



## **Graduate Students' Association**

**University of Saskatchewan- Graduate Students' Association**

### **Council Meeting**

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

**Meeting Location: Hybrid (GSA Commons + Zoom)**

### **AGENDA**

*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.*

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|    | ITEM   | ACTION      | PAGE                                      |
|----|--|-------------|---|
| 1  | Call to order  |             |   |
| 2  | Approval of agenda   | Decision    |   |
| 3  | Approval of GSA Council meeting minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ June 2025</li> <li>➤ July 2025 (Special council meeting)</li> <li>➤ August 2025</li> </ul>  | Decision    | 3-8<br>8-11<br>12-15                      |
| 4  | Motion to receive GSA executive meeting minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Aug 13, 2025</li> <li>➤ Sept 3 &amp; 19, 2025</li> </ul>  | Decision    | 15-16<br>17-20                            |
| 5  | Motion to ratify the GSA Academic councils and Social groups ( <i>Appendix B</i> )   | Decision    | 36-41                                     |
| 6  | Motion to approve GSA Standing Committees ( <i>Appendix B</i> )  | Decision    | 42-43                                     |
| 7  | Motion: Review of Event Funding Application Procedure  | Discussion  |   |
| 8  | Motion to take a decision on GSA owned BBQs  | Decision    |   |
| 9  | GSA executive reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. President</li> <li>b. Vice President Finance and Operation</li> <li>c. Vice President Academic and Student Affairs</li> <li>d. Vice President External Affairs</li> <li>e. Vice President Indigenous Engagement</li> </ul> | Information | 20-24<br>25-26<br>26-29<br>30-31<br>31-32 |
| 10 | Other Businesses:<br>Nomination of Councilors/Alternate Councilors for GSA<br>Standing Committee's Vacant Position   |             |   |
| 11 | Adjournment  |             |   |

**June Council meeting minutes**  
**University of Saskatchewan-Graduate Students' Association (GSA)**

Thursday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025; 17:00-19:00

Meeting Location: Online (Zoom)

***“As Council gathers, we acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of our gathering place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.”***

*Attendance: See appendix A*

**Chair: Shaily Tandekar**

(The Recording secretary was absent)

### **Call to Order**

- Meeting was called to order at 5:20 PM by Chair Shaily Tandekar.
- Quorum was confirmed with 24 members present.

### **Land Acknowledgement**

- The Chair delivered the Treaty 6 Territory and Métis Homeland acknowledgement.

### **The Chair reviewed meeting procedures:**

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

### **Approval of Agenda**

- Moved and seconded.
- Motion carried.

### **Approval of Minutes**

- a) Motion 1: AGM Minutes – April 30, 2025

- Motion to receive minutes was moved and seconded.
- Motion carried.

b) Motion 2: Executive Minutes – April 9 & 29, 2025

- Motion to receive minutes was moved and seconded.
- Motion carried.

**Motion3: Election of Vice Chair**

- The Chair outlined the role and responsibilities of the Vice Chair (presiding in absence of Chair, knowledge of bylaws, conducting one training meeting, etc.).

Candidate Introductions

- Clement Abdullah (Community Health & Epidemiology, originally from Ghana, currently in Ghana for data collection until July 15).
- Zinat Akbarzadeh (Plant Sciences, originally from Iran, M.Sc. student, interested in contributing to the GSA).
- Mohammad Shafiqul Islam Khan (Originally from Bangladesh, MPA student at Johnson Shoyama School of Public Policy, background in finance, administration, and public service).

Candidate Question & Answer

- Mostofa Kamal asked about candidates' availability, especially Clement's current presence in Ghana. Clement clarified he is abroad only temporarily for thesis data collection and will return July 15.
- Clarification was made that the Vice Chair role is a volunteer (unpaid) position; candidates confirmed their awareness.
- Candidates were asked to elaborate on qualifications, motivations, and goals:
  - *Mohammad Shafiqul Islam Khan* highlighted prior student club involvement, professional memberships, and desire to integrate into Canadian academic culture. He acknowledged needing to review GSA bylaws more thoroughly.
  - *Clement Abdullah* emphasized extensive student leadership experience in Ghana and Germany, aiming to improve council meeting attendance by increasing departmental visibility of GSA representatives. He also referenced his current research on graduate student wellness, health, and racism.

- *Zinat Akbarzadeh* stressed the importance of inclusive communication, transparency, and fostering a respectful environment, citing prior involvement with student-led clubs.
- Mandela Alema asked follow-up questions:
  - To *Mohammad Shafiqul Islam Khan*: Why his initial remarks focused on personal integration rather than student community contributions, and whether he had reviewed GSA governing documents. Mohammad explained his professional background, club involvement, and acknowledged he had not yet reviewed the bylaws in detail but intended to do so.
  - To *Clement Abdullah*: How he planned to increase meeting attendance. Clement proposed strengthening departmental-level visibility of GSA reps and leveraging his research insights on graduate student wellbeing to encourage participation.
- After Q&A, the Chair confirmed that voting would proceed.
- A secure voting link was circulated in the chat for council members only.

#### **Motion 4: Call for Self-Nominations: VP Indigenous Engagement**

- The Chair opened discussion on filling the Vice President Indigenous Engagement position, noting it had remained vacant after both the general election and by-election.
- The Chair stated that according to bylaws, vacant positions may be opened at the next AGM or council meeting.
- Mostofa Kamal raised a point of order, stating that under current bylaws, executive vacancies may only be filled by council if less than four months remain in the term. Otherwise, they must follow the general election process. He argued that proceeding with a self-nomination at this time would violate governing documents.
- The Chair requested that Mostofa provide a screenshot of the relevant bylaw clause for review.

#### **Vice President Indigenous Engagement Vacancy**

- Discussion was held on the process for filling the VP Indigenous Engagement vacancy.
- Mostofa Kamal argued that according to the Constitution and bylaws, an executive vacancy can only be filled by council if less than four months remain in the term. Otherwise, it must follow the general election process.
- Luke Dojack suggested that if this is a concern, a motion to amend the bylaws should be considered, but noted that bylaws cannot be amended at a council meeting.
- The Chair (Shaily Tandekar) cited Bylaw 4.8.3.9, which states:

“If no nomination is received after the extension of the nomination period, the Chief Electoral Officer shall refer the vacant position to the next general meeting or council meeting, whichever comes first, to appoint a graduate student to fill the position until the by-elections.”

- The Chair clarified that this bylaw has already been followed, and the position remains vacant. Therefore, the position is being re-opened for self-nomination.
- Mandela Alema agreed with the Chair’s interpretation but noted the bylaw specifies “appointment,” seeking clarification on the process.
- The Chair explained that, due to the sensitivity of the VP Indigenous Engagement role, she preferred self-nomination from Indigenous students rather than direct appointment. She confirmed the Elections and Referenda Committee would oversee the process in line with the bylaws.
- Members agreed that interested students could self-nominate by emailing the GSA.

## **GSA Executive Reports**

### **a) Vice President Finance and Operations – Lindsay Carlson**

- Announced the Spring/Summer Term GSA Need-Based Bursary is open. Approximately \$111,000 will be distributed, with one-third allocated in this call.
- Thanked outgoing Bursary Selection Committee members (Vincent, Jessica, Sarah, Mary Portia, and Nixon) for their commitment.
- Reported the GSA has transitioned to digital invoicing (QBO) to improve efficiency, record-keeping, and reduce errors.
- Informed council that the barbecue grills previously stored in the GSA Commons shed can no longer be stored due to University of Saskatchewan’s removal of small structures. Facilities have prohibited indoor storage, outdoor chaining, or new storage structures, and suggested selling the grills and using Marquis Catering instead.
- Expressed concern that this limits services available to councils and sought suggestions for solutions.

### **Discussion:**

- Mostofa Kamal suggested verifying with the fire department whether storage of grills in the existing storage room could be allowed, noting available space and secure access.
- Lindsay agreed to follow up, as Facilities had not provided clear justification beyond citing fire code.

