



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

March 31st, 2021
Virtual Meeting
5:30 pm

University of Guelph Graduate Students' Association
UC Level 5 | gsa@uoguelph.ca | 519.824.4120 Ext. 56685 & 53314
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Agenda

Wednesday, March 31, 2021: 5:30 p.m.

Quorum 100 Votes – Electronic proxies due 12:00 p.m. on March 31, 2021

5:30 p.m. Call to Order: Victoria Bali, Chair

Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the University of Guelph resides on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We recognize the significance of the Dish with One Spoon Covenant to this land and offer our respect to our Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Métis neighbours as we strive to strengthen our relationships with them.

Today, this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and acknowledging them reminds us of our important connection to this land where we learn and work.

Opening Remarks and Meeting Format – Chair, Victoria Bali

5:35 p.m. Approval of Agenda

MOTION #1: B.I.R.T. the AGM Agenda for March 31, 2021, be approved as presented.

5:40 p.m. Auditor/Accountant

MOTION #2: B.I.R.T. the Chartered Accounting firm of Robinson Lott & Brohman, be ratified for the fiscal year May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2022.

5:50 p.m. Roundtable/Committee Reports

GSA General Directors

6:10 p.m. Executive/Staff Reports

President: Nicole Berardi – gsapres@uoguelph.ca

- Executive Election Results
- Annual Report Presentation

VP Internal: Mohsen Yoosefzadeh Najafabadi - gsavpint@uoguelph.ca

- GSA Constitution & By-Laws Presentation



MOTION #3: B.I.R.T. the Amendments to the Graduate Students' Association Constitution & By-Laws be accepted as presented.

- Annual Report Presentation
- **V.P. Finance: Akshay Chadha – gsavpfin@uoguelph.ca**
- W/21 update and S/21 Budget Presentation

MOTION #4: B.I.R.T. the GSA S/21 Working Budget be approved as presented.

- Health Plan Referendum Results
- Annual Report Presentation
- **V.P. External: Britta McBride – gsavpext@uoguelph.ca**
- Annual Report Presentation

GSA Activities & Communications Co-ordinator: William Kramer – gsaact@uoguelph.ca

- Annual Report Presentation/Event Summary

GSA Office Manager: Daria Ruginis – gsa@uoguelph.ca

- Office Operations

7:10 Question Period/Open Forum

7:20 Miscellaneous/Business Arising

7:30 Prizes & Adjournment

Proxy forms must be submitted via the online form no later than 12:00 p.m. March 31, 2021



Executive & Staff Reports

President Report – Nicole Berardi

Hello General Directors and GSA Members,

Before I begin my report, I first have some very sad news to share with you all. Bonnie Runge, our former Grad Lounge Manager passed away on February 28th, 2021. I am sure many of you are familiar with Bonnie and recognize what a great loss this is. Bonnie worked with the GSA for a total of 24 years, first from 1988-2007 and again beginning in 2015 until she chose to step away from her role in the lounge in September 2020. All who visited the lounge during Bonnie's time with us would have been greeted with a smile and so much enthusiasm and hospitality. We want to formally acknowledge Bonnie's huge contribution to the GSA over the years and more specifically the impact that she had on the lounge, and the graduate student experience as a whole. It is hard to imagine the lounge without Bonnie being there as the Grad Lounge Manager. I personally have had the privilege of working closely with Bonnie and know how great of an impact she has had on graduate students and on me personally. It was almost a year ago that I found out I'd be continuing on the GSA Exec but in the role of President instead, and I remember talking with Bonnie about how excited we were to work together on improvements in the lounge - Bonnie was always trying to make improvements and enhance graduate student life. I am extremely saddened and shocked at the news of Bonnie's passing. The GSA will be working with Bonnie's family on a way that we can honour and celebrate Bonnie's life and her lasting impact on graduate student life at the University of Guelph. We hope to dedicate a space in the lounge to Bonnie with a commemorative plaque.

I also want to take the time to remind everyone of student wellness and counselling services on campus. Please take the time you need to process this information and reach out to [student wellness](#) if you need support.

2020-2021 Report

I want to start off by saying that it has been a pleasure to serve as the GSA President and CEO for the 2020-2021 term and I sincerely appreciate being given this opportunity. The 2020-2021 term began during the beginning stages of the pandemic and brought on many challenges that the GSA had not seen previously. We have nearly completed our term with very little in person interaction and have had to adapt quickly to the sudden change to the online environment. I also want to take a moment to acknowledge the tremendous impacts that this last year has had on graduate student mental health, research progress and more. At the beginning of our terms, I don't think any of us would have expected that we would still be dealing with the pandemic and this new way of life. I want everyone to take a moment and reflect on all that we have been through over the last year – I know it was not easy, and I commend each of you for doing your best and getting through this last year. I hope that life will return to a new 'new normal' soon. In the meantime, I want to again mention that there are many supports available through [student wellness](#) and I encourage you to utilize them.



At the beginning of my term as GSA President, the main goal initially was focused on navigating the pandemic and learning what kinds of support graduate students needed. We started out the term by distributing a survey to graduate students to get a better idea of the impacts the covid-19 pandemic was having on graduate students and to get a better sense of what supports were lacking. In the early days of the 2020-2021 term, the GSA Executive spent a tremendous amount of time liaising with University Administration to communicate the struggles, concerns and needs of graduate students as a result of the pandemic. We appreciate the input that we received from all graduate students as it was invaluable in guiding those early conversations. I do also want to take a moment to mention that thanks to Britta, GSA VP External, a second survey has been released by the GSA to gather information on the impacts of the pandemic now that we have been going through it for over a year.

The 2020-2021 term has been a big year of transition at the GSA, we transitioned to an entirely online environment and learned to run all of our committee meetings, events and board meetings online. Becoming a 'virtual GSA' is not the only major transition of this term – we also experienced a major transition in the role of GSA Office Manager. Our former GSA Office Manager, Erin Angus, retired in August 2020 after working for the GSA for nearly 32 years. To say that Erin has had a tremendous impact on the GSA and graduate student life alike, would be an understatement. I want to thank Erin once again on behalf of graduate students for her many years of service to graduate students at the University of Guelph. Having worked closely with Erin over the last few years, I want to thank her personally for all of her guidance, and support over the years. She has truly helped me in so many ways and for that, I cannot thank her enough. Thank you Erin, from the bottom of my heart, for everything you have done to serve graduate students for the past 32 years.

Erin's retirement left big shoes to fill for the Office Manager position. Early in our term the Executive was tasked with interviewing for the position and hiring Erin's replacement. Daria began her role as Office Manager at the end of August. I am pleased to say that Daria has risen to the occasion and adjusted to the role well despite having to navigate a new job in the midst of the pandemic. I want to thank Daria for all of her hard work this year in supporting the GSA Executive, Board of Directors and graduate students at large. Daria – your hard work, organization, and ability to stay two steps ahead of our needs has eased the transition to a new GSA Office Manager more than you know.

Aside from the work to address graduate student needs as a result of the pandemic, and hiring a new GSA Office Manager, my main goal for my term as GSA President was to implement meaningful changes in the graduate student spaces on campus. It is difficult to summarize all of the work we have done this year, so I am choosing to focus on a few major things, instead – please know there is so much more that goes on behind the scenes!



Updates to Mental Health Space

The GSA has donated space to host a counsellor from Student Wellness to provide confidential graduate student counselling since 2017. The GSA space that was being used for counselling however, did not provide a good atmosphere for counselling. I applied for a Student Life Enhancement Fund (SLEF) grant for the Fall 2020 and the GSA was successful in securing \$4000 to go towards upgrades to the space that will be donated for use by counselling services. To the right is a photo of the space. We are hopeful that when it is safe to return to campus, the space will aid in supporting graduate student mental health.



Updates to the Grad Lounge

With the shutdown of the Grad Lounge due to the pandemic, I hoped we would be able to take advantage of the downtime to provide some much-needed improvements that better supported the needs of graduate students. The goal has been to completely renovate the space and provide a place for graduate students to socialize, relax, and gather in when we are able to safely return to campus. The improvements that will be made in the lounge are expected to provide a positive impact on graduate student life for years to come. In the Fall 2020 semester, we were successful in applying for another SLEF grant to go towards the cost of painting the lounge. The GSA received \$3,500 to go towards this initiative and began planning the full renovation (including painting, in the fall semester). In the winter semester, I secured another \$10,000 of SLEF funding to go towards replacing the flooring in the lounge which allowed us to address safety and accessibility concerns. I also approached the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (OGPS) to gain their support on this initiative. OGPS has contributed \$20,000 to go towards this project. I want to take a moment to express my gratitude to both the SLEF and OGPS for their contributions to this project – it means a lot that multiple areas of the University recognize the need and importance of graduate student space. The remainder of the project will be funding using GSA reserves with the rationale being that this is a great way to give back to graduate students in a way that everyone can enjoy. We also hope that the space will be able to strengthen a sense of community among graduate students, post pandemic. We expect the work to be completed mid-summer.

The GSA has also entered into an operational partnership with UC Services, in which UC Services will provide the day-to-day operations of the lounge with input from the GSA Executive. I want to recognize UC Services and in particular, Mike Calvert, for all of his help in planning and coordinating renovations, working with us on a partnership and all of the invaluable advice he has provided us throughout my term.

We look forward to the day when we are able to return safely to campus for us all to enjoy the space and relax after living through the pandemic.

Thank you



Last, but certainly not least, I want to take the time to thank everyone that has contributed to the work we have accomplished at the GSA this term. A huge thank you to the GSA 2020-2021 Executive team, Mohsen Yoosefzadeh Najafabadi, Akshay Chadha, and Britta McBride – the pandemic has made this a challenging and demanding year and I appreciate all of the hard work each of you have put in, more than you know! To our GSA Staff team, Daria Ruginis, Vicky Bali, Drew Anderson, Morgan Rees and William Kramer - thank you for your hard work, it is really is what keeps the GSA going. To the former GSA Staff that we began this term with, Erin Angus, Bonnie Runge and Kati Doma, you each have had an amazing and lasting impact on the GSA and for that I thank each of you deeply. To the Board of Directors – without each of you, the GSA would not have the presence on University Committees that we do, your presence on these committees and work to advocate for all graduate students makes the GSA what it is. Thank you to everyone, it has been an honour to represent graduate students as the GSA President this year, it has truly been some of the most rewarding work I have ever done.

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions, comments or concerns.

Thanks,

Nicole

Nicole Berardi
GSA President
gsapres@uoguelph.ca



VP Internal Report – Mohsen Yoosefzadeh Najafabadi

“The first day of spring is one thing, and the first spring day is another. The difference between them is sometimes as great as a month.”

— Henry Van Dyke, Fisherman’s Luck

Dear General Directors,

I hope your semester is wrapping up well!

It was a nice experience serving as the GSA VP Internal for the past academic year and have had the opportunity to work the GSA Board Members. Now, I would like to thanks all of you; your dedication and hard work has greatly benefited executives and helped us to make decisions and further advocate on behalf of all graduate students. I Remember that sometimes I sent emails during weekend and you kindly responded to my emails. It was amazing and I am so grateful to work with you all. Here also I would like to thanks our fantastic Executive, Daria, William, Vicky, and Morgan for their help and support before, during, after the board meeting.

This year can be known as one of the challenges years for GSA specially in election due to COVID situation providing limit opportunity for advertising because of social distancing. However, I am so proud to see that we have around 54 general directors at boards from 31 departments/communities. Also, I had a chance to call the motion of opening two available seats for black graduate students at GSA board and it was successfully passed on the December board meeting. I set up a mandatory Orientation session for returning and new General Directors in the Fall semester, and new General Directors only in the Winter semester to familiarize/remind our Board members of GSA procedures, expectations and updates. The expansion of our Board has increased the graduate student presence around on 44 University committees campus-wide which has resulted in positive feedback from University administration. With such a large Board, we are able to assign alternate committee members where applicable in an effort to ensure graduate students are represented at every meeting.

One of the most important tasks as a VP Internal is to be a bridge between graduate students and university administrative. Therefore, most of my efforts was to improve communication between the GSA and graduate students across campus to ensure all graduate students are receiving the same information and have equal opportunities.

Tree Memorial Ceremony

The Central Student Association (CSA) and the Graduate Student Association host a Student Memorial Tree Dedication in September of every year to recognize students who passed away in the previous academic year (May 1st – April 30th) at the University of Guelph.



Due to the covid situation, we decided to postpone this event to the coming year. The letters were mailed to the destinations. However, due to mailing restrictions in some countries, we were unable to send mail to their location. Therefore, we sent an Email as well to them.

By-Laws & Constitution Amendments

The GSA By-Laws Committee has reviewed and made the suggested changes below. I would like to say a huge thank you to the By-Laws Committee, Akshay Chadha, Alireza Zolfaghari, Azin Sadat, Aiman Khaleel, and Scott Sammons for helping with all of the amendments. There were some sections needed to be changed based on the COVID situation such as the limited time for participating in board meeting remotely. Also, we changed the honoraria section properly. All Executive sections have been updated to more accurately represent their roles including committees, social media and Board management.

