auditor Meeting
11/18/2025	USSU Student & City Connections
11/19/2025	Anti-Racism Symposium
11/24/2025	USSU UPass Meeting
11/26/2025	Provincial budget meeting with University Administrators
11/26/2025	GSA Council Meeting

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

Regards,

Lindsay G. Carlson (she/her)

VP Finance and Operations, Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

PhD Candidate, Department of Biology University of Saskatchewan

VP External affairs:

Dear Council Members,

I am pleased to present my report for October 2025, outlining ongoing initiatives and upcoming priorities for the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) in the area of external affairs. This month's work has focused on strengthening graduate student visibility, advancing advocacy priorities, and supporting preparations for Fall Orientation.

Saskatoon Transit Meeting & Engagement Sessions

The GSA attended the City of Saskatoon's public open house on the upcoming rapid transit design for 1st Avenue. The consultation presented updated plans for dedicated transit lanes, fare structure options, and long-term implementation timelines leading to the 2028 service launch. Discussions focused on balancing affordability, service expansion, and accessibility, with strong community support for targeted low-income discounts and sustainable fare models. The GSA continues to monitor developments to ensure graduate students' transportation needs are represented in future planning.

Movie Night / Board Game Event

This month, we began preparing for a February movie and board-game night to help graduate students stay connected during the long winter season. The idea grew from the simple goal of giving students a warm place to gather, relax, and spend time with friends after busy weeks of research and classes. The event will include familiar games like Ludo, Chess, and Uno, creating a light, friendly atmosphere where everyone can join in and feel welcome. Early planning has started, and we will continue shaping the event so it becomes a small but meaningful break for our community in February.

Website Customization and Social Media Engagement

This month, updates continued on the GSA website to keep information clear and accessible for students. Meeting minutes were uploaded regularly, and recent newsletters were added to the news section so members can easily follow ongoing work. On social media, several posts were shared to support student awareness, including updates on the Housing & Tenancy Rights Workshop, a Thanksgiving message, the Postdoc U-Pass announcement, Budgeting 101 information, and highlights from the Halloween program. These social media efforts were a collaborative achievement, with multiple GSA executives and team members contributing to content creation, sharing, and promotion across platforms. This team approach helped maintain steady engagement and ensured that students stayed informed about opportunities, events, and available support.

TLARC Committee Update

This month, I attended the TLARC committee meeting, where we received updates on three working groups beginning new work this year. The Teaching Effectiveness group is reviewing updates to the Student Learning Experience Feedback procedures and exploring an AI-supported dashboard for student comments. The Assessment Policy group is preparing for the rollout of a new university-wide assessment policy, focusing on fair and transparent assessment practices. The AI and Teaching group is working on expanding AI literacy for instructors, recommending curriculum supports, and examining how AI may be used in assessment. These discussions offered a clear view of upcoming priorities and the collaborative work ahead.

Meetings Attended as Vice-President External Affairs

Oct 8, 2025	GSA Executive Meeting
Oct 14, 2025	GSA Executive Meeting

Oct 21, 2025 Teaching, Learning, and Academic Resource Committee Meeting
Oct 27, 2025 Public Open House by Saskatoon Transit

Regards,

Biraj Saha Aronya (he/him)

Vice-President External Affairs, Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

PhD Student, Department of Computer Science, University of Saskatchewan

VP Indigenous Engagement:

Dear GSA Council,

I am writing to report on my activity for the month of October 2025.

Connections on Campus (Group Introductions)

Throughout this month I have begun to have both formal and informal meetings with Indigenous groups on campus. I have met with Metis, Indigenous and Inuit students to gather their concerns and offer support from the GSA and university in general. I am confident that the GSA is doing a great job at connecting with these groups and providing a space for inclusion.

Planning the “Indigenous Resource and Intercultural Exchange Fair”

Aside from connecting with groups, I have also begun meeting with student bodies to gather support for the Resource Fair on January 21st, 2026. The event will be from 11am-3pm and tables have been confirmed by the Metis Students of Usask, the USSU Food Centre and Cousins. I am in the process of organizing meetings with the ISU, Birm, Indigenous Vice Provost and JSGS. Two other groups that I am considering are our healthcare providers and the College of Medicine, who have Indigenous representatives in their college.

Meeting with CFS Representative

On October 23rd, the President and I met with Mary, a student who is currently undertaking CFS relations for Usask, separate from the GSA. Mary inquired about a recognized position as a GSA representative, and we discussed issues to bring to the conference from November 1st-6th. Going forward, we plan to meet with Mary regularly to determine if our contributions to CFS are practical for Saskatchewan graduate students.

GSA Halloween Event

On October 29th, the GSA held a Halloween Event for students and their children. The event was well attended with roughly 25-30 attendees and the President and I, along with Shaily, organized a costume contest and photo booths. Going forward, there is a highlighted need for food at these sorts of events.

Meetings and Events

October 8th, 2025: GSA Executive Meeting / GSA Council Meeting

October 14th, 2025: MSU Ribbon Cutting / GSA Executive Meeting

October 16th, 2025: Indigenous Graduate Leadership Circle

October 23rd, 2025: Meeting with CFS Representative (Mary)

October 28th, 2025: GSA Staff Meeting

October 29th, 2025: Meeting with MSU / GSA Halloween Event

October 30th, 2025: CGPS Graduate Faculty Council

Laila Valila (*she/her*)

VP Indigenous Engagement | MPA Student

Graduate Students' Association



Graduate Students' Association

Appendix A

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

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

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

Appendix B

a.

Academic Council	Councilors	Executive members
Agricultural and Resource Economics Graduate Students' Society	Councilor- Aminata Ba Alternate Councilor- Cornelius Mensah	President: Josie-Lynn Huber Vice-president: Rebecca Zanello Treasurer: Desmond Buabeng GSA representative: Aminata Ba GSA representative: Cornelius Mensah Social Committee member: Josie-Lynn Huber Social Committee member: Stacey Schitka Social Committee member: Biruktait Hailu Ph.D. representative: Rebecca Zanello M.Sc. representative: Cole Sanderson

b.

1	Bursary Committee	Hamid Yari - Councilor Julia-Rose Miller – Councilor Mary- Councilor
2	Budget and Finance Committee	Sunny Bui- Councilor
3	Elections and Referenda Committee	Darji, Hetvi – Councilor
4	Code of Ethics and Discipline Committee	Motajo Modupeoluwa Olakunle- Councilor
5	Sustainability Committee	Councilor- Vacant
6	Diversity Committee	Councilor- Vacant
7	Awards Committee	Sunny Bui- Councilor Angelica Caresse Uy- Councilor