## Discussion on Bursary Distribution

- Mostofa Kamal raised concerns regarding bursary distribution, noting that based on his experience, a disproportionately high percentage of recipients are PhD students, despite Master's students making up a larger share of the graduate population. He requested a report on bursary recipients by program type (Master's vs PhD) for the past five years, if possible.
- VP Finance Lindsay Carlson responded that the bursary rubric was revised in the past year to better prioritize financial need and reduce unfair disadvantages. She confirmed she could provide data for the past year, but not earlier, and would include this in her next report.

## Reports from Executives

- **VP Academic and Student Affairs (Mandela Alema):** Presented goals focusing on academic advocacy, funding opportunities, mental health supports, and revitalizing academic/social events. He also reported on attending national stakeholder meetings on student health plans and policy advocacy (mental health, high-cost prescription drugs, and English/French proficiency requirements for work permits).
- **VP External Affairs (Biraj Saha Aronya):** Outlined plans to strengthen engagement with graduate students, highlighted national advocacy campaigns on affordability and equity, and reported on attending the Canadian Federation of Students meeting and Alumo stakeholder sessions.

## Graduate Students' Association

### Vice Chair- Election Updates

- The Vice-Chair election did not reach quorum (12 votes received). Voting will remain open via email until quorum is reached, after which results will be announced.

### Bylaws and Policy Updates

- Mostofa Kamal noted that updates from previous AGMs/Special AGMs have not been reflected in the governing documents. Chair clarified that in the October 2024 Special AGM, only the budget was approved; no bylaw or policy changes were made. Updates from the 2025 AGM are in progress and will be uploaded soon.

### Other Business: Presidency Election Update

- VP Finance Lindsay Carlson provided clarification regarding the Presidency election: following the revocation of a candidate's eligibility and subsequent appeal, the matter is under review by the Ethics Committee and Elections & Referenda Committee.
- Chair added that until a final decision is made, Palash Roy will not act as President. VP Finance Lindsay Carlson will assume Presidential duties on an interim basis, as per bylaws.
- Council agreed that the Ethics Committee's report will be shared once a final decision is made.

## **Adjournment**

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 PM.

**Special Council meeting minutes**  
**University of Saskatchewan-Graduate Students' Association (GSA)**  
 Monday, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025; 17:00-19:00  
 Meeting Location: Online (Zoom)

***"As Council gathers, we acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of our gathering place and reaffirm our relationship with one another."***

*Appendix: See appendix A*

## **Chair: Shaily Tandekar**

(Recording secretary was absent)

### **• Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:40 PM. A land acknowledgment was given, recognizing Treaty 6 territory and the Métis homeland. The chair welcomed all attendees and introduced the meeting format.

### **• Rules and Regulation**

The chair outlined the procedures based on Robert's Rules of Order.



A question was raised regarding whether the Chair should step down. The Chair clarified the responsibilities of the position and stated they would continue in the role. Council agreed, and the meeting proceeded under the Chair's leadership.

- **Agenda: Approval of Agenda**

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

Palash requested two amendments to the agendas: First Unauthorised removal of the President and second Election and Referenda Committee's clarification on disqualification of a candidate. The amendments were approved by the council. And the agenda was accepted by the Council.

**Mover:** Palash

### **Election Report**

The Chief Electoral Officer (Chair) presented the election report.

- Palash was announced as the elected President.
- Emmanuel's candidacy was revoked by the Elections and Referenda Committee after a formal complaint.
- Two mass emails sent by Emmanuel during the voting period were deemed as campaigning, which is prohibited under the bylaws.
- Despite receiving the highest number of votes, Emmanuel was disqualified, and Palash was confirmed as President.

### **Ethics Committee Appeal Report**

- Emmanuel appealed the disqualification decision to the Ethics Committee.
- The Council Chair recused themselves; Luke was appointed interim Chair.
- The Committee reviewed bylaws, policies, and meeting records and found the definition of "campaigning" unclear.
- Emmanuel clarified that his reminder emails aimed to increase voter turnout, not promote his candidacy.
- Evidence showed inconsistent communication of campaign rules among candidates.
- The Ethics Committee concluded that Emmanuel's emails did not constitute campaigning and overturned the disqualification.

### **Discussion on Ethics Committee Decision**

- Palash Roy expressed respect for but disagreement with the decision, noting discrepancies in the emails referenced and concerns about authorization and targeted communication.
- Luke Dojack clarified that the decision focused solely on the reminder emails and confirmed permission was granted for their use.
- Sunny Bui raised questions about the visibility of Emmanuel's name and mass emailing. Luke responded that the emails appeared non-promotional and some recipients mistook them as official GSA messages.
- Members agreed that the Ethics Committee's findings were based on content review, permissions, and procedural fairness.

### **Discussion on Voting and Removal of President**

- Palash Roy cited Bylaw 4.4.2.6, emphasizing that the Chief Electoral Officer is responsible for election reminders and maintained that he followed all election rules.
- Luke Dojack reiterated that the Ethics Committee reviewed all emails and found no violations.
- Emmanuel Aggrey emphasized fairness and due process.
- The Chair clarified that while Emmanuel's disqualification was overturned, Palash cannot be removed as President without a majority vote per Bylaw 2.9.1.
- Voting procedures were outlined, and members were instructed to vote using their official credentials.

### **Voting Procedure Concern**

- Shaily noted that only 16 of 23 members had voted.
- The Council decided to circulate the voting link via email to ensure full participation.

### **Palash Roy's Motion**

- Palash proposed a motion to ensure the Council follows the full bylaw process (Bylaw 2.9) and considers the entire Ethics Committee report, emphasizing the issue of unequal rule application among candidates.
- The motion **did not carry**; the majority voted against it.

## Council's Decision

- The Council agreed that adequate discussion had occurred.
- Voting results would be finalized via email.
- It was clarified that the President's removal, if confirmed, does not require a by-election due to the Ethics Committee's decision.

The Chair will send the meeting recording and a summary of the Ethics Committee's report along with the voting link to all council members. (Remaining agenda items, including "unauthorized revocation," will be addressed in the next meeting.)

## Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

## Voting result:

### Outcome of Vote on Presidential Removal



○ Grad Students' Assoc Chair <gsa.chair@usask.ca>

Wednesday, July 9, 2025 at 16:30

To: ○ Grad Students' Assoc VP Student Affairs; ○ Grad Students' Assoc VP External; +136 more

Hello Council Members and Executives,

I am writing to inform you of the results of the vote regarding the removal of Palash as President, which was initiated during the Special Council Meeting held on July 7th.

We received 13 votes in favour of removal. However, as per **Bylaw 2.9.1**, a two-thirds (67%) majority of the council votes is required to remove an executive. In this case, that threshold was not met.

As a result, the motion to remove Palash as President is **nullified**.

If anyone has any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me directly.

Best regards,

**Shaily Tandekar (she/her)**

Chair and Chief Electoral Officer, Graduate Students' Association

M.Sc. student, Department of Plant Sciences

University of Saskatchewan



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BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

*We acknowledge that the GSA is located 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.*

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**Summer Council meeting minutes**  
**University of Saskatchewan-Graduate Students' Association (GSA)**  
Wednesday, August 2025; 17:00-19:00  
Meeting Location: In person (GSA Commons)

***"As Council gathers, we acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of our gathering place and reaffirm our relationship with one another."***

*Appendix: See appendix A*

**Chair: Shaily Tandekar**

(Recording secretary was absent)

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:14 pm. The Chair, began by introducing herself and acknowledging the land, recognizing Treaty 6 territory and the Métis homeland. She then continued to welcome members to the meeting and introduced the meeting format.

**Approval of the agenda**

Motion: (Palash/ Portia): That the agenda be approved as circulated.

**Rules and Regulation**

The Chair outlined the procedures based on Robert's Rules of Order. She then explained the voting protocols. She emphasized respect and decorum.

**Agenda: Election of GSA Recording secretary**

She outlined the roles and responsibilities of a Recording Secretary as enshrined in the GSA Bylaws 1.16. She then introduced all the contestants for the Recording Secretary position as follows: Kelly Heinemann, Roana Facanha da Silva Leite, Nooshin Jannati, Marziyeh Hassani Sangani, Leili Rouhi, Aiminayanate Pepple, Adriana Pita Chopin, Hamid Yari, Rahul Kumar Yadav and Manpreet Singh.