Academic Policies & Procedures Working Group

The Academic Policies & Procedures Committee working group met several time during the 2020-2021 terms and the major subjects that were discussed are as follows:

- Serving Scholars program.
- Review of a policy that was started last year (GPA recalculation).
- Policy on Pass/Fail Grading Option.
- Policy on 20% Feedback.
- Policy on Maximum Weight of Final Exam.
- Policy on Maximum Weight of Single Course Component.
- Policy on an Expanded Definition of Academic Consideration.
- Guidelines for Accommodation.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the Board over the past year and would like to thank you for your continuous work to help us communicate with graduate students across campus and representing graduate students on GSA and University committees. Your active involvement on the Board and these Committees has truly benefited the graduate student experience at the University and we are extremely grateful. It has been a pleasure to work with this Executive Committee over the past year, all of whom are extremely hard working and dedicated to improving the graduate student experience at the University of Guelph.

Thanks for your attention, and all the best for the rest of March!

Mohsen

Mohsen Yoosefzadeh Najafabadi

GSA VP Internal

gsavpint@uoguelph.ca



VP Finance Report – Akshay Chadha

Dear Board of Directors and GSA Members,

I am humbly thankful to all the graduate students, board of directors, previous and current executive members for your continuous support. As VP Finance, I feel privileged to present you the annual report of my term. During this term, I worked on the ongoing objectives set by previous VP Finance and advocated for graduate students facing unique challenges during the uncertain times.

COVID-19 outbreak impacted all of us and limited our ability to schedule in-person academic activities and board meetings. I hope that the vaccination program will be successfully completed soon. I understand that this was a challenging time for all grad students and during such times I tried my best to prepare and present a budget with hope in each semester, oversee appropriate usage of GSA funds, and attend committee meetings where finances were discussed. Please find the major highlights from the committee meetings below:

1. Compulsory Fees Committee

The committee met several times during the year, and we had a discussion around a number of issues surrounding the compulsory fees. Students choice initiative and its impact regarding the legal challenge were considered. We are waiting on an update from the courts in coming days. There were no changes for the compulsory fees in Winter 2021 semester. The committee also discussed about referendum and its effect on the compulsory fee. It was notified that the referendum results should be submitted to the office of the Vice-Provost Student Affairs by February 19th, 2021 so that the fees results can be charted and submitted for review. The committee also discussed about SLEF Allocations discussions updates about disbursing a \$14,000 amount to College Royal, funding updates on SLEF allocations, increase in consumer price index (CPI) for this year.

2. Student Health and Dental Plan Committee

The committee met several times during the year and had a discussion around a number of issues surrounding the health and dental plan benefits. The committee voted to use funds from the reserve to increase psychological benefits available on our health plan at no cost to students. Committee also voted to use funds from the huge reserve for supporting enhanced dental plan benefits at no increased cost to students. This was a great win for students as they received the value for the funds invested as dental plan fees.

Due to pandemic, effective from September 1, 2020, all eligible claims made outside Canada (for international students studying in their home country) were reimbursed as per the terms of our health and dental plan. The provision was extended for the 2020-2021 policy year. International students currently registered on the plan's GroupNet would receive reimbursement directly into their Canadian bank account. Those who are not registered with GroupNet must retain receipts and submit when they return to Canada. Exceptions for students who do not have a Canadian bank account and will not be returning to Canada after the policy



year ends (August 31, 2021) will be considered on a case by case basis through the Concern Form process managed through the CSA and GSA.

The committee phrased and approved the Referendum preamble and question about making health plan optional. Joint referendum was held, the referendum failed for grad students and the joint also referendum failed as the required votes was not met. The results were announced to grad students using newsletter and our social media platforms. The health and dental plan fee were updated by to cost of living index for the coming year.

3. Student Budget Committee

The committee met and discussed updates about university's operating budget, vision on strategic enrolment including optimum recruitment, retention, and attainment of students. The committee was also updated about 2020-21 operations and ancillary budget due to COVID-19 and miscellaneous other updates were discussed.

4. Late Appeals Committee

The committee met and discussed several late fee applications and during this pandemic we took a considerate approach for many late fee applications.

5. GSA Finance Committee

As VP Finance, I chair the Finance committee. Due to COVID-19 outbreak the travel grants were suspended. The committee approved the proposed budget for Summer-2021 and running budget for Winter-2021. The committee also increased the honorarium for GSA team members. The committee decided to brainstorm ideas for supporting grad students during the pandemic in form of increased travel grant for the 2021-2022 term. Increasing financial supports to the Guelph Student FoodBank, PDR's, childcare bursaries and looking for other proposed avenues for spending the grad money judiciously was introduced. Due to travel grants restrictions, alternate bursaries to support grad students in attending conference and symposiums might be explored in near future.

The committee decided to update the GSA reserves to correct figures by balancing out the money from grad lounge account. The COVID-19 outbreak has impacted all of us and limited our ability to schedule in-person board meetings, to appreciate the hard work put by general directors in board meeting since the start of the online board meetings last year, the committee decided to send a \$30 amazon gift card to each of the board of the directors and GSA team members.

6. GSA The Fifth Sustainability Committee

As a committee we discussed about upgrading the point of sales system, partnership with UC, paint, choice of wall colors, floor style and miscellaneous discussion items. The budget for Grad Lounge renovations were approved and we hope that the renovations will make the 5th a go to spot for everyone.

7. Suppliers Code of Ethical Conduct Advisory Committee Working Group

The advisory committee looked into policies and procedures for amendment to widen its scope. A list of suppliers was requested to identify the list of suppliers with concerns. In a recent



committee meeting, we discussed some potential questions that committee would like to discuss with the VP Finance.

8. Student Leaders and Admin Meetings (SLAM) Meetings

As a member of this committee, I had a chance to participate in discussions related to a large number of items including cyber security, computing and communication services, hospitality services, student wellness, campus community police, recreational activities and athletics building, student experience regarding the Gryphon app, Guelph center for urban organic farming, sexual violence training and Covid-19 related updates. The committee was also updated about the unfortunate outbreak at east residence. Tightened health and safety measures were followed this incident and fortunately we have a vaccination drive running at UC now.

9. SLEF

As a member of this committee, I had a chance to review different SLEF applications and along with that I participated in discussion on different applications.

10. Grad By-laws and Constitution Committee

The committee discussed plausible corrections and additions to the bylaws like making the language of bylaws more indicative of current COVID-19 situation, correction in the honorarium of CRO along with several other updates.

11. FAQ items:

I designed the tentative format of GSA FAQ webpage. As per feedback of our web developer, there were some changes in the design of the proposed webpage. The main goal of implementing FAQ webpage is to make it a single spot web destination to answer widest range of general queries of graduate students. It was discussed that a google analytics for measuring the usefulness of each question can be supported by the backend facilities available from university website without making it complex and time consuming for the developer.

12. Miscellaneous updates

- a. I participated in GSA employee payroll discussion.
- b. Making financial recommendations to ACC and actively participated in prize distribution for activities organized by GSA.
- c. Approval of donation to food bank.
- d. Meeting with Dr. Ben Bradshaw, AVP Graduate Studies: we had discussion around various issues related to grad studies and Covid-19 Updates.
- e. As a proud GSA member, we took a stand against derogatory practices by making a statement in our monthly newsletter. Supported a new seat for representing people of color in GSA to make GSA board more inclusive.
- f. Participated in CSA-GSA meetings to network and bridge the gaps.
- g. Shortlisting candidates for office manager position, meeting with HR to discuss hiring format.
- h. Hiring of ACC.
- i. Participated in Gender Diversity and Inclusive Practices Training.
- j. Overseeing and understanding the audit report.



- k. Overseeing and approving financial transactions for GSA.
- l. Participated in grad orientation welcome chat to provide an overview about the Graduate Students Association.
- m. Considering budget for two types of mugs.

Thank you so much for reading the report patiently. With a hope of returning to normalcy soon, GSA should invest more financial resources in areas which will fulfill the financial needs of grad students and increase the student experience. Kindly feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

As always, I look forward to hear more from all the general directors, board members and grad students for your feedback. Kindly don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Most importantly Stay safe & stay healthy!!!

Akshay Chadha

GSA VP Finance, GSA

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VP External Report – Britta McBride

Happy March!

Welcome to the newly elected GSA executive!

I would first like to say how sad I am to hear of the recent passing of our former Grad Lounge Manager, Bonnie Runge. I would like to express my condolences to all who worked with her and knew her, and to remind everyone to take space to process this news. Counselling Services are available through Student Wellness Services, 519-824-4120, ext. 53244.

It's that time of the term where we summarize the happenings in our portfolios over the elected term. This has been an interesting year. This executive team was elected at the end of February 2020, right before the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. Given the challenges and constraints that we encountered in an unusual situation, I'm proud of what we were able to accomplish as a team.

Here is a summary of my portfolio this year:

- **Student Transit**

Covid-19 led to free service on Guelph Transit Buses shortly after the beginning of my term. The Student-Card tap program was in a pilot phase and was shelved due to the circumstances we found ourselves in.

I strongly advocated for safety measures for passengers using transit and made sure that safety was a high priority for the committee.

Due to the bus service becoming free in March 2020, the committee arranged for a partial refund of the W20 U-Pass cost for students.

In S20, F20, and W21, the committee petitioned Guelph City Council to temporarily suspend the U-Pass contract, so that students (many of whom did not return to Guelph) would not be burdened with a mandatory fee for a service that they may not be using.

The committee worked with Guelph Transit to create a special fare category for Post-Secondary students, as well as changing the bylaws to allow students to qualify for the affordable bus pass.

My personal project, organizing a Guelph-Kitchener/Waterloo charter-bus contract with Guelph Transit that would shuttle students between the Universities of Guelph and Waterloo, and Wilfrid Laurier University, was unfortunately shelved due to the pandemic. I hope future VP Externals continue with this program in the future.

The next VP External will be faced with negotiating a new U-pass contract and overseeing a referendum to this end.

- **Homecoming Committee**



Due to Covid, the committee did not meet at all in 2020. No in-person homecoming activities took place.

I will attend my first homecoming committee meeting at the end of March 2021.

- **Experiential Learning Advisory Committee**

I began sitting on this committee in November of 2020. So far, we have reviewed criteria for experiential learning activities and watched presentations of different proposed experiential learning initiatives planned by committee members.

- **Food Security Working Group**

This group was formed specifically to tackle food insecurity among students caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. It ran from May to September 2020. The group worked with the University of Guelph hospitality department to distribute meals and care packages to many international students who were stuck in Canada due to the closure of the borders, and we worked with the Student Food Bank to distribute electronic grocery gift cards to students. We had planned to host a socially-distanced produce market in Branion plaza, but these plans were shelved due to the worsening pandemic and the changing public health restrictions.

- **Mental Health and Wellness Advisory Committee**

I sat on this committee from May 2020 to September 2020, and then after the GSA general election in October 2020, I shuffled to a new committee.

During my time on this committee I advocated for diversity in hiring practices within Student Wellness, especially for counsellors. GSA and CSA representatives received a lot of student feedback naming the lack of diversity as a reason they had not reached out for services. I voiced my opinion that the counselling services specifically for graduate students should be expanded so that there is more gender diversity on the team. Only having a male counsellor available for graduate student counselling could deter some students from reaching out. I hope that this is an area that future executives seek to improve.

As part of this committee, I provided feedback on some of the Student Wellness messaging released this year, as well as provided feedback on the Sexual Violence Support module that was released on CourseLink this academic year.

Lastly, Nicole and Daria undertook a revamp/redecoration of the Mental health space on the grad floor of the UC. I helped with some design picks, but ultimately Nicole and Daria made a great counselling space, that will serve students well.

- **Town and Gown Committee**

Due to Covid, the committee did not meet at all in the summer of 2020. My first meeting took place in October 2020 and there was a second one in February 2021.



The subject of the meeting revolved around student adherence to Covid-19 protocols, discussion of the Covid outbreak in student residences, and Covid safety messaging for students around different holidays and breaks.

- **Other Projects**

Our Executive team successfully planned and executed the first Virtual Grad Student Conference in August 2020. I moderated one of the conference panels and had a great experience learning about student research in other disciplines.

The executive created a Covid Survey in S20 in order to gather feedback to assess student needs in the new reality. I've been responsible for creating this year's Covid Survey which will gather updated information and feedback from students.

This year we hired an Office Manager, Daria, after the retirement of Erin. The hiring process was a learning curve for all of us. I know that we picked the right person for the job, and I'm glad Daria will be guiding the next executive team.

The Executive, under Nicole's great leadership, has undertaken the renovation/ revamping/ rebranding of the grad lounge space, along with a partnership with the UC that should help the grad lounge become a great and inclusive space for grad students. Nicole and Daria have worked hard to make this a reality!

Best,
Britta McBride
GSA VP External 2020-2021
gsavpext@uoguelph.ca



Activities & Communication Co-ordinator (ACC) – William Kramer

Hello GSA Board of Directors, Executive team, and Staff;

Personal Introduction:

Since the beginning of my contract (August 2020), I have had to adjust to organizing all events on a virtual platform. Initially, this was a bit of a hurdle that forced me to become more creative in getting students engaged in events while we are all experiencing virtual meeting fatigue. However, I believe that I was still able to successfully execute events on behalf of the GSA regardless of not being able to meet in person. It is unfortunate that I was unable to plan events in person, as I would have enjoyed the opportunity to make some personal connections and really help to foster a bit more of a sense of community among students. I am hopeful that there could be a chance that I can plan at least one event in the newly improved Grad Lounge at the end of my tenure.

Overview:

Below is a brief summary that outlines the events that have been planned on behalf of the Graduate Students' Association for Summer 2020, Fall 2020, Winter 2021 and upcoming Summer 2021 semesters. I have included details such as events cost, attendance, overall success determined through attendance/participant feedback, and areas for improvement if these events were to be organized again in the future.

Summer 2020 Semester Events:

GSA Virtual Conference: August 26, 2020

- **Event Details:** Cross campus virtual conference where graduate students were able to provide a 12-minute presentation on their research with 3 minutes for questions. Presentations were judged by a panel of peers and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place prizes (tuition credit) were donated by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Dr. Amy Greer gave a keynote address that encompassed what we know about pandemics.
- **Event Cost:** \$100 gift card for keynote speaker & \$15 gift card for every individual who volunteered to judge.
- **Event Attendance:** 43 presenters & ≈150 participants
- **Suggested Improvements:** Consistent panel of judges throughout the entire event. Ph.D. and MSc should be judged separately. Provided students/judges with more breaks throughout the day.

Fall 2020 Semester Events:

UofG Campus Virtual Scavenger Hunt: September 12, 2020

- **Event Details:** Virtual clues lead students to various famous outdoor landmarks around campus. Participants took selfies with each clue in order to receive their next clue. 10



different clues were used. This was a Covid friendly event that did not require students to enter any buildings. 1st 2nd and 3rd place prizes were given out to participants who solved the clues the fastest.

- **Event Cost:** \$35
- **Event Attendance:** 5
- **Suggested Improvements:** Typically, orientation events show low participation due to the lack of communication between incoming students and organizations. Lower participation could have to do with the event being held on campus and students not feeling comfortable leaving the house.

PhD – Postdoc Mentorship Event: September 24, 2020

- **Event Details:** This event featured a panel of UoG Postdoctoral Researchers from various backgrounds and disciplines that shared their experience on the transition from PhD to a postdoc.
- **Event Cost:** \$10 to all Postdoc volunteers - \$60 total
- **Event Attendance:** 45
- **Suggested Improvements:** Event was a great success, and we had a lot of great feedback. This event will be included in the upcoming Networking Event.

Pumpkin Carving Instagram Contest: October 26 – 31, 2020

- **Event Details:** Carved pumpkin photos were submitted to the GSA Instagram page and featured on our story. Carved pumpkins were voted on using the “polls” feature on Instagram. 1st 2nd and 3rd place prizes were given to those that had the highest number of votes.
- **Event Cost:** \$35
- **Event Attendance:** 14
- **Suggested Improvements:** This event ran great and brought a lot of attention to our Instagram page.

Halloween Costume Instagram Competition: November 2 – 6, 2020

- **Event Details:** Halloween costume photos were submitted to the GSA Instagram page and featured on our story. Costumes were voted on using the “polls” feature on Instagram. 1st 2nd and 3rd place prizes were given to those that had the highest number of votes.
- **Event Cost:** \$35
- **Event Attendance:** 9
- **Suggested Improvements:** Attendance was low based on the reduced number of individuals dressing up this year.

Hirst Brother Virtual Conference: November 20, 2020



- **Event Details:** Virtual concert hosted by a local Guelph band and University of Guelph Alumni, The Hirst Brothers. This event consisted of a pre-recorded concert set, a live performance by lead band member Johnny Hirst, and a Question-and-Answer period.
- **Event Cost:** \$100 donation to the bands Cure Blindness charity
- **Event Attendance:** 12
- **Suggested Improvements:** Event was held on a Friday night which could have been the reason for low participation. Moving forward, events were held during the week.

Gingerbread Decorating Instagram Competition: December 20 – 24, 2020

- **Event Details:** Photos of decorated Gingerbread houses were submitted to the GSA Instagram page and featured on our story. Costumes were voted on using the “polls” feature on Instagram. 1st 2nd and 3rd place prizes were given to those that had the highest number of votes. Gingerbread decorating kits were provided to students who wanted to participate in this event.
- **Event Cost:** Gingerbread Kits: \$300 + Prizes: \$35 = \$335 total cost
- **Event Attendance:** 30 kits distributed & 21 photos submitted
- **Suggested Improvements:** Event was a great success. I think offering decorating kits to students was a great way to increase participation and removed the financial burdens to participate.

Winter 2021 Semester Events:

Virtual Trivia Night Co-hosted with the History Department in Support of United Way: January 27, 2021

- **Theme:** “Great Minds Think Alike: Literature, history, music, and famous thinkers”
- **Event Details:** The iconic trivia night brought to a Virtual Platform. Both the History department and the GSA encouraged participants to donate to the United Way campaign. We also had a United Way organizer give an explanation on what the proceeds go towards.
- **Event Cost:** \$0
- **Event Attendance:** 40
- **Suggested Improvements:** This event was held on Teams, which doesn't have a user-friendly breakout room feature. Future events were held on Webex.

Virtual Trivia Night: February 17, 2021

- **Theme:** “For the Love of Trivia”
- **Event Details:** The GSA hired on two graduate students from the History Department to host trivia as a monthly event. This event was around Valentine's day and was more focused on pop culture trivia.



- **Event Cost:** \$40 – divided amongst the winning team
- **Event Attendance:** 35
- **Suggested Improvements:** Event had a great turn out. Moving monthly Trivia to Webex was great improvement to handling the event logistics. We will continue to use this platform each month.

Virtual Paint Night: February 23, 2021

- **Event Details:** Participants followed along as the artist (Justine McCloy) demonstrated step by step how to paint a picture that was determined by students using the “polls” feature on our Instagram page.
 - **Event Cost:** \$300
 - **Event Attendance:** 13
 - **Suggested Improvements:** This event ran really smoothly. Artist handled all of the logistics in terms of virtual platform setup. Participation was low.

Virtual Trivia Night: March 17, 2021

- **Theme:** “Looking Forward, Looking Back: Covid Edition”
- **Event Details:** Similar to previous Trivia events that will be repeated on a monthly basis.
- **Event Cost:** \$40 – divided amongst the winning team
- **Event Attendance:** 32
- **Suggested Improvements:** Monthly Trivia always has a great turn out. The addition of unique themes could attract higher attendance.

Virtual Networking Event: March 30, 2021

- **Event Details:** Event logistics are still being ironed out. This event is to take place the day before the AGM, therefore, update will be provided during the time.
- **Event Cost:** TBD
- **Event Attendance:** TBD
- **Suggested Improvements:** TBD

Summer 2021 Proposed Events:

- Dr. Kristopher Gies (Keynote speaker for the conference) has agreed to be a resource of the GSA related to all things professional development. I am grateful we are now establishing a great connection with both career services and Dr. Gies. Moving forward, he has agreed to host various professional development workshops such as: interview preparation, effective cover letter formatting/writing, CV workshop, etc.



- Based on the success of the Virtual Conference held in Summer 2020 Semester, this event could be organized again. The event will be very similar to what was planned last conference but with minor improvements based on feedback received.
- Monthly trivia nights

Closing Remarks:

I want to thank everyone for their continued support as I navigate organizing events virtually. I know a lot of events haven't shown the highest number of participants, but I will continue to keep doing what I can to provide students with a break from their schoolwork or a chance to develop their professional career. You can follow the GSA on all social media platforms (Instagram: @uofg_gsa / Facebook: @GSAguelph / Twitter: @UoGGSA) or check out our monthly newsletters to keep up with all events being planned not only by the GSA but other organizations on campus as well.

Lastly, I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as the Actives and Communications Coordinator on the GSA and look forward to continuing to work with the staff, executive team, and the board of directors, particularly all of those on the Volunteer Committee. The success of the events that were planned could not have been done without your continued support and participation from the graduate student community.

As always, if you have any questions regarding my report or have any suggestions for potential events please don't hesitate to reach out.

Regards,

William

William Kramer

Activities and Communications Coordinator

gsaact@uoguelph.ca



GSA Office Manager Report – Daria Ruginis

I encourage everyone to attend the virtual GSA 2021 AGM! Those in attendance will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the GSA and even have a chance to win 1 of 8 \$250 tuition prizes!

If you are unable to attend, proxy votes will be accepted. You may complete the online proxy form by noon Wednesday, March 31, to assign a fellow GSA member to vote on your behalf.

Meeting starts at 5:30 p.m. (based on Quorum 100 votes). Please login 10 minutes prior to the start of the meeting.

The GSA Executive had an unprecedented year, working through the pandemic in a virtual environment. From working closely with University administration to fostering positive relationships with external stakeholders, the Executive team has worked very hard to ensure graduate student voices were heard during these challenging times.

The Executive team has made some great strides to improve the graduate student experience and each executive team member worked on special projects over their term. Some highlights include the Grad Lounge renovations, partnering with UC Services to improve the Grad Lounge operations, Mental Health Space renovations, working with the GBSA to create a General Director position for Black students, the Health Plan referendum and negotiating the suspension of the bus pass during these unprecedented times. These highlights are only a small look into the countless hours the team put in.

I would like to thank Nicole, Mohsen, Akshay, Britta and Will for their tireless efforts. All of you have been so welcoming to me and made it easy to love my job! It has been a huge learning curve this year for all of us and I am glad that we could do it together as a united front!

A special thanks to Kati, Victoria and Drew, as Chairs and CRO, without whom the GSA would not run as smoothly. Finally, thank you to our General Directors for filling your roles to a high standard and representing the GSA and your colleagues well. It has not been an easy year and we appreciate you stepping up in these roles.

For the first time in 32 years the GSA saw a change in the Office Manager position when Erin retired at the end of August. Erin was a large part of the GSA and had a great impact on the University of Guelph community and for that we would like to thank her. It has been an honour to take on this role and I want to thank the community for being so welcoming.

Lastly, I would like to remember Bonnie Runge, our Grad Lounge Manager who passed away at the end of February. She served as the Grad Lounge Manager for 24 years (1988-2007, 2015-2020), retiring this past September. Though I did not have the pleasure of working with her, her positive impact on not only the graduate student community but the University of Guelph community is evident and will live on.

Warm regards,



University of Guelph Graduate Students' Association
Annual General Meeting March 31st, 2021
Virtual Meeting

Daria Ruginis
GSA Office Manager gsa@uoguelph.ca (519-824-4120 x56685)



March Committee Reports

(If your Committee does not meet, please submit that statement)

Advisory Committee on Student Mental Health & Wellness

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Academic Policies & Procedures

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Alcohol & Substance Abuse Advisory Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Animal Care Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

By-Laws & Constitution Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Counselling Services

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Hate Activity Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Health & Dental Plan

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Athletics Advisory Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Co-Curricular Transcript Advisory Group

Meeting date:



Report:

Next Meeting:

Code of Ethical Conduct Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Compulsory Fees Advisory Committee (CFC)

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Energy Conservation Working Group

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Experiential Learning Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Finance Committee (GSA)

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Grad Lounge Sustainability Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Graduate Student Learning Initiative Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Graduate Student Mental Health Curriculum Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Hospitality Services Advisory Committee (HSAC)

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Human Rights Advisory Group

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Information Technology Student Advisory Committee



Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Judicial Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Library Learning Commons

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

OUTline Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Parking & Traffic Appeals Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Positive Space Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Sexual Violence Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

SHINE Mental Well-Being Week Committee

Meeting date: February 26, 2021

Report: The SHINE Week calendar is getting near completion. The March 15-20, 2021 event is going to include a resource fair, positive messaging, meditation, a paint night, LivingWorks START, Beyond the Books, an open dialogue on men's mental health, yoga, a mood moves program, an international student discussion, Stress Buster Scategories, Sexy Bingo, a one-day mental health conference, Saturday night wellness activities, and a mental health panel (see below). There are digital assets and finances available to help promote and support events. Here are some additional minutes about the mental health panel:

- The University of Guelph's Mental Health Panel features guest speakers including students, professors and staff to share their experiences with mental health. This event will be occurring on Wednesday, March 17 at 5:30 - 7:00 PM.



- We are currently looking for anybody who would be interested in joining the panel as a speaker. There are no specific requirements other than being linked with the University of Guelph. As a speaker, you will have the chance to share your story and raise awareness on mental health, stigma and more. If you are interested in sharing your story or learning more about this opportunity, please contact Tony Nguyen, anguye25@uoguelph.ca, or Rebecca Skelhorn, skelhorn@uoguelph.ca. We do not have a specific deadline, however, we appreciate if you can contact us as soon as possible.
- If you aren't interested as a speaker, **we also have an active Mental Health Podcast called "The Shine Cast" (ongoing after SHINE Week)** and a Men's Mental Health Workshop/Discussion. The topics of discussion are similar, however, in a different format. Please contact Tony or Rebecca (as listed above), if you are interested.

Meeting date: March 5, 2021

Report: The committee met to review the **SHINE Week (15-20 March 2021) Calendar and website**. Committee members were asked to check them for typos / errors as the calendar will be finalized by Monday at the latest. **Resource Fair** posts will be shared via the **Wellness Instagram account**.