All candidates for the position were given the opportunity to introduce themselves to the assembly, outline their reasons for contesting, and share their aspirations as well as relevant experiences.

Following the introductions, the house proceeded to vote, and Aiminayanate Pepple was elected with a total of 8 votes.

### **Agenda: GSA executive reports**

#### **President**

The President provided an update on activities from June to August. Key highlights included:

1. Collaboration with the Student Recruitment Team to enhance engagement with new graduate students through events, videos, and tours.
2. Ongoing planning of an Anti-Racism Symposium with campus partners, proposed for the fall.
3. Notification from the University Governance Office regarding the implementation of a 1% administrative fee on GSA student fees.
4. Discussions with the university on tuition payment options and financial sustainability for graduate students.
5. Exploration of collaborations with the University Library to promote graduate research visibility.
6. Development of a GSA website page and newsletter feature to highlight graduate student research and life stories.
7. Upcoming meeting with a Federal MP to discuss advocacy priorities, with Councilors invited to provide input.
8. Advocacy for graduate student representation on the University's Board of Governors.
9. Continuation of childcare advocacy efforts to establish a GSA childcare facility.
10. Plans to meet with Saskatoon Transit regarding a potential spring/summer U-Pass option.
11. A new format for the GSA Orientation, led by the VP Academics, with a focus on creating a more engaging experience for incoming students.
12. He concluded with the number of meetings he has attended.

Concerning the 1% administrative fee on GSA student fees, Matthew Chapelski, from the College of Kinesiology Graduate Society, asked if the 1% fee will increase going forward or if a backpay will be required. He also asked if the President had any idea what the interest fee could be for tuition payment plan. The President responded that the Provost's Office has just made GSA aware of the situation, and that we will provide further communication as more information becomes available. He opined that at this time; our position is not to agree to pay fees that were not collected by the University. Matthew commended GSA for the Life stories, proposed changes to HARVEST.

Portia Mohrbutter from the Biology Grad Students Association, asked about the meeting date with the Federal MP and the deadline for the grad student submission of feedback. The President

responded that the meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, August 28, at 1:00 PM and that we expect receive input from grad student by August 27.

Another member asked how often the GSA expects to hold council meeting and asked if the functionality of the U15 archives and how different it is from the Interlibrary loan. The president responded that at least once in a month. He also added that yes, the functionality of the U15 archives and the Interlibrary loan are different in his opinion.

### **Vice President Finance and Operation**

The VP Finance and Operations was in absentia. The President read her report. He provided an update on activities from July to August. Key highlights included:

1. GSA-CGPS Need-Based Bursary: 34 recipients were awarded bursaries from the Spring-Summer call, with 216 applications received. The Fall Term call will be announced in September, with the remaining 76 bursaries distributed during the fall and winter terms. Analysis of recent data indicated 69% of applicants were master's students and 31% PhD, with 59% of bursary recipients being master's and 41% PhD.
2. 2024 Audit Completion: The finalized audit for the 2023–2024 fiscal year was completed in June 2025 and approved by the GSA Executives. The audit was favourable, with no major concerns, though it noted higher-than-typical accounts payable due to delayed vendor payments between January 2023 and April 2024. All outstanding debts have since been paid, and the GSA is in good standing with vendors. Council was advised that the 2024 audit may reflect over-inflated assets, which will be corrected in the 2025 financial statements.
3. GSA Events Survey: A July survey with 180 respondents identified top student-preferred events, including free professional headshots, a research conference, financial literacy sessions, health and dental plan information sessions, and movie nights. Upcoming financial literacy workshops will cover budgeting (October), saving and investing (February), and taxes (March).

### **Vice President Academic and Student Affairs**

The VP Academic and Student Affairs provided updates on activities and upcoming initiatives. Highlights included:

1. 2025 Fall Orientation: Scheduled for September 10, 2025, at the GSA Commons, this year's event will feature a relaxed drop-in format with booths from key campus units and services. Councilors were asked to secure at least three volunteers from their departments to support the event.

2. Ratification of Academic Councils and Social Clubs: Councils and clubs must re-ratify annually (September–August). A call for ratification will open in early September, and all are encouraged to submit packages promptly.
3. Graduate Opportunities Workshop (GSA–USSU Collaboration): Scheduled for September 12, 2025, the workshop will provide undergraduates with information on graduate studies and feature peer mentorship roundtables. Twelve graduate students have volunteered to date, with a target of at least 20 volunteers. Councilors and members were encouraged to participate.

Following the report by Vice President Academic and Student Affairs, Portia Mohrbutter from the Biology Grad Students Association, asked if grad students will receive email notification when the call for ratification is opened. Mandela responded affirmatively and noted that notifications will be sent by email as well as through the GSA Newsletter.

### **Vice President External Affairs**

The VP External Affairs was absent so President read his report. Highlights included:

1. GSA Research Feature Series: New initiative to highlight graduate research and stories via GSA platforms; two students featured so far, more encouraged to participate.
2. Meeting with Federal MP: Upcoming meeting to discuss advocacy priorities (funding, housing, immigration); Councilors invited to suggest additional topics.
3. GSA Orientation – Social Media Engagement: VP External to enhance online presence for Sept 10, 2025 Orientation through promotions and coverage; suggestions for boosting reach welcomed.

### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 p.m. (Mandela/Mary)



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relationship with one another.***

GSA Executives Meetings on August 13, 2025

**Time:** 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM



**Attendance:** Palash Roy, Mandela Alema

**Guests:**

**All executives approved all of these actions.**

President

**1. Fall Orientation of GSA**

Palash discussed and planned for the upcoming Fall Orientation. He suggested waiting for feedback from the council regarding food arrangements. If the feedback is positive, the team will proceed with those options.

**2. Graduate Student Feature Initiative**

Palash also provided an update on the Graduate Student Feature Series. He recommended using the university's media resources to ensure that the initiative is presented in a professional manner.

Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs

**1. Fall Orientation of GSA**

Mandela agreed with the proposal to organize a live BBQ, provided there are enough positive responses. He also emphasized the importance of promoting the event effectively to engage more students in the Orientation activities.

**2. Fall Welcome Event**

Mandela shared his ideas for the upcoming Fall Welcome Event. He suggested using the GSA booth at the Bowl as an opportunity to showcase the full GSA team, which would help raise awareness about the association and provide students with information about the Orientation program.

**3. Backdrop**

Mandela also discussed the design and budget for the Orientation backdrop. He recommended creating a design that is versatile and durable so that it can be reused at future events.





Graduate Students' Association

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GSA Executives Meetings on Sept 03 and 19, 2025

**Time:** 5:45 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.**

Palash requested VP Finance Lindsay to chair the meeting for the day, and she accepted, proceeding to continue the meeting in the role of Chair for this session.

President

#### **1. Halloween Event**

Palash proposed hosting a Halloween event at the GSA Commons to celebrate the season and foster community engagement. The event will include a movie screening, food, a costume contest, and prizes for the best costumes. Palash emphasized that this initiative will not only bring students together but also set the stage for hosting more events during the upcoming winter term. There was a discussion about the best date for the event.

#### **2. Event Prioritization and Scheduling**

Palash emphasized the importance of determining which events the GSA will hold during this tenure and opened a discussion on potential dates. Lindsay had previously shared the survey results outlining the types of events graduate students are most interested in. As the topic would require a dedicated discussion, all agreed to postpone this agenda to the upcoming executive meeting. Lindsay further noted that each executive should bring one event idea to the next meeting that they would be willing to lead.

### **3. PEC Agenda**

Palash asked Lindsay to prepare an agenda item for the first PEC meeting. At the Sept 19 meeting, Palash provided an update on the PEC meeting scheduled for October 2, 2025. He noted that this meeting will focus primarily on issues related to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and that executives should contribute to a shared document, which we can use to brainstorm thoughts and ideas to share with the PEC.

### **4. Launching Public Seminar Series**

Palash discussed the proposed Public Seminar Series initiative, which was introduced by Vice-President Research, Baljit Singh. The series aims to highlight graduate student research and strengthen community engagement. Lindsay suggested holding additional meetings to further understand and refine the details of the initiative before launching it, with concern about the bandwidth of GSA to carry out these events without support, and lack of clarity in what supports are being offered/logistics are being managed by OVPR, but stated that GSA is happy to help connect grad students interested in presenting with OVPR/this initiative.