Next Meeting: March 12, 2021 (drop-in as needed)

Special Grants & Speakers' Fund Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Student Assessment Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Student Executive Council

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Student Life Advisory Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Student Life Award Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Student Rights & Responsibilities Committee

Meeting date:



Report:

Next Meeting:

Student Transit Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Student Financial Services

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Student Experience

Meeting date: March 23, 2021

Report:

- Some temporary staff positions in student experience are now full-time positions
- New staff have been hired to fill International Student Coordinator positions
- In the Fall of 2021, there will be a referendum on Graduate Student fees for Outline
- Return to Campus Planning includes orientation in the fall, a re-orientation will be offered to 2nd year students who were not able to come to campus in their first year

Next Meeting: September/October 2021

Student Wellness Advisory Group

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

University Centre Board

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

UC Digital Signage Content Review Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Volunteer Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:



GSA Health Plan Referendum 2021

Referendum Results

Prepared by GSA CRO, February 12th 2021

Question:

Are you in favour of replacing the current plan which has the following features:

Group Health Insurance Program, which DOES NOT have an opt-out option, is priced at an annual cost of \$140 per policy year for full time students and has the potential to increase annually by the Consumer Price Index.

With the following modified plan effective September 2021:

Group Health Insurance Program which DOES have an opt-out option for full time students with alternative coverage, is priced at an annual cost of \$186 per policy year, and has the potential to increase annually by a maximum of 4%?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	36.79%	195
2	No	59.81%	317
3	Decline	3.40%	18
	Total	100%	530



GSA Summer 2021 Budget

Revenue - Student Fees	Yearly Fees	Semester			Yearly Fees	Semester
	2020/2021	Spring Actual	Fall Actual	Winter Running	2021/2022	Spring Projected
Number of Students	CPI=2.1%	2529	3047	2853	CPI=1.85%	2500
GSA Fees	\$35.60	\$90,032.40	\$108,473.20	\$101,573.28	\$36.26	\$90,652.28
CFS & CFS-O	\$6.02	\$15,351.00	\$18,408.16	\$17,175.06	\$8.79	\$21,975.00
Food Bank	\$2.43	\$5,499.09	\$6,821.01	\$6,932.73	\$2.47	\$6,187.34
GRCGED	\$2.19	\$4,570.53	\$5,685.24	\$6,248.07	\$2.23	\$5,576.29
Guelph Transit	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Late Night Bus Fee	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Budget		\$115,453.02	\$139,387.61	\$131,929.14		\$124,390.90
GSA Budget	\$32.27	\$81,610.83	\$98,326.69	\$92,072.79	\$32.87	\$82,173.27
Grad Lounge Budget	\$3.33	\$8,421.57	\$10,146.51	\$9,500.49	\$3.39	\$8,479.01
Total Operable Budget		\$90,032.40	\$108,473.20	\$101,573.28		\$90,652.28

Revenue - Other	Year	Semester		
	2020/2021	Spring Actual	Fall Actual	Winter Projected
Grad Lounge Income	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
SLEF	\$19,000.00	\$0.00	\$7,500.00	\$11,500.00
Other	\$20,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$20,000.00
	Year	Semester		
	2021/2022	Spring Actual	Fall Actual	Winter Projected
Grad Lounge Income				
SLEF				
Other				

Summary	
W21 Update (as of March 31)	
Total Income	\$ 133,073.28
Total Expenses	\$ 123,187.85
Difference	\$ 9,885.43
S21 Projections	
Total Income	\$ 90,652.28
Total Expenses	\$ 59,079.68
Difference	\$ 31,572.60



GSA									
Operational Expenses	Previous Year	Current Year				Upcoming Year		Semester	
	2019/2020	2020/2021		Winter		2021/2022		Spring/Summer	
	Actual	*Projected	Running Total	*Projected	Running total	*Projected	Running Total	*Projected	Actual
Staff									
Wages	\$ 62,805.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 43,150.38	\$ 16,400.00	\$ 11,800.00	\$ 55,000.00		\$ 15,800.00	n/a
Health Plan Benefits	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	n/a	n/a	\$ 2,000.00		n/a	n/a
Employee Benefits	\$ 10,914.59	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 10,050.00	\$ 3,666.67	\$ 3,050.00	\$ 11,000.00		\$ 3,500.00	
Executive									
Honorariums	\$ 38,962.32	\$ 48,052.61	\$ 44,140.06	\$ 16,215.88	\$ 12,237.45	\$ 51,859.40		\$ 17,300.00	
Executive Budget	\$ 3,274.74	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,596.72	\$ 107.33	\$ 107.33	\$ 1,600.00		\$ 1,600.00	
Elections	\$ 545.88	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	
Office Operations									
Telephone	\$ 2,994.19	\$ 780.00	\$ 716.00	\$ 260.00	\$ 196.00	\$ 780.00		\$ 260.00	
Capital Expenditures	\$ -	\$ 92,000.00	\$ 89,000.00	\$ 85,000.00	\$ 85,000.00	\$ 5,000.00		\$ -	
Office Supplies and Operations	\$ 8,601.45	\$ 8,600.00	\$ 4,018.02	\$ 400.00	\$ 185.66	\$ 5,000.00		\$ 500.00	
Website	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00		\$ 750.00	
Insurance	\$ 2,536.50	\$ 2,623.20	\$ 2,623.20	\$ 874.40	\$ 874.40	\$ 4,338.24		\$ 1,450.00	
Travel	\$ 475.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00		\$ 200.00	
Meetings	\$ 2,726.97	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 6,128.15	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 3,860.00	\$ 11,000.00		\$ 2,000.00	
Finances									
Professional Fees	\$ 10,424.25	\$ 10,817.00	\$ 10,675.68	\$ 1,017.00	\$ 762.75	\$ 11,000.00		\$ 1,100.00	
Interest and Bank Charges	\$ 728.44	\$ 900.00	\$ 948.50	\$ 350.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 900.00		\$ 300.00	
Bursaries and Grants									
Childcare	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00		\$ 1,500.00	
Travel	\$ 2,701.96	\$ 4,000.00	\$ -	\$ 4,000.00	\$ -	\$ 15,000.00		\$ 3,000.00	
PDR	\$ 400.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00		\$ 1,500.00	
Other Donations	\$ 2,090.45	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00		\$ -	
Activites									
GSA Conference and Events	\$ 5,871.37	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 2,500.00		\$ 800.00	
GSA Contents and Prizes						\$ 2,000.00		\$ 700.00	
Total Expenses	\$ 158,803.11	\$ 247,722.81	\$ 217,596.71	\$ 132,041.28	\$ 119,423.59	\$ 196,727.64	\$ -	\$ 52,260.00	\$ -

Grad Lounge									
Operational Expenses	Previous Year	Current Year				Upcoming Year		Semester	
	2019/2020	2020/2021		Winter		2021/2022		Spring/Summer	
	Actual	*Projected	Running Total	*Projected	Running Total	*Projected	Running Total	*Projected	Actual
Staff									
Wages	\$ 113,958.42	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Unknown		Unknown	
Employee Benefits	\$ 7,250.13	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
Health Plan Benefits	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	n/a	n/a	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Lounge Operations									
Insurance	\$ 7,819.46	\$ 7,870.00	\$ 7,190.00	\$ 2,623.20	\$ 1,966.00	\$ 8,000.00		\$ 2,622.00	
Supplies	\$ 6,063.96	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Office and Telephone	\$ 2,526.42	\$ 924.00	\$ 462.00	\$ 308.00	\$ 231.00	\$ 924.00		\$ 308.00	
Repairs and Maintenance	\$ 1,382.59	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	
Finances									
Professional Fees	\$ 5,923.07	\$ 6,224.04	\$ 5,705.37	\$ 2,074.68	\$ 1,556.01	\$ 6,224.04		\$ 2,074.68	
Bank Charges	\$ 6,547.22	\$ 99.00	\$ 77.25	\$ 33.00	\$ 11.25	\$ 45.00		\$ 15.00	
Lounge Activities									
Entertainment	\$ 2,210.23	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,000.00		\$ 1,000.00	
Defence Mugs	\$ 2,856.50	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,500.00		\$ 800.00	
Advertising and Promotion	\$ 369.45	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	
Total Expenses	\$ 158,907.45	\$ 29,116.64	\$ 15,192.76	\$ 5,038.88	\$ 3,764.26	\$ 21,693.04	\$ -	\$ 6,819.68	\$ -



Constitution and Bylaws of the University of Guelph Graduate Students' Association

GSA Bylaws Amendment Report

Over the fall 2020 and winter 2021 semester, the GSA Bylaws committee met several times to review the Bylaws. The updated bylaws document can be reviewed below. A brief overview of the changes that were made are as follows:

- Formatting, spelling and grammar edited.
- Adjustments to GSA Executive committee memberships.
- Adding an item to the activities and communication coordinator section.
- Adding the GSA black graduate student representative in sections 1.2, 3, and 4.
- Considering an option to attend the virtual meetings during pandemic.
- Adjusting section 5.9, 6.5, 7.3, and 8.2.



1.0 General

1.1 GSA Mission Statement

To advance the academic goals and professional and personal development of the University of Guelph graduate student body by providing key academic, social, and financial resources. The GSA strives to ensure the accessibility of these resources and to responsibly articulate the interest of graduate students to the appropriate persons and organization(s). The GSA is committed to the pursuit of a system of high quality graduate education.

The objective of the Graduate Students' Association, is to uphold the services of The Grad Student Lounge (also known as, The Fifth: GSA Rooftop Patio and Lounge). The GSA will work with the Grad Student Lounge Manager to develop supports and work to achieve goals of long-term sustainability of our licensed establishment, as graduate student recreational and professional space.

1.2 Definitions

Unless otherwise stated, in these Bylaws the following shall be defined as:

"GSA" means the Graduate Students' Association, the Corporation and Primary Student Organization representing graduate student interests at the University of Guelph;

"Bylaws" means the Constitution and Bylaws, the policy document governing the activities of the GSA;

"Board of Directors" means the governing body of the GSA;

"General Director" means any elected representative on the Board of Directors from a recognized departmental unit at the University, or the Indigenous, international, ~~and~~ LGBTQ2SIA+, and Black -graduate student population;

"Executive" means the President and CEO, Vice President Internal, Vice President Finance, and/or Vice President External;

"University" means University of Guelph, including Ridgetown Campus;

"Membership" means graduate student members of the GSA as outlined in Section 2.0; holders of membership shall be herein referred to as "member";

"Departmental Unit" means any Department or School at the University with a Chair or Director as recognized by the Office of Graduate Studies of the University, as outlined in Appendix 1;

"Appointed Officer" means the Chair, Chief Returning Officer, and Activities



and Communications Coordinator of the GSA;

"Graduate Student" means any student registered in a graduate program at the University;

"email" means the @uoguelph.ca email of the individual(s) to which the specific Bylaw applies;

"Day" means a business day of the GSA Office;

"Website" means the GSA main website found at the URL:
www.uoguelph.ca/gsa;

"Social media" means any internet-based application where a user can create and share content, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn;

"GSA Employee or Staff" means salaried employees of the GSA Office;

"Constituency" means the student body which elects a General Director or Executive;

"Regular meeting" is defined as the regularly scheduled monthly meetings of the Board of Directors.

1.3 Interpretation

1.3.1 These Bylaws shall be interpreted in accordance with the following:

- a) the headings in the Bylaws are inserted for reference purposes only, and are not to be considered or taken into account in construing the terms or provisions thereof or to be deemed in any way to clarify, modify, or explain the effect of any such terms or provision;
- b) any references herein to any contractual agreement, regulation or policy shall be construed as a reference thereto as amended or re-enacted from time to time or as a reference to any successor thereto.
- c) any dispute over the interpretation of the Bylaws shall be referred to the Vice President Internal, who shall make a ruling. In all circumstances where the Vice President Internal's ruling is disputed, the Bylaws Committee shall make the final definitive decision.

1.4 Human Rights Statement

The GSA, as part of the University of Guelph's community, abides by the University's Human Rights Policy. The Human Rights Policy at the University of Guelph is committed to maintaining the human dignity of individuals and groups of individuals. The University of Guelph and the GSA are committed to a campus free of discrimination and harassment, and are dedicated to the highest standards of human equality and academic freedom. The



University of Guelph and the GSA will not tolerate any violations of human rights.

Discrimination and harassment based on grounds prohibited by the Ontario Human Rights Code devalue and taint the environment of those covered by the policy. The GSA, as a part of the University of Guelph's community, is also committed to foster an environment that respects the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) under the timeline as provided by the University.

1.5 Conflict of Interest

1.5.1 No member of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Appointed Officer, or GSA Employee shall place their own interests before those of the GSA, and shall declare and avoid any conflict(s) of interest and action(s) that would give them the appearance of a personal benefit. No member of the Board of Directors, Appointed Officer, or GSA Employee shall use their position for financial gain.

1.5.2 Determination that an individual is in a conflict of interest shall be by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors or 20% of constituents which the individual serves. Immediately upon determination of a conflict of interest, the individual found to be in conflict shall remove themselves from all decisions and responsibilities relating to the conflict.

1.5.3 Determination of a conflict of interest may be appealed to the Bylaws Committee by submitting the Determination of Conflict of Interest form available from the GSA Office Manager. Appeals shall be decided by a majority vote of the members of the Bylaws Committee.

1.5.4 No GSA Executive may hold an executive position with another student organization whereby they have signing authority and/or are paid a stipend, honourarium or receive some other type of regular financial salary or gain.

1.6 Communications

1.6.1 All communications between the GSA and the Board of Directors shall first be sent to the GSA Office to be distributed by the GSA Office Manager or approved designate.

1.6.2 Communications sent through the GSA media include email, letter mail, the website, and social media. All website maintenance shall be the responsibility of the GSA Office Manager; associated tasks can be delegated to the GSA Activities and Communications Coordinator, or the GSA Office Assistant.

1.6.3 All communications must be approved by the President or designated Executive(s) prior to distribution.

1.6.4 No request to distribute communication(s) to the Board of Directors may be unreasonably denied. Any individual who has their request to distribute a communication denied may appeal the decision to the Bylaws Committee.

1.7 GSA Head Office

The Head Office of the GSA shall be within the University Centre of the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada and at such place therein as the Executive determine and the lease dictates.

1.8 Seal

The seal, as affixed on the original copy herein, shall be the Corporate Seal of the GSA. The Seal shall be maintained in the GSA Office.



2.0 GSA Membership

2.1 Membership Requirements

The membership of the GSA shall consist of individuals registered in a recognized graduate degree program at the University, as recognized by the Office of Graduate Studies, and have paid the GSA membership fee.

2.2 Membership Fee

2.2.1 The membership fee for each year, and a breakdown of such fees, will be made available to members on the GSA website.

2.2.2 The membership fee shall increase annually by an amount in agreement with the Cost of Living Allowance. The membership fee may be amended by majority vote of the membership on an appropriate referendum question conducted under the provisions of the Bylaws.

2.3 Rights and Privileges of the GSA Members

2.3.1 All GSA members:

- d) have the right to participate in all GSA events, including, but not limited to, meetings of the GSA Board of Directors, Annual General Meeting (AGM), social events, elections, by-elections, and referenda, unless specified otherwise herein
- e) are entitled to all services provided by the GSA, where applicable; and
- f) are entitled to stand for election to, and hold the title of, a General Director for the departmental unit in which they are registered, or an Executive position, in accordance with Sections 5.2 and 6.7 of the Bylaws.

2.4 Termination of Membership

An individual's membership in the GSA shall be valid as long as the individual is registered in a graduate program at the University. An individual's membership in the GSA is automatically terminated at the end of the semester in which they have successfully completed their degree requirements as outlined by the University Registrar, and therefore no longer pay membership fees to the GSA.

2.5 Annual General Meeting

2.5.1 The GSA shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) in March of each year in lieu of a regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting. The date of the meeting will be selected with consideration afforded to religious holidays.

2.5.2 Notice of AGM, including the date, time, and location, must be given at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting.

2.5.3 The purpose of the AGM shall be:

- a) to receive reports on the activities of the GSA and each Executive for the preceding year;
- b) to vote to accept or reject amendment(s), if any, to the Bylaws as presented by the Vice President Internal and the Bylaws Committee. Amendments to the Bylaws will be presented en masse, barring a motion at the AGM that the amendments be approved individually;
- c) to appoint an independent accounting firm for the coming fiscal year;
- d) to announce the results of the Executive elections and referenda, when applicable, to the GSA membership; and



- e) to conduct any other business for which notice has been given.
- 2.5.4 In addition to general meeting procedures as outlined in section 3.2, the AGM shall be conducted according to the following provisions:
 - g) quorum for the AGM shall be one hundred (100) votes
 - h) all members of the GSA are entitled to vote at the AGM in person or by proxy
 - i) proxy voting shall be according to the following procedures:
 - (i) A proxy holder shall be a member of the GSA;
 - (ii) A signed proxy form, available from the GSA Office Manager, shall be submitted to the Chair prior to voting at the AGM
 - (iii) The signed proxy form can be submitted in person or via email. Email proxies must be received by noon the day of the scheduled AGM
 - j) all decisions shall be decided by a majority vote of the members in attendance and represented by proxy.

3.0 The Board of Directors

3.1 Composition of the Board of Directors

3.1.1 The Board of Directors shall be composed of:

- a) the executive, including the following titles:
 - (i) President and CEO;
 - (ii) Vice President Internal;
 - (iii) Vice President Finance; and
 - (iv) Vice President External;
- b) up to two (2) General Directors representing each recognized departmental unit at the University (a list of recognized departmental units is provided in Appendix 1), ~~and up to two (2) International Student Representatives~~ and, up to two (2) LGBTQ2SIA+ Student Representatives, ~~and up to two (2) Indigenous Student Representatives, and up to two (2) Black Student Representatives~~;
- c) a non-voting chair.

3.1.2 All members of the Board of Directors must be members of the GSA.

3.2 Meetings of the Board of Directors

3.2.1 Meeting agenda and motions presented for consideration during a meeting must be made available at least three (3) days prior to said meeting. Motions presented for consideration after this deadline or during a meeting (except those related to Petitions, Delegations and Representation [Activities Grant]) must be written and submitted to the Chair and shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote to pass.

- a) Meetings of the GSA shall be held at the University of Guelph. During May of each year, the meeting locations will be determined based on room reservations.
- b) Meetings of the GSA shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order and the Bylaws. Meeting procedures stipulated in these Bylaws shall override any stipulation made in Robert's Rules of Order.
- c) Meetings of the GSA shall be open to all GSA members. Non-members of the Board of Directors shall not be excluded from a meeting except for improper conduct or as provided herein.
- d) Non-members of the Board of Directors may be granted speaking rights by the



Chair.

- e) Only members of the Board of Directors may be present if a meeting has been moved "in camera." Presence of GSA Appointed Officers and staff may be permitted at the discretion of the Chair.
- f) Any decision made by the Chair may be overturned by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors.
- g) Motions at a meeting of the Board of Directors shall be decided by a majority vote unless specified otherwise herein. In the case of a tie, the motion fails.
- h) At any meeting, unless a poll is demanded, a declaration by the Chair that a motion has been carried, or fails, shall be sufficient for an entry to be made in the minutes. Such an entry shall be considered as proof of a majority decision without the necessity of providing a vote count. A vote count may be requested by any member of the Board of Directors.
- i) A record of all meetings (minutes) of the Board of Directors or GSA membership shall be made available to all members of the GSA and shall be distributed by the GSA Office Manager. Minutes shall be presented for approval at the subsequent regular meeting of the Board of Directors. Accepted minutes shall be signed by the Chair and President and CEO and archived. Board minutes shall be posted on the website within ~~seven~~fourteen (~~7~~14) days after being approved.
- j) Notice for a meeting shall be sent according to guidelines set out for said meeting. The statutory declaration that notice has been given pursuant to the Bylaws shall be sufficient and conclusive evidence to the giving of such notice. If an error or omission in giving such notice for a meeting is alleged to have occurred, an appeal can be filed with the GSA Bylaws Committee, which will then rule on the validity of the proceedings and may rule to void the proceedings.

3.2.2 In addition to the general meeting procedures in Section 3.2.1, regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be conducted according to the following procedures:

- a) Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at least once per month. No regularly scheduled meeting shall be required in August or March. The AGM in March shall take place in lieu of a Board of Directors meeting, but no presentations or speakers shall be part of the agenda unless previously approved by the Executive Committee and notice is made available at least seven (7) days prior to said meeting.
- b) The meeting schedule shall be decided upon by the Executive during the annual Executive Committee Transition.
- c) Notice of regular meetings shall be sent via email to the Board of Directors at the beginning of each semester and a reminder of the meetings shall be sent no less than three (3) days prior to the date of the meeting. The meeting notice shall include all materials to be discussed at said meeting, including, but not limited to, the agenda and Executive reports. The meeting schedule shall be included on the GSA website, and on the nomination form for General Directors, and shall be sent to all General Directors upon their successful election to the Board of Directors.
- d) Quorum for regular meetings shall be two-thirds (2/3) of the total number of voting seats of the Board of Directors. Quorum for regular meetings shall be



reduced to one-third (1/3) of the total number of voting seats of the Board of Directors for the period of May 1 to August 31. Voting seats are defined as one (1) per represented department, one (1) International Student Representative, one (1) LGBTQ2SIA+ Student Representative, one (1) Indigenous Student Representative, ~~one (1) Black Student Representative~~, and one (1) per executive member.

- e) There is a limit of three (3) Activities Grant application reviews, as per Section 9.4, per meeting, with the exception of tabled Activities Grants.

3.2.3 In addition to the general meeting procedures in Section 3.2.1, special meetings of the Board of Directors shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedures (a special meeting is defined as a meeting of the Board of Directors or GSA membership called outside of the regular meeting schedule):

- a) Unless specified otherwise herein, special meetings may be called by:
- (i) three-quarters (3/4) of the Executive;
 - (ii) one-third (1/3) of the voting seats of the Board of Directors; or
 - (iii) ten percent (10%) of the GSA membership.
- b) Quorum for special meetings shall be one-half (1/2) of the total number of voting seats of the Board of Directors.
- c) Notice of special meetings shall be sent via email to the Board of Directors, and GSA membership where required, not less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the date of the meeting. The meeting notice shall include all materials to be discussed at said meeting.

4.0 General Directors

4.1 Responsibilities of General Directors

4.1.1 The Responsibilities of General Directors shall be:

- a) to attend duly called meetings of the Board of Directors or, if not able to attend, send regrets to the GSA Office Manager at least two (2) hours prior to the meeting;
- a)b) ~~In the case of in-person meetings, Electronic~~ electronic attendance is permitted for one (1) regular meeting per term. A GSA General Director who wishes to attend the GSA Board Meeting electronically is solely responsible for ensuring their attendance is facilitated by another GSA General Director or graduate student designate. The General Director should inform both the GSA Office Manager and the desired facilitator at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting. A GSA General Director who is a proxy holder must attend in person.
- b)c) to act as a liaison between the GSA and graduate students in the departmental unit which they represent. In the case of the Indigenous, International ~~and~~ LGBTQ2SIA+, ~~and Black~~ Graduate Student representative(s), to act as a liaison between the GSA and the graduate student communities they represent. Communication with their departmental unit shall be achieved by, at minimum, monthly newsletters to their constituents outlining graduate student-related campus news, GSA activities and Board Meeting Updates. The Frequency of these newsletters is at the discretion of the Vice- President Internal;
- e)d) to solicit feedback and opinions from their constituents;



- d)e) to regularly monitor and respond appropriately to any correspondence that might be distributed by the Executive;
- e)f) to represent the GSA on at least one (1) GSA Committee and University Committee as assigned by the Vice President Internal;
- f)g) to attend all meeting(s) of the committee(s) on which they are a GSA representative; to provide a written report on all relevant decisions, issues and activities to the GSA Vice President Internal at least seven (7) days before a meeting of the Board of Directors.
- g)h) if a General Director is unable to attend a meeting of the committee(s) on which they are assigned, they shall contact the assigned alternate General Director to go in their place; if the alternate is unable to attend, the General Director should contact the Vice President Internal;
- h)i) to ensure activities of the GSA comply with the GSA Mission Statement; and
- i)j) to uphold the Human Rights Statement of the GSA and the University Human Rights Policy.
- j)k) to sign a letter of agreement with the GSA acknowledging these responsibilities. One copy will be given to the General Director, and one copy will be retained by the Vice President Internal.
- k)l) duties and related items of re-elected General Director does not carry over from the previous term and is at the discretion of the Vice- President Internal.

- 4.1.2 No General Director shall present themselves as a representative of the GSA to any individual, committee, or organization without permission from the Executive.

4.2 Election of General Directors

4.2.1 General Director Guidelines

- a) General Director Elections shall occur in September of each year with elected General Directors commencing their term on October 1 of the same year, and terminating their term on September 30 of the following year. A by-election shall be held in January of the following year, if required, to fill any remaining General Director vacancies.
- b) Any General Director positions that are not filled during the by-election shall remain vacant for the remainder of the term. Further by-elections may be held to fill vacancies at the discretion of the Vice President Internal.

4.2.2 Nominations and Eligibility

- a) The nomination period shall commence at the discretion of the Chief Returning Officer (CRO), in consultation with the Vice President Internal. The nomination period shall commence as soon as possible after the University calendar's September Add/Drop deadline and will be at least five (5) days in duration.
- b) Only current members of the GSA as outlined in Section 2.0 are eligible to be nominated for a position as General Director.
- c) Members who have previously been removed from a position on the Board of Directors, as per Section 4.4 or 5.8, are ineligible to seek election to any position on the Board of Directors for a period of one (1) year after their removal.
- d) Nominations for General Director positions shall be submitted by email to the Chief Returning Officer. Candidate nomination statements shall be made available to the GSA membership during the election nomination period.