### **5. Daycare Initiative**

Palash shared updates on the daycare initiative under discussion, and suggested that we should work to prepare a business case. Lindsay expressed the view that providing new daycare services should not fall under the GSA's scope, is too complex for a student-run organization to manage, and stated that the responsibility should instead rest with the university and the province. Palash expressed hopefulness that the University could partner with GSA to make the undertaking successful.

## **Vice-President Finance and Operations**

### **1. Report on outcome of student event interest survey**

Lindsay provided a copy of the results to all executives, and suggested that each of them should come up with an idea for an event that they will plan and host this term. Lindsay reported she is planning a Budgeting workshop as part of a financial literacy series for October. Palash proposed a Halloween event. Other executives will bring their ideas to the next meeting.

### **2. Proposal to pay GSA staff for extra hours for orientation**

Lindsay proposed paying GSA Chair, Shaily, and GSA Recording Secretary, Pepple, as "coordinators" for 3 hours for their time at the Orientation event. The rationale was that working this event is well beyond the scope of their normal duties, and we could not have done it without them especially because only 1 of 6 volunteers showed up and

2 of 4 coordinators were available. The executive team unanimously agreed to compensate both individuals for three hours of work at the coordinator rate.

**3. Event funding requests**

At the Sept 3 meeting, Lindsay provided executives with copies of academic year-end (AY 24-25) event funding applications from several ratified groups, including the Ukrainian Students' Research Association, Women in Computing (WIC), Computer Science Graduate Council, and Engineering Graduate Council. Palash and Biraj abstained from providing opinions on the Computer Science Graduate Council application due to a conflict of interest. At the Sept 19 meeting, Lindsay provided executives with copies of event funding applications from the Computer Science Graduate Council for their ResearchFest event and from the Bangladeshi Students' Association for their NextFresh event. Both proposals were discussed, but decisions were delayed due to lack of time, and until the ratification process was completed.

**4. September Council meeting**

Lindsay led a discussion on scheduling the September Council meeting. All executives agreed to hold the meeting in a hybrid format to allow both in-person and virtual participation, following feedback from some councilors that it is difficult for them to attend in-person.

**5. Planning meeting with City of Saskatoon**

Lindsay reached out in August to a contact the City of Saskatoon regarding scheduling a meeting to discuss the details of the GSA UPass, but had not heard back. She will follow-up in hopes to schedule a meeting sometime in October.

Graduate Students' Association

Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs

**1. GSA Fall Orientation 2025**

Mandela provided an overview of the GSA Fall Orientation 2025, noting the strong response and enthusiastic participation from graduate students. He acknowledged the contributions of the GSA team in making the event successful. The executives shared their reflections and feedback on the event, and Palash reiterated the importance of preparing the volunteer list well in advance to ensure smooth coordination.

## Vice-President External Affairs

### 1. **Website updates Graduate Voices series**

Biraj provided an update on the recent customization of the GSA website, noting that newsletters had been added and a separate page for GSA News had been created. He suggested making the page more interactive and engaging and requested assistance with setting up tag categorization. Palash raised some concerns about the implementation and suggested incorporating certain changes he had recommended earlier.

### 2. **Graduate Voices series Social media post**

Biraj provided an update on the Graduate Voices series, noting that three responses have been received so far and that additional media support would be required to convert the series into a video format. Palash advised against spending funds at this stage, recommending that the series continue in article form to evaluate its performance, and further suggested featuring the stories in the GSA newsletter to enhance visibility and engagement. He also recommended following up with the media production team, if needed, to explore possible arrangements.

### 3. **Social media post**

Biraj discussed the update of social media engagement and preparing short videos and posts to engage graduate students for the GSA orientation program. Lindsay suggested creating a social media calendar to plan when we will post content that Studentcare/Alumo sent us.

## Vice-President Indigenous Engagement

### 1. **Indigenous Research Fest Website updates**

Laila shared her plans about the Indigenous research fest.



Dear GSA Councilors,

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

### **Non-Profit Status is reobtained**

The GSA has successfully regained its non-profit status. Congratulations to all members, and special thanks to our VP Finance, Lindsay, for leading this effort for two terms straight. Through her persistence and hard work, we are now fully caught up and in a much stronger position moving forward. You can find more information in Lindsays Report.

### **GSA Fall Orientation 2025**

The GSA held its Fall Orientation on September 10, 2025, which was a successful event. Further details are available in the VP Academic Mandela's report. I was actively involved in the planning and coordination of the orientation. Although I was unable to attend in person due to attending a conference in Auckland, I shared a recorded welcome message to greet incoming graduate students.

Through this report, I would like the Council to extend congratulations to Mandela for his leadership in organizing the orientation, as well as to the entire GSA team for their hard work in delivering such a successful event.

### **Graduate Voice – First Feature Launched**

The *Graduate Voice* initiative has officially launched its first feature, titled “*From Farm Fields to Research Fields – Jeremy Irvine’s Journey.*” For the inaugural edition, we reached out to Vanier Scholars, but the call for contributions remains open. Importantly, this platform will not only highlight award winners but will also showcase diverse graduate experiences and initiatives across our community.

The GSA is committed to continuing this effort and working with Council to make it a permanent initiative, ensuring it endures beyond leadership transitions. The vision for *Graduate Voice* is to create a space where graduate students can share their stories, challenges, and perspectives. By doing so, we aim to normalize the struggles of graduate life, foster solidarity among students, and amplify graduate voices to the broader university community. The first feature can be viewed here: <https://gsa.usask.ca/gsa-news/articles/gradvoiceirvine.php>

### **Collaboration with Vice President Research Office**

The GSA will lead new outreach initiatives, with support from the Vice President Research Office, to engage graduate students in activities beyond the university campus. The goal is to create spaces where graduate students can share their research experiences and highlight how their work is shaping the future. This initiative also aims to educate and inspire broader community members, whether by encouraging high school students to pursue higher education, demonstrating how new technologies can support agricultural practices, or supporting community members with resources such as financial literacy. At its core, the program will allow

graduate students to connect their research with real-world impact while strengthening ties between the university and the wider community.

### **Planning of Anti-Racism Symposium**

The GSA, in collaboration with the USSU and Student Health and Wellbeing, is organizing an **Anti-Racism Symposium** on **November 19th at the GSA Commons**. This will be a full-day event focused on equipping students with tools to recognize, address, and challenge racism on campus. The symposium will feature student-led discussions where participants can share their lived experiences, research presentations that highlight current work on racism and equity, and interactive sessions designed to help students identify what racism looks like in campus settings and explore strategies to address it.

Feedback gathered from students will also help inform the development of a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** between the University, the GSA, and the USSU, ensuring that student voices are heard and reflected in future initiatives. Planning is still underway, and further details will be shared soon.

### **Residence Living Experience**

I along with VP Academics Mandela met with the Director of Consumer Services to discuss the graduate student living experience in residence. Our discussion focused on concerns raised by students regarding parking security, mattress quality, and pest control, particularly at McEown Park Residences. Mattress quality emerged as a key issue due to potential health impacts. The GSA will soon be proposing changes to improve mattress standards, while continuing to advocate for enhanced parking security and effective pest control.

### **Supplemental Meal Swipe Program**

Culinary Services has recently launched the Supplemental Meal Swipe Program as part of a campus-wide response to food insecurity among students at USask. This new program provides short-term, discreet support to students in need while also connecting them with sustainable food resources.

Eligible students can apply online, and upon approval, three meal swipes are loaded onto their student card. These swipes are valid for three days and can be used at the Culinary Centre in the same way as a regular meal plan. Student Affairs and Outreach or Residence Student Life will follow up with applicants to ensure they are connected with additional supports.

At present, meal swipes are manually activated during core University hours (Monday–Friday), with work underway to explore weekend access options.

GSA will continue to support and raise awareness of this initiative, recognizing its importance in meeting the immediate needs of graduate students while contributing to long-term solutions around food security on campus.