4.2.3 Campaigning

- a) The campaign period shall immediately follow the nomination period and shall be two (2) days in duration.
- b) The CRO shall review all campaign material, including all material posted on social media, prior to publishing to ensure that they are not libelous or offensive. If any campaign material is published without permission, the CRO can choose to remove that candidate from the campaign
- c) All campaigning must cease, and any campaign materials removed by 4:30 pm EST on the last day of the campaign period. Failure to comply may result in disqualification from the election.
- d) No campaigning shall be permitted during the voting period.

4.2.4 Ballots and Voting

- a) The voting period shall follow the campaign period and be at least two (2) days in duration.
- b) Each candidate shall be permitted to submit a statement of up to one hundred fifty (150) words in length. The statements will appear on the ballot and must be submitted with the nomination form. The Chief Returning Officer has the discretion to reject any statement found to be libelous or offensive if the candidate refuses to make any changes deemed necessary by the Chief Returning Officer. Statements that exceed the word limit will be cut off after 150 words.
- c) Voting shall be conducted by electronic ballot distributed through the GSA listserv, as created by the University of Guelph Department of Computing and Communication Services.
- d) Ballots shall contain the following information:
 - (i) The position to be filled with a brief description of the position;
 - (ii) Candidate name(s) and statement(s), if provided, presented in alphabetical order according to last name;
 - (iii) A statement indicating the voter may choose up to two (2) of the candidates listed where more than one (1) candidate has applied for the position; and,
 - (iv) Voters shall have the option to decline or to vote for none of the listed candidates, where applicable.
- e) Immediately prior to the commencement of the voting period, the CRO shall cast a paper ballot for each position being contested in the election. This ballot shall be sealed and used in the event of a tie. If no tie exists after the election this ballot shall be destroyed without opening.

4.2.5 Results

- a) The CRO shall obtain the election results following the voting period. The CRO shall prepare a summary report outlining the name(s) of the successful candidate(s), the total number of votes cast for each candidate, and the total number of votes cast in the election. This report shall be presented to the GSA Office Manager and to the discretion of the Office Manager to be distributed to Executive members.
- b) For all available positions, the candidate(s) with the greatest number of



affirmative votes shall be declared the successful candidate(s). In the event of a tie, the seal ballot cast by the CRO pursuant to Bylaw 4.2.4 e) shall be opened and used to break the tie.

- c) Successful candidates shall be notified of their election to the Board of Directors via email.
- d) Re-election of a General Director shall be considered void if, as of the beginning of their term on October 1, said member has failed to fulfill the responsibilities for General Directors as outlined in these Bylaws, for three (3) consecutive months in their previous term. The same rule shall apply for a General Director elected in the by-elections.

4.3 General Director Vacancies

4.3.1 A vacant General Director position, however caused, shall be filled in accordance with the election procedures for General Directors (Section 4.2).

4.3.2 A vacancy shall be determined to exist when a General Director:

- a) resigns from their position;
- b) is no longer a member of the GSA;
- c) is removed from their position as specified in Section 4.4.

4.4 Removal of General Directors

4.4.1 A General Director shall be removed from their position if:

- a) they are absent without regrets from any three (3) regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors, including the AGM;
- b) they are absent with or without regrets from any four (4) regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors, including the AGM;
- c) they are absent with or without regrets from three (3) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors, including the AGM; or,
- d) they fail to fulfill their duties as General Directors as outlined in Section 4.1 for three (3) consecutive months.

4.4.2 A referendum to remove an elected General Director may be requested by submitting a completed the Request to Remove form, available from the GSA Office Manager, with signatures from one of the following groups:

- a) one-fifth (1/5) of the General Director's constituents;
- b) two-thirds (2/3) of voting members of the Board of Directors; or,
- c) three-quarters (3/4) of the Executive.

4.4.3 Upon receipt of a request to hold a referendum to remove a General Director, the Vice President Internal shall schedule a special meeting of the Board of Directors at which the referendum shall take place. This meeting shall take place no more than ten (10) days following receipt of the request.

4.4.4 Members of the constituency of the General Director in question are allowed to attend and vote at the special meeting. In the case of in-person meetings, Electronic electronic attendance is permitted, but each person physically present at the meeting may only facilitate the electronic attendance of one other person.



4.4.5 A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of no-confidence of those present and voting is required to remove the General Director.

4.4.6 For reasons of grossly inappropriate or criminal behaviour, or violations of the GSA Human Rights Statement or University of Guelph Human Rights Policy, members of the Board of Directors may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors. This action is not a substitution for a grievance against the individual, complaints to the University of Guelph Office of Diversity and Human Rights, or criminal or civil charges, and these options may also be pursued.

5.0 The Executive

Executive members cannot take a paid Executive position with CUPE #3913 during their tenure. Elected GSA Executive have been elected to represent all graduate students, in tandem with the GSA Bylaws that differ from the mandate of CUPE #3913, as a bargaining unit.

5.1 General Responsibilities of the Executive and the Purpose of Executive Meetings

5.1.1 The general responsibilities of all Executive shall be:

- a) to attend all duly called meetings of the Executive, Board of Directors, and GSA members or, if not able to attend, send regrets to the GSA Office Manager at least two (2) hours prior to the meeting. ~~Electronic~~ Electronic attendance is permitted for one (1) regular in-person meeting per term. An Executive who wishes to attend a GSA Board Meeting electronically must inform the GSA via the gsa@uoguelph.ca email and provide relevant contact information at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting. No more than one (1) Executive member may attend electronically per GSA Board Meeting;
- b) to present, in writing, a report of their official activities to all regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors. Executive Board Reports are mandatory and must be submitted seven (7) days prior to a Board Meeting, regardless of academic or personal travel obligations. ~~Electronic~~ Electronic attendance is permitted one (1) regular in-person meeting per term. An Executive who wishes to attend a GSA Board Meeting electronically must inform the GSA via the gsa@uoguelph.ca email and provide relevant contact information at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. No more than one (1) Executive member may attend electronically per GSA Board Meeting [intent: first come first served];
- c) to maintain communication with the GSA membership;
- d) to ensure executive representation at all meetings between student leaders and University administration, where possible;
- e) to meet regularly with the Vice Provost of Student Affairs;
- f) to maintain communication with the Central Student Association (CSA) and, where necessary, other prominent student organizations at the University;
- g) to ensure GSA representation at official functions and public occasions where a graduate presence is required;
- h) to ensure activities of the GSA comply with the GSA Mission Statement;
- i) to be familiar with the Bylaws;
- j) to uphold the Human Rights Statement of the GSA and the University Human Rights Policy;
- k) to develop, implement, and revise policies for the effective performance of the



- l) mandated duties of Executive members, individually and collectively; and to inform and request formal support from the Executive Committee as to any initiatives undertaken using the GSA name, brand, or identity.

5.1.2 In the case of a temporary absence of the President and CEO, the Vice President Internal shall fulfill the roles and responsibilities of the President. In the case of the temporary absence of more than one Executive, the remaining Executive shall fulfill the roles in order of the Executive hierarchy: Vice President Internal, Vice President Finance, and Vice President External.

5.1.3 Meetings of the Executive shall occur according to the following procedures:

- a) Executive meetings shall be held at least once per month, regardless of whether quorum is reached. Additional meetings can be held at the discretion of the President and CEO;
- b) Executive meetings shall be chaired by the President and CEO;
- c) Quorum for an executive meeting shall be three-quarters (3/4) of the sitting Executive.
- d) Executive meetings may be called by an Executive with no less than forty-eight (48) hours' notice, unless there is agreement by the entire Executive to meet on shorter notice; in circumstances when shorter notice is accepted, all executive members must be in attendance.
- e) Executive members may attend in-person Executive meetings electronically no more than one (1) time per semester. The Executive member who wishes to attend electronically must inform the chair at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting and provide relevant contact information. The chair must ensure arrangements are made to facilitate the Executive members' attendance.

5.1.4 During the summer semester at the commencement of their term, the Executive are recommended to complete at least one (1) of the following trainings:

- a) safeTALK;
- b) Gender Diversity and Inclusive Practices Training (arranged through the Sexual and Gender Diversity Advisor);
- c) First Aid;
- d) Mental Health First Aid; or,
- e) any other training offered through the University that would be considered a benefit to the GSA and its constituents.

5.2 Responsibilities of the President and CEO

5.2.1 In addition to the general responsibilities of the Executive outlined in Section 5.1, the President and CEO shall:

- a) be charged with the full responsibility of carrying out the legislation, policies, Bylaws, regulations, and resolutions of the GSA;
- b) in conjunction with the Vice President Internal, regularly consult with University administration in order to communicate the policies and activities of the GSA and obtain information on changes in such institutional policies and activities;
- c) be responsible for the supervision of all employees of the GSA;
- d) ensure the development of long-term goals, priorities, and policies of the GSA;



- e) be responsible for presenting to the Board of Directors a summary of all GSA activities and future goals of the Executive at the beginning of the Fall and Winter semesters;
- f) be responsible for all matters pertaining to the maintenance of the Seal, Letters, Patents, Bylaws, and Resolutions of the GSA;
- g) chair the Grad Student Lounge Sustainability Committee
- h) represent the GSA on University committees, including, but not limited to:
 - (i) the Senate (ex-officio seat),
 - (ii) the Admissions and Progress Committee,
 - (iii) The Board of Graduate Studies (BOGS),
 - (iv) The Student Executive Council,
 - (v) University Centre Board, and
 - (vi) Student Leaders and Administration Meetings (SLAM)
- i) meet regularly with the Assistant Vice President of Graduate Studies;
- j) assist in the coordination of Grad Student Orientation, in conjunction with Office of Graduate Studies and the Activities and Communications Coordinator;
- k) in conjunction with the Vice President Finance, conduct annual performance evaluations for all permanent GSA staff positions including, but not limited to, the GSA Office Manager, Grad Student Lounge Manager, and Grad Student Lounge Staff;
- l) represent the GSA on the University Presidential Advisory Committee (or such committee which serves this purpose at the time);
- m) possess discretionary, residual powers over matters that are not specifically governed by the Bylaws;
- n) delegate short-term services on an ~~honourary~~ honorary basis, as required;
- o) fulfill any other duties as indicated in the Bylaws for the President and CEO; and
- p) provide a summary report at the end of the term to be used and discussed with the incoming President and CEO during transition.

5.3 Responsibilities of the Vice President Internal

5.3.1 In addition to the general responsibilities of the Executive outlined in Section 5.1, the ~~Vice President Internal shall~~ President and CEO shall;

- a) manage the Board of Directors by:
 - (i) maintaining a complete list of departmental units with representation on the Board of Directors and a list of elected General Directors;
 - (ii) maintaining a complete list of GSA and University committees on which the GSA represents graduate students on;
 - (iii) maintaining a list of GSA Board members that represent the GSA on GSA and University committees, and ensure GSA representation and participation on these committees;
- b) establish and maintain communication with graduate students at the University by:
 - (i) submitting important information to be included in the GSA newsletter to the Activities and Communications Coordinator by the first (1st) of each month;



- (ii) ensuring the information on the GSA Website is up to date in conjunction with the GSA Office Manager;
- c) prepare the Board Meeting Materials Package and distribute to the Board of Directors at least three (3) days prior to the monthly Board Meeting;
- d) chair the GSA Bylaws Committee and vice chair the Board of Directors;
- e) have a working knowledge of the Bylaws and ensure the Bylaws are readily accessible to GSA members;
- f) represent the GSA on University committees, including, but not limited to:
 - (i) Academic Policies and Procedures Committee;
 - (ii) Student Leaders and Administration Meetings (SLAM)
 - (iii) The Student Organization Policy (SOP) Steering Committee, upon review of the SOP every five (5) years;
 - (iv) University Centre Board (alternate)
- g) in conjunction with the President and CEO, maintain communication with the Senate, Board of Graduate Studies, and student bodies with graduate representation for which no established communication channels exist;
- h) facilitate academic dispute resolution meetings with any GSA member; meetings must occur in a private space on campus, or in special circumstances over the phone or internet, if agreed upon by all parties; one additional GSA staff or Executive must be in attendance;
- i) in conjunction with the CSA Vice President Academic, be responsible for the organization of the Memorial Tree Ceremony and shall be responsible for contacting the families of all graduate students to be included in the ceremony to request permission for the student(s) name(s) to appear on the plaque and to invite all family members to attend the ceremony;
- j) in conjunction with the President and CEO, organize a GSA display at University events requiring GSA participation and representation;
- k) fulfill any other duties as indicated in the Bylaws for the Vice- President Internal; and
- l) provide a summary report at the end of the term to be used and discussed with the incoming Vice President Internal during transition.

5.4 Responsibilities of the Vice President Finance

5.4.1 In addition to the general responsibilities of the Executive outlined in Section 5.1, the Vice President Finance shall:

- a) supervise all business transactions of the GSA in accordance with the Bylaws, which includes the allocation and approval of funds to be used by the Activities and Communications Coordinator during the term;
- b) adhere to the financial procedures outlined in the Bylaws;
- c) prepare and present:
 - (i) a budget and an annual written financial statement to the Board of Directors for approval at the September board meeting;
 - (ii) a preliminary budget for the following fiscal year which should be presented for discussion at the meeting of the Executive prior to the AGM; and,
 - (iii) a tentative budget completed for approval at the AGM.
- d) keep the Board of Directors fully informed on all financial matters concerning



- the GSA; this includes a budget update at the January and May meetings of the Board of Directors;
- e) prepare semesterly statements of income, expenses and additional financial statements as requested by the Executive, and present the statements to the Board of Directors;
 - f) ensure the keeping of permanent and accurate records of all financial transactions of the GSA and all departments operating and within the purview of the GSA;
 - g) chair the Finance Committee;
 - h) represent the GSA on University committees, including, but not limited to:
 - (i) the University Student Health and Dental Plan as Co-Chair
 - (ii) Compulsory Fees Committee
 - (iii) the Student Budget Committee
 - (iv) the Late Appeals Committee
 - (v) Compassionate Bursary Committee
 - (vi) University Centre Board
 - (vii) Student Leaders and Administration Meetings (SLAM);
 - i) be responsible for assisting the GSA Office Manager with administrative duties associated with the Student Health and Dental Plan;
 - j) in conjunction with the President and CEO, perform annual performance evaluations for all permanent staff positions;
 - k) provide a summary report at the end of the term to be used and discussed with the incoming Vice President Finance during transition; and
 - l) fulfill any other duties as indicated in the Bylaws for the Vice- President Finance.

5.5 Responsibilities of the Vice President External

5.5.1 In addition to the general responsibilities of the Executive outlined in Section 5.1, the Vice-External shall:

- a) establish and maintain communication with student organizations and associations external to the University including, but not limited to:
 - (i) the Canadian Federation of Students,
 - (ii) the Canadian Federation of Students – Ontario,
 - (iii) the National Graduate Caucus;
- b) establish and maintain communication with local external associations and organizations including, but not limited to:
 - (i) the City of Guelph,
 - (ii) Guelph Transit, and
 - (iii) local media;
- c) represent the GSA on the following committees:
 - (i) the Student Transit Committee as Co-Chair;
 - (ii) Town and Gown;
 - (iii) Homecoming Committee; and
 - (iv) Student Leaders and Administration Meetings (SLAM);
- d) coordinate campaigns and events centered on federal, provincial, and municipal issues affecting students;
- e) attend Guelph City Council meetings where issues pertaining to graduate



- f) students are on the agenda;
be familiar with regulations, procedures, and changes in the Ontario Student Assistance Plan (OSAP), the Canadian Student Loan Plan, and the other funding bodies external to the University including, but not limited to the Tri-Council Scholarships (NSERC, SSHRC, and CIHR) and the Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS);
- g) in the event of a federal, provincial, or municipal election, determine, record, and inform the GSA membership of candidates' stance on issues that affect students. Further, shall encourage the GSA membership to vote in all federal, provincial, and municipal elections, by-elections, and referenda, with such information in mind;
- h) maintain the GSA Guelph Facebook page, according to the GSA Social Media Standard Operating Procedures document;
- i) provide a summary report at the end of the term to be used and discussed with the incoming Vice President External during transition; and
- j) fulfill any other duties as indicated in the Bylaws for the Vice- President External.

5.6 Election of the Executive

5.6.1 General Election Guidelines

- a) All Executive positions must be elected except in the case of a vacancy or removal as per Sections 6.7 and 6.8 of the Bylaws. The CRO shall be responsible for conducting the election of Executive according to the procedures as follows.
- b) The GSA Office Manager shall announce the timeline of the election period, as determined by the CRO, at the meeting of the Board of Directors that immediately precedes the beginning of the election period.
- c) Individuals seeking election to the Executive may not run as a member of the slate. For the purposes of the Bylaws a slate is defined as two or more candidates who have declared their intention to run together for separate positions.
- d) The nomination period shall be one (1) month in duration. In the event that a nomination is not received for the Executive position(s), the CRO can extend the nomination period as long as doing so does not postpone the voting period beyond the Annual General Meeting, where possible.

5.6.2 Nominations and Eligibility

- a) Only current members of the GSA as outlined in Section 2.0 are eligible to seek a nomination for any Executive position.
- b) Members seeking a nomination to an Executive position must be registered, or indicate the intent to register, in graduate studies at the University for the spring, fall and winter semesters of their term.
- c) Members seeking a nomination to an Executive position must have at least six (6) months service as a General Director or Executive at the commencement of their term to be eligible. This requirement is waived if none of the candidates nominated meet the requirement.
- d) Members who have previously been removed from any position on the Board of Directors, as per Section 4.4 or 5.8, are ineligible to seek election



to any position on the Board of Directors for a period of one year after their removal. These members must sit on the board for an additional six (6) months prior to submitting a nomination for Executive positions.

- e) No GSA member is eligible to run for an executive position if they have held the same elected or appointed executive position for the past three (3) consecutive terms.
- f) Nominations for Executive positions shall be submitted by email to the CRO.

5.6.3 Campaigning

- a) The campaign period shall immediately follow the nomination period and shall be of two (2) weeks in duration.
- b) The CRO shall review all campaign materials prior to publishing to ensure that they are not libelous or offensive, including all material posted on social media, prior to publishing. If any campaign material is published without permission, the CRO can choose to remove that candidate from the campaign.
- c) Campaign spending shall be limited to seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per candidate. Campaign materials for which a candidate is charged less than the market value shall be accounted for in the campaign spending limits at fair market value as determined by the CRO.
- d) Campaign expenses shall be reimbursed to the candidate by the GSA upon receipt of a summary of expenses, along with receipts, which shall be submitted to the CRO on the last day of the campaigning period.
- e) All campaigning must ~~cease~~cease, and any campaign materials removed by 4:30 pm EST on the last day of the campaign period. Failure to do so may result in disqualification from the election.
- f) No campaigning shall be permitted during the voting period.

5.6.4 Ballots and Voting

- a) The voting period shall follow the campaign period and be of at least two (2) days in duration.
- b) Each candidate shall be permitted to submit a statement of up to five hundred (500) words in length to be included on the ballot. Statements must be received at least ten (10) days before the voting period and must be approved for content by the CRO. The CRO has the discretion to reject any statement exceeding the word limit or found to be libelous or offensive if the candidate refuses to make any changes deemed necessary by the CRO. Statements that exceed the word limit will be cut off after 500 words.
- c) Voting shall be conducted by electronic ballot distributed through the GSA listserv, as created by the University of Guelph Department of Computing and Communications Services.
- d) Ballots shall contain the following information:
 - (i) The name(s) of the Executive position(s) to be filled with a brief description of the position;
 - (ii) Candidate name(s) and, if provided, statement(s)



- presented in alphabetical order according to last name;
 - (iii) Voters shall have the option to decline or to vote for none of the listed candidates, where applicable.
 - e) Immediately prior to the commencement of the voting period, the CRO shall cast a paper ballot for each position being contested in the election. This ballot shall be sealed and used in the event of a tie. If no tie exists after the election this ballot shall be destroyed without opening.

5.6.5 Results

- a) The CRO shall obtain the election results following the voting period.
- b) For any position, the candidate with the greatest number of affirmative votes shall be declared the successful candidate. In the event of a tie, the sealed ballot cast by the CRO pursuant to Bylaw 5.6.4 (e) shall be opened and used to break the tie.
- c) The CRO shall prepare a summary report outlining the name(s) of the successful candidate(s), the total number of votes cast for each candidate, and the total number of votes cast in the election. This report shall be presented to the candidate(s) and the Board of Directors via email and to the GSA membership at the AGM.

5.7 Executive Vacancies

5.7.1 A vacancy in an Executive position shall be determined to exist when:

- a) an Executive resigns from their position;
- b) an Executive is removed from their position as specified in Section 5.8;
- c) an Executive assumes the title and responsibilities of a vacant Executive position, as per Section 5.7.3; or
- d) no nominations are received for a position during the Executive elections.

5.7.2 In the event an Executive position becomes vacant, the President and CEO, in consultation with the remaining Executive, shall delegate key tasks of the vacant position between the remaining Executive.

5.7.3 The remaining Executive may assume the title and responsibilities of a vacant position, if said position immediately precedes their own position in the Executive hierarchy: President and CEO, Vice President Internal, Vice President Finance, and Vice President External. This decision must be ratified by the Board of Directors.

5.7.4 Vacancies in any Executive position(s), anticipated or otherwise and however caused, shall be communicated to the Board of Directors and a call for nominations to the vacant position(s) shall be sent immediately to the GSA membership. The remaining Executive shall be responsible for selecting a suitable candidate for the vacant position(s). Ratification of this decision will be made at the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors. The newly elected Executive shall begin their duties immediately after ratification with their term expiring on April 30.

5.8 Removal of an Executive

5.8.1 For reasons of grossly inappropriate or criminal behaviour, or violations of the GSA Human Rights Statement or University of Guelph Human Rights Policy, members of the Executive may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by the Board of Directors. This action is not in substitution for a grievance against the individual, complaints to the



University of Guelph Human Rights and Equity Office, or criminal or civil charges, and these options may also be pursued.

5.8.2 A referendum to remove an Executive may be requested by submitting a completed Request to Remove form, available from the GSA Office Manager with any of the following groups:

- a) one-fifth (1/5) of the membership;
- b) two-thirds (2/3) voting members of the Board of Directors; or
- c) three-quarters (3/4) of the Executive.

5.8.3 Upon receipt of a request to hold a referendum to remove an Executive, the President and CEO shall schedule a special meeting of the Board of Directors at which the referendum shall take place. This meeting shall take place no more than ten (10) days following receipt of the request. In the event the President and CEO is the position to be removed, the Vice President Internal shall be responsible for scheduling the special meeting.

5.8.4 In the case of 5.8.2 a), members of the GSA are allowed to attend and vote at the special meeting.

5.8.5 A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of no-confidence of those present at the special meeting and voting is required to remove the Executive.

5.8.6

5.9 Executive ~~Honouraria~~Honoraria

5.9.1 The President and CEO shall receive an ~~Honourarium~~Honorarium in the amount of eight hundred and twenty-nine dollars and 70 cents (~~\$871.19~~ ~~\$829.70~~) per month (effective May 1st, 2021) for the duration of their term. The ~~honourarium~~honorarium shall increase annually by an amount in agreement with the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA).

5.9.2 The Vice President Internal, Vice President Finance, and Vice President External shall each receive an ~~honourarium~~honorarium in the amount of eight hundred and five dollars and thirty five cents ~~seven hundred and sixty seven dollars and 53 cents~~ (~~\$805.35~~~~767.53~~) per month (effective May 1st, 2021) for the duration of their term. The ~~honouraria~~honoraria shall increase annually by an amount in agreement with the ~~Cost of Living~~Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA).

5.9.3 In case of a conflict in honoraria received, it should be immediately reported to GSA executive and GSA office manager.

6.0 Appointed Officers

6.1 Chair

6.1.1 The responsibilities of the Chair of the GSA Board of Directors shall be:

- a) to preside over all meetings of the Board of Directors and the Annual General Meeting;
- b) to have a working knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order and the GSA Bylaws;
- c) to oversee General Meetings of the GSA according to Robert's Rules of Order and the Bylaws, and in conjunction with the Vice President Internal, enforce the Bylaws at meetings of the GSA;
- d) as it pertains to meetings of the Board of Directors or the Annual General Meeting, to act as an advisor to members of the Board of Directors on issues pertaining to Robert's Rules of Order and the GSA Bylaws; and
- e) to ensure that all routine items of GSA business are discussed by the Board of Directors, or the GSA membership in the case of the Annual



General Meeting, and that all agenda items are addressed.

- 6.1.2** The Chair may not stand for election or hold an elected seat on the Board of Directors, and may not be a member of any GSA committees while holding the position of Chair.
- 6.1.3** The Chair shall not hold a term of more than three (3) years in duration.

6.2 Chief Returning Officer

- 6.2.1** The responsibilities of the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) of the GSA shall be:
- to, in accordance with all relevant provisions of the GSA Bylaws, preside over all GSA elections, by-elections, and referenda; and
 - to have a working knowledge of the GSA Bylaws.
- 6.2.2** The CRO may not stand for election or hold an elected Executive position while holding the position of CRO.
- 6.2.3** The CRO shall not hold a term of more than three (3) years in duration.

6.3 Appointment of Chair and CRO

- 6.3.1** Appointed officers must be current members of the GSA, as outlined in Section 2.0.
- 6.3.2** The Executive shall be responsible for selecting a suitable candidate for the positions of Chair and CRO according to the following procedure:
- vacancies in appointed positions shall be announced to the GSA membership and nominations for suitable candidates sought immediately upon any position becoming vacant.
 - applications for the vacant position(s) shall be received until a suitable candidate is chosen.
 - The Chair should have previously served on the Board of Directors for at least six (6) months or have been a past executive member. In extenuating circumstances, preference will be given to candidates with prior chairing or related experience.
- 6.3.3** The Vice President Internal shall be responsible for fulfilling the responsibilities of the Chair and/or CRO while the position(s) is/are vacant.

6.4 Removal of an Appointed Officer

- 6.4.1** An Appointed Officer may be removed from their position by either:
- a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members of the Board of Directors at a regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors; or
 - a three-quarters (3/4) majority vote of the Executive.