### **Previous Council Meeting Wrap-Up (Academic Year 2024-25)**

The final Council meeting of the previous tenure concluded with great success, with 34 members RSVPing and even more attending in person. The meeting was followed by a BBQ, which created a wonderful opportunity for graduate students to connect, celebrate our collective efforts, and mark a smooth transition into the current tenure. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all the members of the previous Council for their dedication, service, and contributions throughout their term, which helped make this event and the year a success.

### **MLA Meeting Update**

We circulated survey forms to gather students' concerns ahead of our meeting with the MLA. While many of the issues raised do not fall within the MLA's portfolio, none of them were disregarded. Instead, we are working to direct those concerns through the appropriate channels. When we met with the MLA in August, our discussion focused on tuition fee increases, childcare support, and public transit safety. We also engaged in a broader conversation about the recent cap on international student study permits, considering both the impact on the university community and the wider economic effects for the province of Saskatchewan.

Moving forward, we plan to continue building stronger collaboration with both provincial and federal government officials to ensure student concerns are addressed and to explore meaningful long-term solutions.

### **Transit Pass Update**

We have initiated contact with Saskatoon Transit and will soon meet with them to renegotiate the GSA transit contract. This process will allow us to discuss several key points, including the criteria for opting out of the transit pass as well as the possibility of introducing Spring and Summer bus passes. Our Vice-President Finance, Lindsay, initiated the contact.

We will also meet with the USSU to understand if there is an opportunity for the GSA to be included in their Spring and Summer transit pass program. Once we receive the quotes from Transit, these will be presented to GSA Council, and the final decision will follow the direction of Council's vote.

### **Meetings Attended as President**

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| August 13, 2025, | GSA Executive Meeting                                     |
| August 13, 2025, | GSA Council Meeting                                       |
| August 14, 2025, | Meeting with Past Board of Governor (Joy Crawford)        |
| August 14, 2025, | Meeting with Director of Consumer Services, George Foufas |
| August 18, 2025, | Meeting with CGPS Dean Dr. Debby Burstyn                  |



|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| August 21, 2025,    | GSA executives and CGPS team   |
| August 21, 2025,    | Vice Provost Dr. Angela Jamie (OVPIE)  |
| August 26, 2025,    | GSA & USSU   |
| August 27, 2025,    | GSA Executive & Vice President Research Team (Dr. Baljit Sing & Brit Tastat) |
| August 28, 2025,    | MLA Tajinder Grewal  |
| September 2, 2025,  | Welcome Week Event   |
| September 3, 2025,  | Event attended, Vice-President Research 2025-26 Campus Address               |
| September 3, 2025,  | GSA Executive Meeting  |
| September 4, 2025,  | Presidents Executive Monthly Meeting   |
| September 4, 2025,  | CGPS Council Meeting   |
| September 16, 2025, | Jocelyn and Emma for Anti racism Symposium                                   |
| September 16, 2025, | Governance Committee Meeting   |
| September 17, 2025, | Senate Orientation   |
| September 18, 2025, | CGPS Dean Dr. Debby Burstyn  |
| September 18, 2025, | Student Orientation USask Council  |
| September 19, 2025, | GSA Executive Meeting  |
| September 22, 2025, | Graduate Voice Discussion meeting  |
| September 25, 2025, | Meeting with Family Service  |
| September 25, 2025, | University Council Meeting   |
| September 26, 2025, | Senate Executive Committee Meeting   |
| September 29, 2025, | Meeting with CGPS Dean   |
| October 2, 2025,    | Presidents Executive Monthly Meeting   |
| October 2, 2025,    | CGPS Executive Meeting   |
| October 2, 2025,    | Graduate Voice Discussion Meeting  |
| October 2, 2025,    | Faculty Council Meeting  |

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





Dear GSA Councilors,

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

**1) GSA's Non-Profit Status Restored**

I am proud to report that GSA's non-profit status has been restored with Information Services Corporation as of September 1. Due to late completion of audits and failure of previous executives to file annual financial statements, the organization's non-profit status lapsed in November 2022 and has not been registered since. I began the restoral process in October 2024 after completion of the FY 23 audit, but by the time our name renewal was approved, it was too late to restore without the FY 24 audit. This has been a complex and work-intensive process, but an important obstacle to overcome. With this status, GSA can now move forward with fundraising initiatives such as grant applications and new revenue opportunities such as GICs.

**2) GSA Calendar Distributed**

Rather than the traditional "handbook", we used that budget line to create a 2025-2026 academic year desktop calendar featuring student photos, highlighting important University and GSA deadlines and events, and describing GSA programs and benefits. All calendars were distributed at the GSA Orientation on September 10. We appreciate our photo contest winners for sharing their beautifully captured memories with us – congratulations to Adriana Noguera, Samantha Carley, Miranda Carley, Alana Muenchrath, Julia Tregobov, Ryan Newton, Mabiana Camargo, Riel Castro-Zunti, Anastasiia Nykonenko, and Brianne Symak! If you didn't snag a copy of the calendar, you can see their photos featured in GSA newsletters throughout the academic year.

**3) Announcing Financial Literacy Series**

In collaboration with Student Finance, GSA will host a series of information sessions on Financial Literacy topics throughout the academic year. The first session is scheduled for October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 1:00 – 2:00 pm at the GSA Commons, and will cover the topic of "Budgeting." Free lunch will be provided. More information will be shared soon.

**4) GSA Brings Campus Safety Concerns to President's Executive Committee**

At the first meeting of the academic year, GSA Executives brought concerns about campus and campus-adjacent safety to President Stoicheff and the members of the President's Executive Committee. Topics included traffic flow issues on campus-adjacent roadways, lack of safety precautions during road construction, insufficient bicycle and pedestrian safety measures, and concerns about safety using public transit. You can read the full document in the News section

of our website. During the next PEC meeting, GSA and USSU will engage with University administrators on diversity, equity, inclusion initiatives and the role of student leadership.

#### VP Finance Meetings Attended

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 8/25/2025 | Awards Committee Meeting                |
| 8/28/2025 | Operations Manager Meeting              |
| 9/2/2025  | Welcome Week Event                      |
| 9/3/2025  | GSA Executive Meeting                   |
| 9/3/2025  | VP Research Address                     |
| 9/4/2025  | PEC Meeting                             |
| 9/10/2025 | GSA Orientation                         |
| 9/12/2025 | Bookkeeper Meeting                      |
| 9/18/2025 | University Council Student Orientation  |
| 9/19/2025 | GSA Executive Meeting                   |
| 9/23/2025 | Student Finance Meeting                 |
| 9/24/2025 | Planning & Priorities Committee Meeting |
| 9/25/2025 | Fee Review Committee Orientation        |
| 10/2/2025 | PEC Meeting                             |
| 10/2/2025 | Scholarship & Awards 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



Dear GSA Councilors,

I am writing to provide you with an update on my September activities as the Vice-President Student and Academic Affairs.

#### **1. 2025 Fall Orientation**

The Graduate Students' Association (GSA) organises Fall Orientation each year to welcome new and returning graduate students to campus. The event provides information about the support

and services offered by the GSA, campus partners, and student service units, while also creating opportunities for students to connect. It also provides an opportunity for graduate students to connect with fellow graduate students. In previous years, Fall Orientation featured talk sessions from the GSA and campus partners. This year, the orientation adopted a more relaxed, drop-in style format, allowing graduate students to explore information booths and connect with fellow students at their own pace.

Promotion for the event included the GSA website, newsletters, PAWS, GSA social media platforms as well as campus screens. Posters were also printed and placed at key locations across campus. In addition, departments were contacted directly to share event information with their new and returning graduate students. Finally, students were encouraged to share the event details through their social media platforms and campus associations. In previous years, GSA has provided free “swag” to encourage student attendance. Following the success of last year’s USask branded t-shirts, we ordered 400 custom “University of Saskatchewan” GSA t-shirts from the University Bookstore.

The 2025 Fall Orientation took place on September 10 from 11:00 AM to 2:30 PM at the GSA Commons. Information booths were hosted by the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, ALUMO/Studentcare, the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), the International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC), the University Library, University Residence, Career Services, and Bridges. SaskTransit was invited but did not attend. Exhibitors distributed informational materials, stickers, souvenirs, and other branded items.

A total of 363 students registered online, with 223 registrants attending. An additional 102 unregistered students participated, bringing total attendance to 325. Each participant received a GSA-branded T-shirt and a coupon for refreshments and a prize draw. Thanks to planning and preparation by GSA’s Operations Manager, VP Finance and food service by GSA Coordinators, a free BBQ lunch was provided for attendees, with halal, vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options, along with drinks and chips.

In addition to the GSA Executives, the event was supported by GSA staff and volunteers. I would like to take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to all my fellow executives, our operations manager (Brenna Maxwell), Council Chair (Shaily Tandekar), Recording Secretary (Aiminayanate Pepple), Council Vice Chair (Clement Abdallah), Coordinators (Esther Adeola-Gold, Arezou Askarian Abyaneh), previous executives (David Ohene Amoako, Nickson Joseph) and volunteers (Md. Sharab Hossain and Rahul Yadav) for their significant support in making this event a great success.

Overall, the Fall Orientation successfully achieved its goal of welcoming new and returning graduate students, connecting them with campus resources, and fostering a sense of community at the start of the academic year. The verbal feedback we received after the event was overwhelmingly positive, largely due to the drop-in style format we adopted this year and the

high level of graduate participation. Some students and campus partners even remarked that this was the best GSA Orientation they had attended in the last decade.

A breakdown of the 2025 GSA Fall Orientation expenditures is presented in Table 1 below, and selected pictures from the event are included in Appendix 4.

**Table 1.** Breakdown of 2025 GSA Fall Orientation expenditures

| Item # | Item description                               | Cost (CAD) |
|--------|--|------------|
| 1.     | Poster printing                                | \$26.46    |
| 2.     | GSA branded T-shirts                           | \$4,218.00 |
| 3.     | Food, drink, and disposable plates and cutlery | \$1,847.98 |

## **2. Ratification of Academic Councils and Social Clubs**

Academic Councils function as mini associations within the Graduate Students' Association (GSA), consisting of students from one or more departments who share common academic or professional interests. Each Academic Council elects representative(s) to participate in GSA Council meetings. The ratification of Academic Councils and Social Clubs is valid for the period from September to August of each academic year. As such, all councils and clubs must re-ratify annually to maintain active status. Ratification ensures that each council or club is officially recognized by the GSA, giving your group the ability to access funding, participate in governance, and represent your peers effectively.

In previous years, the application for ratification required applicants to download a form from our website, complete it in Word format, attach supporting documents, and submit via email. This year, the GSA President and VP Finance designed and implemented a web-based application system, allowing applicants to complete and submit their materials entirely online. This innovation enhances efficiency, reduces potential errors, and provides a more user-friendly experience for applicants while streamlining administrative review. A call for ratification was issued on 5 September 2025, with a submission deadline of 19 September 2025. As of the deadline, only 12 Academic Councils had submitted their applications. Some councils reached out and requested an extension, as they were in the process of selecting new executives. Consequently, the application period was extended to 5 October 2025.

## **3. Graduate Opportunities Workshop – A collaboration between GSA and USSU**

Each fall term, the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union (USSU) organizes Academic Awareness Week, an initiative focused on promoting academic integrity, highlighting research

opportunities, and supporting student success across campus. This year, the event took place from Monday, September 8 to Friday, September 12, 2025.

As part of Academic Awareness Week, the USSU partnered with the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) to host the Graduate Opportunities Workshop on Friday, September 12. The workshop provided undergraduate students with valuable insight into pursuing graduate studies at the University of Saskatchewan. It offered an overview of the graduate student experience, guidance on preparing strong applications, key considerations for prospective applicants, and information on available research and funding opportunities. The workshop was held at the North Concourse of the Place Riel Student Centre in a relaxed, drop-in format from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM.

The USSU coordinated the venue, logistics, and catering, while the GSA organized ten graduate student volunteers to serve as peer mentors during the workshop (Appendix 5). The peer mentors reported engaging and informative conversations with undergraduate participants. Feedback from the undergraduates indicated that they left with a clearer understanding of graduate school opportunities, expectations, and realities. Many students also reported feeling more confident after learning from the experiences shared by the graduate mentors.

#### **Meeting attended**

| <b>Date</b>           | <b>Meeting type</b>                        |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. September 4, 2025  | Student Executive and PEC                  |
| 2. September 4, 2025  | Graduate Programs Committee (GPC)          |
| 3. September 4, 2025  | Meeting with Rachel Cossette               |
| 4. September 15, 2025 | Graduate Programs Committee (GPC)          |
| 5. September 17, 2025 | Graduate Academic Affairs Committee (GAAC) |
| 6. September 17, 2025 | Academic Programs Committee (APC)          |
| 7. September 18, 2025 | Orientation for University Governance      |
| 8. September 25, 2025 | University Council Social                  |

Mandela Alema (him/he)  
Ph.D. Student, Department of Soil Science  
University of Saskatchewan  
Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs



**Dear Council Members,**

I am pleased to present my report for August 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.

### **GSA Graduate Voices**

The GSA Research Feature Series was officially launched this month as a new initiative to celebrate and share the diversity, talent, and experiences of our graduate student community. A dedicated webpage has been created on the GSA site to showcase graduate research and personal stories of life on campus. We are also planning to share it as an article in our GSA newsletter. This project aims to highlight inspiring work across departments, strengthen community connections, and promote visibility through opportunities such as university-wide digital monitors. So far, we have received three submissions from graduate students, and we continue to encourage broader participation to make this initiative a success.

### **Meeting with MLA**

This month, we met with the MLA to discuss advocacy priorities for graduate students. The meeting gave us an opportunity to share the main challenges faced by our community. We highlighted five top priorities, including childcare support, housing and rent concerns, and funding and scholarship issues. These discussions marked an important step in pushing forward our advocacy efforts and raising awareness of the needs of graduate students.

### **Meeting with the Vice President of Research**

We had a breakfast meeting with the Vice President of Research and discussed promoting graduate students' work within the broader community. This initiative will create opportunities for graduate students to connect with community members, gain valuable insights, and share the real-world impact of their research. At the same time, it will benefit the community by increasing awareness of the important research being conducted and fostering stronger connections between graduate scholarship and community needs. Ultimately, this initiative is envisioned as a bridge linking student research with the people and communities it serves. We also discussed

the upcoming Research Feature Series and addressed childcare issues as key areas of focus for supporting our graduate student community.

### **GSA Fall Orientation – Social Media Engagement**

This year's GSA Fall Orientation received an overwhelming response from graduate students, with many sharing positive feedback about the event. Students particularly enjoyed the new t-shirts, live BBQ, and other engaging activities that contributed to a welcoming atmosphere. We focused on maximizing social media engagement by creating short videos, posters, and live updates to highlight key moments and capture the spirit of the event.

### **Meetings Attended as Vice-President External Affairs**

August 21, 2025, GSA executives and CGPS team

August 26, 2025, GSA & USSU

August 27, 2025, GSA Executive & Vice President Research Team (Dr. Baljit Sing & Brit Tastat)

August 28, 2025, MLA Tajinder Grewal

September 3, 2025, GSA Executive Meeting

**Regards,**

Biraj Saha Aronya (he/him)

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

PhD Student, Department of Computer Science, University of Saskatchewan



Dear GSA Council,

I am writing to report on my activity since the beginning of my term on September 2nd.

**Introductory Meeting with Jennifer, Former Exec.**



On September 9th I met with Jennifer Amarualik-Yaremko, Former VP Indigenous, and we discussed resources for Indigenous graduate students and her former commitments on behalf of the GSA. The resources she gave me pertained to emergency funding and scholarships, Indigenous events for both undergraduate and graduate students on campus and contact information for other Indigenous coordinators.

### **Introductory Meeting with Aurora Wolfe, Indigenous Initiatives Coordinator at CGPS**

On September 10th, following the GSA Orientation, I met with Aurora Wolfe. She connected me to different Indigenous supports on campus and gave a briefing on her Cousins program. Through this meeting, I was directed to Kassidy Guy to begin working on a feature in the CGPS Indigenous Student Spotlight.

### **Resource Collection for Indigenous Graduate Students**

I have been working on creating a folder for Indigenous student resources that would be accessible to distribute by all other Executives. In addition, I have met with the coordinators for Cousins, USSU Food Centre, JSGS and BIRM to organize a potential “resource” fair for next semester. This event is still pre-emptive but it will include opportunities for non-Indigenous students to learn about our cultures in an accessible and convenient way.

### **Meetings and Events**

**September 2nd, 2025:** President’s Address at PAC

**September 3rd, 2025:** GSA Executive Meeting

**September 4th, 2025:** PEC Meeting

**September 9th, 2025:** Meeting with Jennifer Amarualik-Yaremko, Former VP Indigenous

**September 10th, 2025:** GSA Orientation Event

**September 10th, 2025:** Meeting with Aurora Wolfe, Indigenous Initiatives Coordinator at CGPS

**September 19th, 2025:** GSA Executive Meeting

**September 25th, 2025:** University Council Meeting

**Laila Valila** (*she/her*)

**VP Indigenous Engagement | MPA Student**

**Graduate Students' Association**



Appendix A

| Academic Council  | Name of Councilors and (alternates)   | June 2025 | July 2025 | Aug 2025 |
|---|---|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Biology Graduate Student Association  | Portia Mohrbutter<br>Ayicia Nabigon (Alternate)   | P         | P         | P        |
| Chemistry Course Council  | Marco Justino<br>Loza Taghavi (Alternate)<br>Ozra   | A         | A         | A        |
| College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Biochemistry, microbiology & Immunology | Andy Kim - Councilor<br>Shirley Yu - Councilor<br>Samiul Chowdhury - Councilor<br>Sara Dalkilic - Councilor<br>Rylan Bahrey (Alternate)<br>Adrielle Souza (Alternate) | A         | A         | A        |
| Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)  | Thulani Hewavithana<br>Norah Ridley<br>Mary Fidelma Ndupu<br>Mumtahina Ahmed (Alternate)  | P         | P         | P        |
| Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biological                              | Sumana Majumder<br>Emmanuel Ezechinyelu (Alternate)   | P         | A         | A        |
| Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biomedical                              | Danyil Dmytriiev<br>Bashu Gautam (Alternate)  | P         | P         | A        |
| Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Chemical                                | Parvaneh Koranian<br>Sara Nath (Alternate)  | A         | A         | A        |
| Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Civil, Geological & Environmental       | Anukul Basnet<br>Bashu Gautam (Alternate)   | A         | A         | A        |

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Electrical & Computer | Deepa Upadhyaya Subedi<br>Bashu Gautam (Alternate)  | A | P | A |
| Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Mechanical            | Kiranbir Kaur<br>Faizan Ansari (Alternate)  | P | A | A |
| English Course Council  | Lydie Hua<br>Gwen Rose (Alternate)  | A | A | A |
| Geography & Planning Graduate Council                                 | Emily Ireland<br>Prakash Sapkota (Alternate)  | P | P | A |
| Kinesiology Graduate Student Council                                  | Matthew Chapelski<br>Karissa Johnson (Alternate)  | P | P | P |
| Nursing Graduate Student Association (NGSA)                           | Jordan Sherstobitoff<br>Ewurabena Sacky-Forson<br>Hayen Chei Luri (Alternate)<br>Stella Aluko (Alternate)<br>Kristen Witter (Alternate) | P | A | A |
| Plant Science   | Luke Dojack<br>(Rodensky Teramene)  | P | P | P |
| Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS)                               | Patrick Janzen-Brown<br>Taya Stang (Alternate)  | P | P | A |
| SENSSA  | Jethro Opara<br>Chelsea Ohenewaa Nyarko<br>(Alternate)  | A | P | A |
| School of Public Health (SPHSA)                                       | Wasim Al-Khanati<br>Omar Bardouh<br>Theresa Agbeyei<br>Isfar Chowdhry (Alternate)   | P | P | A |
| Sociology GSA   | Meaghan Boily<br>Leah PHouseman (Alternate)   | P | P | A |

|  |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Soil Science Graduate Student Association                            | Kelsey Acton<br>Andrea Cline<br>Chloe Canning (Alternate)<br>Levi Lundell | P | P | A |
| Animal and Poultry Science GSA                                       | Megan Dubois<br>Gus Halibert (Alternate)                                  | A | P | A |
| Toxicology Graduate Student Association (TGSA) Academic Councilor    | Chantel De Lange<br>Summer Selinger (Alternate)                           | P | A | A |
| History Graduate Student Association                                 | Catlin M. Woloschuk   | A | A | A |
| Physics & Engineering Physics (PEGASUS)                              | Jeisson A. Vanegas Carranza<br>Nicholas Simonson                          | P | A | A |
| Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy Student Association | Harjot Tur-harjot<br>Bazal Khalid (Alternate)                             | A | A | A |

| Executive member                      | Name of executive member | June 2025 | July 2025 | August 2025 |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Exec. President                       | Palash Roy               | -         | -         | P           |
| Exec. VP Finance and Operations       | Lindsay Carlson          | P         | P         | A           |
| Exec. VP Academic and Student Affairs | Mandela Alema            | P         | P         | P           |
| Exec. VP External Affairs             | Biraj Saha               | P         | P         | A           |
| Exec. VP Indigenous Engagement        | -                        | -         | -         | -           |

Appendix B

a. Academic Councils

|   |  | Councilors   | Executive team  |
|---|--|--|---|
| 1 | Biology Graduate Students' Association                       | Councilor- Portia Mohrbutter<br>Alternate- Laura Dyson                       |   |
| 2 | Chemistry Course Council                                     | Councilor- Shreya Tiwary<br>Alternate- Segun Liyansan                        | Marco A. Justino - President, Chair<br>Shreya Tiwary - VP, External operations<br>Mario Proulx - VP, Internal operations<br>Amanda Ferrer - VP, Communications<br>Negin Neissari - VP, Event coordinator<br>Jaydeep Kumar - VP, Finance   |
| 3 | History Graduate Student Association                         | Councilor- Jessy Lee Saas<br>Alternate- Julia-Rose Miller                    | 1. Julia-Rose Miller - Chair -<br>2. Will Rowe - Vice-Chair -<br>3. Joseph Mays - Department Rep -<br>4. Erica Riley - Social Media<br>Coordinator 5. Jessy Lee Saas - GSA<br>Rep<br>6. Jessica Jack - Member at Large -<br>7. Harris Ford - Member at Large -<br>8. Ainsley Jackson - Member at Large -<br>9. Rhianne Bhillard - Member at Large -<br>10. Jacob Poley - Member at Large -<br>11. Jael Basarbra - Member at Large - |
| 4 | Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)                     | Councilor- Md Shamimur Rahman<br>Alternate- Mary-fidelma Chioma Ndupu (Mary) |   |
| 5 | School of environment and Sustainability Student Association | Councilor 1- Nelly Ataawomba Afuubi<br>Councilor 2- Javed Chowdhury          |   |

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|           |  | Alternate 1- Jethro Opara<br>Alternate 2- Anas Ansari  |   |
| <b>6</b>  | Education Graduate Students Association (EGSA)   | Councilor - Kiegan Lloyd<br>Alternate - Rumpa Banik  | Kiegan Lloyd- Vice-President Academic & Student Affairs<br>Rumpa Banik- President<br>Shaimaa Mohammed Khodiry Abdelgalil- Secretary<br>Fanwei Yang- Treasurer<br>Chengcheng Quan- Social Media Director   |
| <b>7</b>  | Geography and Planning Graduate Student Council (GEPL)   | Councilor- Emily Ireland<br>Alternate- Prakash Sapkota   |   |
| <b>8</b>  | College of Kinesiology Graduate Society  | Councilor- Sunny Bui<br>Alternate- Karissa Johnson   |   |
| <b>9</b>  | Physics and Engineering Physics Graduate Association of Students at University of Saskatchewan (PEGASUS) | Councilor- Jeisson Vanegas<br>Alternate- Mona Zolghadrshojaee  | Jeisson Vanegas- Chair<br>Mona Zolghadrshojaee- Vice Chair<br>William Davis- Treasurer  |
| <b>10</b> | Plant Science Graduate Students' Association (PSGSA)   | Councilor 1- Luke Dojack<br>Councilor 2- Giri Raj Paudel<br>Alternate 1- Makenna Mitchell<br>Alternate 2- Sachintha Attanayake | President - Daphnée Ferland<br>Vice President - Krishan Shah<br>Treasurer - Ethan Kish<br>Secretary - Daniela Moraes<br>Faculty Liaison - Anirup Sengupta<br>Social Coordinators - Makenna Mitchell;<br>Taylor de Jong<br>Industry Liaison - Marika van den Berg<br>Social Media Manager - Sachintha Attanayake |
| <b>11</b> | Sociology Graduate Students Association  | Councilor- Meaghan Boily<br>Alternate- Leah Houseman   |   |

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| <b>12</b> | Soil Science Graduate Students Association                | Councilor- Nemat Dindarloo<br>Alternate- Levi Lundell   | Levi Lundell - President & VP Academic<br>Nemat Dindarloo - VP External<br>Kelsey Acton - VP Operations<br>Chloe Canning - VP Finance<br>Ella Hydromako - VP Social |
| <b>13</b> | Animal and Poultry Science Graduate Students' Association | Councilor- Megan Dubois<br>Alternate- Beatriz Montenegro  | Megan Dubois - President<br>Beatriz Montenegro - Vice President<br>Gus Halibert - Treasurer<br>Cassidy Ross - Secretary   |
| <b>14</b> | Nursing Graduate Students Association                     | Councilor- Kirsten Witter<br>Councilor- Aja Tost  |   |
| <b>15</b> | College of Medicine Graduate Student Society (CMGSS)      | Councilor 1- Taylor Dzikowski – (Health Sciences)<br>Councilor 2- Griffin Lehnert - Biochemistry, Microbiology, and Immunology<br>Councilor 3- Christopher Chivers - Anatomy, Physiology, and Pharmacology<br>Councilor 4- Hetvi Darji - Community Health and Epidemiology<br>Alternate 1- Parnaz Soori - Health Sciences<br>Alternate 2- Rylan Bahrey - Biochemistry, Microbiology, and Immunology<br>Alternate 3- Amber Jurke - Anatomy, Physiology, and Pharmacology<br>Alternate 4- Lauren Hinz - Community Health and Epidemiology |   |
| <b>16</b> | Engineering Graduate Community Council                    | Councilor 1- Danyil Dmytriiev<br>Councilor 2-Anukul Basnet<br>Alternate- Bashu Gautam   |   |

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| 17 | English Course Council                                    | Councilor- Hamid Yari<br>Alternate- Jasmine Redford   |   |
| 18 | The School of Public Health Students' Association (SPHSA) | Councilor 1- Motajo Modupeoluwa Olakun<br>Councilor 2-Angie Caresse Uy<br>Alternate- Sun Thai | President – Nick Neudorf<br>Vice President – Motajo Modupeoluwa Olakun<br>Finance Officer – MD Faisal Kabir Rozars<br>External Officer – Chiazam Pearl Ugorji<br>Academic Officer – Angelica (Angie) Caresse Uy<br>Online Officer – Thien An (Sun) Thai<br>Student Life Officer – Akash Ramoo<br>Communications Officer – Jai Roy |
| 19 | Toxicology Graduate Student Association                   | Councilor- Chantel De Lange<br>Alternate- Catherine Roberts                                   |   |

#### **b. Social Clubs**

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| 1 | Bangladeshi Students' Association at the University of Saskatchewan (BSAUS) | President – Mobassir Hossain Irteza<br>Vice President – Administration / General Secretary – Ferdous Wahid Arnob<br>Vice President – Finance – Farzana Haque Reeti<br>Vice President – Events – Emon Rahman<br>Vice President – Culture – Rayantika Das<br>Vice President – Sports – Hridoy Deb<br>Vice President – Communication – Md Shahed<br>Vice President – Youth Engagement – Afifa Rahat Yamim<br>Vice President – Academics – Md Faisal Kabir Rozars |
| 2 | Ukrainian Students' Research Association                                    | Danyil Dmytriiev – President  |
| 3 | Bridges   | Easton Martens, President,  |



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|   |   | Theresah Andoh, VP/Treasurer,<br>Jan Gallardo, VP Secretary,<br>Enoch Yang, VP, (UNDERGRAD)   |
| 4 | Graduate Student Parents' Association                                       | Anastasiia Nykonenko - President<br>Ilsa Griebel - Vice-President<br>Adriana Caswell - Event Coordinator  |
| 5 | University of Saskatchewan Working for Inclusivity in Chemistry (USask-WIC) | President: Negin Neissari<br>Vice President: Shreya Tiwary<br>Secretary: Mariam Mir<br>Treasurer: Tahira Hasan<br>Communication and Outreach Coordinator: Shreya Tiwary<br>Event Coordinator: Farah Mustafa<br>Industrial Liaison and Seminar Coordinator: Aiminayanate Pepple<br>Undergraduate Student Representative: Ella Sikora |
| 6 | Nepalese Students' Association UofS   | Nischal Lamichhane, President<br>Giri Raj Paudel, VP Operations<br>Yugesh Paudel, VP Finance<br>Kul P. Simkhada, VP Public Relations<br>Rupesh Acharya, VP Event Management<br>Nisha Adhikari, VP Student Affairs<br>Binod Sapkota, VP Sports,  |
| 7 | Iranian Game Club   | Amirreza Mahmoudi (GRAD) - President<br>Omid Yaghoobian (GRAD) - Treasurer<br>Asma Ghorbani (GRAD) - Vice President   |
| 8 | University of Saskatchewan (USASK) Student Branch of ASHRAE                 | Chase Hall, President<br>Golnoosh Morshedi, Vice President<br>Sahas Mittal, Student Affairs   |

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|    |  | Sajad Motaei, Treasurer  |
| 9  | Physical Therapy Students' Society   | Taylor Unrath Co-President;<br>Brendan Weeks Co-President;<br>Secretary; Valerie Jackson<br>Mathew Petrishen : Treasurer<br>Class Representative; Dade Meinert<br>Class Representative: Taylor Leonhardt |
| 10 | Biochemistry, Microbiology, and Immunology Graduate Student Association (BMIGSA) | Anna Martens-Koop , co-president<br>Marin Habbick, co-president<br>Harmony Grainger, vice-president  |
| 11 | Public Health Newsletter   | Monisha Mohan - President<br>Jasheen Ghuman - Vice President<br>Minha Batool - Editor-in-Chief<br>Wasim Al-Khanati - Executive   |
| 12 | WildEcol   | Cassidy Waldrep: President<br>Kelsie Huss: Vice president<br>Taylor Volappi: Treasuer<br>Amy Leislar: Treasuer<br>Maycie McWillie<br>Ifrah Abdirizak   |

**c. Standing committees.**

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| 1 | <b>Bursary Committee</b>                       | Balogh, Denise<br>Sharpe, Jessica<br>Bakhite Adam, Abdel Elfatah<br>Mary-fidelma Chioma Ndupu- Councilor |
| 2 | <b>Budget and Finance Committee</b>            | Jahin, Shadman<br>Pham, James<br>Nuruzzaman, Md<br>Baafi, Eric   |
| 3 | <b>Elections and Referenda Committee</b>       | De Leon, Jeroen Jon<br>Hernberg, Ethan<br>Nyazika, Ingrid<br>Darji, Hetvi – Councilor                    |
| 4 | <b>Code of Ethics and Discipline Committee</b> | Amarualik-Yaremko, Jen<br>Hayton, Susan<br>Oliver, Morgan<br>Islam, Muhaimin                             |
| 5 | <b>Sustainability Committee</b>                | Mustafa, Funmilola<br>Zepick, Emily<br>Isai, Rutik<br>Asa'a Ngwabebho, Nestor SR                         |
| 6 | <b>Diversity Committee</b>                     | Amanlou, Arash<br>Patel, Kaushal Ashvinkumar<br>Tabatabaeian, Farnoosh<br>Pita Chopin, Adriana           |

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| 7 | <b>Awards Committee</b> | Buckles-Whittle, Lily<br>Meyer, Amy<br>Nwobodo, Maureen Amuche<br>Dwumah Manu, Blessing |
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