6.5 Appointed ~~Officer~~ of ~~Honouraria~~ Honoraria

- 6.5.1** The Chair shall receive an ~~honourarium~~ honorarium in the amount of ~~Eighty dollars and sixty one seventy nine dollars and 15-cents (\$80.6179.15)~~ per meeting that they are in attendance as Chair, effective May 1st, 2021.
- 6.5.2** The CRO shall receive an ~~honourarium~~ honorarium in the amount of one hundred and ~~fifty two~~ five dollars and ~~9277~~ cents (\$152.77r105.92) for each event in a semester when they hold the position of CRO and are required to oversee a GSA election, by-election, or referendum, effective May 1st, 2021.
- 6.5.3** The Activities and Communications Coordinator shall receive an ~~honourarium~~ honorarium in the amount of seven hundred and ~~eighty one sixty seven~~ dollars and 5372 cents (\$781.7267.53) per month, effective ~~August~~ May 1st, 2020.



6.5.4 No appointed officer shall be permitted to exceed 10 hours per week.

6.5.5 In case of a conflict in honoraria received, it should be immediately reported to GSA executive and GSA office manager.

7.0 Committees

7.1 General Committee Procedures

7.1.1 GSA standing committees and ad-hoc committees shall be called and chaired by an Executive to be decided on by the GSA Executives as a group. The Executive, as a group, shall be responsible for appointing the chair of any ad hoc committee(s).

7.1.2 GSA standing committees should have a minimum of four (4) members in addition to the chair.

7.1.3 Quorum for all GSA committees shall be three-fifths (3/5) of the members of said committee.

7.1.4 All members of a GSA committee, including the chair, shall be allowed to vote on all motions discussed at meetings of said committee. Motions discussed at committee meetings shall be decided by majority vote of the members present at said meeting. In the case of a tie, the motion fails.

7.1.5 Minutes should be recorded for all GSA standing committee meetings, and provided to the Office Manager within seven (7) days of the meeting.

7.1.6 Committee vacancies will be filled according to a fair procedure decided upon by the Vice President Internal.

7.1.7 No GSA member may be denied membership to any GSA standing committee, where a vacancy exists, except in case of a conflict of interest.

7.1.8 The members of a committee may request participation of non-members of the GSA in an advisory role, if necessary. In these circumstances, the same committee reporting procedures must be followed by the non-member.

7.1.9 All committees shall record meeting minutes and make regular reports to the Board of Directors.

7.1.10 Additional ad hoc committees may be formed, where necessary, by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. No committee may be formed that would, in principle or de facto, remove, replace, restrict, or in any way reduce the power of the Board of Directors or its Executive, as outlined herein.

7.1.11 Upon completion of appointed task(s), ad hoc committees shall make a final report to the Board of Directors on their actions and recommendations, and unless otherwise instructed shall then be dissolved.

7.1.12 Whether or not an ad hoc committee has fulfilled its mandate, it may be dissolved at any time by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

7.1.13 A member of the GSA standing committee(s) may be recalled and replaced after three (3) consecutive absences from meetings of said committee.

7.1.14 Recall of a representative may be requested by:

- a) the standing committee to which they have been appointed;
- b) a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors; or
- c) a three-quarters (3/4) vote majority of the Executive.

7.1.15 GSA Standing Committees include:

- a) Bylaws Committee
- b) Finance Committee
- c) Grad Student Lounge Sustainability Committee



- d) Volunteer Committee

7.2 Bylaws Committee

7.2.1 The mandate of the Bylaws Committee shall be to provide critical examination and evaluation of the Bylaws and any proposed change(s) to the Bylaws and to ensure the integrity of the Bylaws.

7.2.2 In addition to the general committee procedures as outlined in Section 7.1, the Bylaws Committee shall:

- a) make recommendations for change(s) to GSA governing policy, if any, at the Annual General Meeting and, where necessary, at meetings of the Board of Directors;
- b) be responsible for reviewing any referendum question(s) referred by the Board of Directors;
- c) be chaired by the Vice President Internal; and
- d) meet at least once prior to the Annual General Meeting, ideally once per Fall and Winter semester.

7.3 Finance Committee

7.3.1 The mandate of the Finance Committee shall be to oversee the finances of the GSA insofar as how they pertain to advancing the academic goals of graduate students as per the mission statement of the GSA.

7.3.2 In addition to the General Committee procedures as outlined in Section 7.1, the Finance Committee shall:

- a) assist the Vice President Finance in creating the annual GSA budget, bursaries and awards, and in preparing financial updates. Current terms and conditions of the GSA Grants and Bursaries are maintained by the GSA Office Manager;
- b) be chaired by the Vice President Finance and consist of at least two (2) General Directors; and
- c) meet at least once per month, in Fall and Winter semesters and as needed in accordance with GSA grant application deadlines and to review Honouraria/Honoraria.

7.3.3 No member of the Finance Committee shall be permitted to attend meetings in which their own application for financial resources is being considered. No Except GSA VP Finance (or the executive chairing the Finance Committee in absence of VP Finance) all other Executive members may apply for financial resources during their term.

7.4 Grad Student Lounge Sustainability Committee

7.4.1 The mandate of the Grad Student Lounge Sustainability Committee is to develop short- and long-term goals for the Grad Student Lounge to achieve and maintain financial sustainability.

7.4.2 In addition to the general committee procedures outlined in Section 7.1, the Grad Student Lounge Sustainability Committee shall:

- a) review all financial statements and proposed budgets of the Grad Student Lounge;
- b) develop short- and long-term goals related to Grad Student Lounge Operations;
- c) be chaired by the President and CEO;



- d) have at least three (3) members consisting of Vice President Finance, and two (2) General Directors;
- e) in addition to committee members, have the Grad Student Lounge Manager and the Activities and Communications Coordinator participate in a non-voting advisory capacity;
- f) determine quorum by the voting members only; and
- g) meet at least once per month.

7.5 Volunteer Committee

7.5.1 The mandate of the Volunteer Committee is to develop, plan and execute GSA events that advance the academic, professional or social development of graduate students as per the GSA mission statement.

7.5.2 In addition to the general committee procedures outlined in Section 7.1, the Volunteer Committee shall:

- a) assist the Activities and Communications Coordinator in creating, planning and running GSA events throughout the semester as well as daily during Fall Orientation Week;
- b) be chaired by the Activities and Communication Coordinator;
- c) have at least five (5) General Directors on the committee;
- d) hold all GSA events at the Grad Student Lounge; and
- e) plan and coordinate all event dates for the semester at beginning of each semester with the Grad Student Lounge Manager.

7.6 University Committees

7.6.1 University committees are those committees that engage in processes of governance that oversee matters of academia, administration objectives, and matters related to the administration of the University.

7.6.2 The Vice President Internal shall be responsible for appointment of members of the Board of Directors to University committees as GSA representatives where a graduate or GSA seat has been provided.

7.6.3 The Executive, as a group, shall be responsible for appointing an Executive(s) to represent the GSA on University Committee(s) requiring Executive membership.

7.6.4 Duties of appointed GSA representatives on University committees shall be to:

- a) attend all meetings required by their position or, if permitted by the committee, arrange for an alternate representative to attend;
- b) seek input from the Board of Directors on business arising at committee meetings, where required;
- c) inform the Executive of matters requiring urgent attention; and
- d) make regular reports to the Board of Directors as to the proceedings of the University committee to which they are appointed.

7.6.5 A GSA representative on a University committee may be recalled and replaced if they fail to fulfill the duties of representing the GSA on said committee or after three (3) absences from meetings of said committee. Recall of a representative may be requested by:

- a) the University committee to which they have been appointed;
- b) a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors; or
- c) a three-quarters (3/4) majority vote of the Executive.

7.6.6 It is the responsibility of the GSA representative to inform the Vice President Internal of committee absences. Any dispute regarding the replacement or removal of the



GSA representative from a committee may be reviewed by the Bylaws Committee.

8.0 Referenda

8.1 Referendum Questions

8.1.1 Any referendum question must consist of a preamble and a clearly stated proposition requiring a "Yes" or "No" answer.

8.1.2 Any referendum question shall be brought to the Board of Directors for consideration and a referendum shall be held upon approval of the question by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote. The Board of Directors may refer any referendum question to the Bylaws Committee for review before final approval.

8.1.3 No referendum shall be held on the same or similar question(s) within two (2) years of the previous question(s) being asked, except for a referendum required for policy or contractual obligations, pursuant to Section 9.0.

8.2 Conducting Referenda

8.2.1 Unless deemed otherwise by the Board of Directors, any referendum shall be held in conjunction with the Executive election process and shall therefore follow the same procedures for campaign, voting, ballot distribution, and results as set out in Section 5.6.

8.2.2 The CRO shall give notice of a referendum to the GSA membership at least fourteen (14) **calendar** days before the last day to register for a "Yes" or "No" campaign.

8.2.3 The ballot displaying the question shall have a preamble and a clearly worded proposition that requires a "Yes," "No," or "Decline" answer.

8.2.4 Quorum for a vote on a referendum question shall be ten percent (10%) of the membership of the GSA. The decision of the voting members shall be based on the answer receiving the majority of votes. In the event of a tie, the referendum fails.

8.3 Referendum Campaigns

8.3.1 "Yes" and/or "No" campaigns shall be conducted according to the following procedures:

- a) all members of the GSA are allowed to conduct a "Yes" or "No" campaign. Any GSA member wishing to conduct either a "Yes" or "No" campaign during any referendum must officially register their campaign with the CRO by 4:30 pm (EST) on the last working day prior to the start of the campaign period for which the referendum is being conducted;
- b) the Board of Directors may officially take a "Yes" or "No" position on any referendum question which must be voted on during a meeting of the Board of Directors;
- c) there shall be only one official "Yes" campaign and one official "No" campaign for each referendum; and
- d) a representative from each of the campaigns shall attend an information session organized and conducted by the CRO immediately following the campaign registration deadline. Failure to attend the information session shall result in the disqualification of official campaign status.

8.3.2 Campaign Materials

- a) each campaign is permitted to submit a statement of up to five hundred (500) words in length to the CRO to be distributed to the GSA membership. The CRO has the authority to refuse to distribute any statement that exceeds the word limit or is determined to be libelous or



- offensive in nature.
- b) the CRO shall review all campaign materials, including all material posted on social media, prior to publishing to ensure that they are not all libelous or offensive. If any campaign material is published without permission, the CRO can choose to remove that position's representation from the campaign.
- c) campaign spending shall be limited to seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per campaign. Campaign materials for which a candidate is charged less than the market value shall be accounted for in the campaign spending limits at fair market value as determined by the CRO.
- d) campaign expenses shall be reimbursed to the candidate by the GSA upon receipt of a summary of expenses, along with receipts, which shall be submitted to the CRO on the last day of the campaigning period.

8.4 Referendum Results

8.4.1 Referendum results shall be determined and reported as per the following procedures:

- a) the CRO shall obtain the referendum results following the voting period.
- b) for any referendum, the answer with the greatest number of votes shall be declared the outcome. In the event of a tie, the referendum fails.
- c) the CRO shall prepare a summary report outlining the results of the referendum and the total number of votes cast for each question. This report shall be presented to the Board of Directors via email and to the GSA membership at the AGM.

9.0 Policies and Contractual Agreements

9.1 Student Organization Policy

9.1.1 The GSA is a recognized Primary Student Organization at the University and shall be required to abide by all University policies and procedures, as outlined in the Student Organization Policy.

9.2 Universal Bus Pass

9.2.1 The University Bus Pass contract is between the City of Guelph/Guelph Transit and the GSA, and organized through the CSA/GSA Transit Committee.

9.2.2 The Universal Bus Pass shall be distributed to graduate students by the GSA according to the Universal Bus Pass policy.

9.3 Health and Dental Plan

9.3.1 The Health and Dental Plan contract is between an insurance broker and the GSA and is managed by the Student Health and Dental Plan Committee.

9.3.2 The Health and Dental Plan shall be administered by the Student Benefits Office at the University.

9.4 Petitions, Delegations, and Representation

9.4.1 The mandate of the Petitions, Delegations, and Representation (Activities Grant) policy shall be to distribute GSA funds available to organizations and groups hosting events that advance the mission statement of the GSA.

9.4.2 The GSA shall make funds available for the direct purpose of distribution to



organizations and groups seeking funds through the Activities Grant application process.]

9.4.3 The distribution of Activities Grant funds shall be according to the following procedures:

- a) Activities Grant request form, referred to as the Graduate Student Association Activities Grant (PDR) Application, shall be available from the GSA Office Manager and on the GSA website;
- b) only requests advancing the mission statement of the GSA shall be considered;
- c) applications will be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis and up to three (3) qualifying applications will be considered per meeting of the Board of Directors (no applications considered during the AGM or during special meetings);
- d) no organization or group may request GSA funding, through the Activities Grant process, more than once during a fiscal year (May 1 to April 30);
- e) organizations or groups requesting funding through the Activities Grant process must provide a detailed description of proposed activities, including a detailed budget, and must be for events that have not yet occurred;
- f) funding request must be submitted to the GSA Office Manager at least ten (10) days before the next meeting of the Board of Directors; and
- g) Activities Grant presentations shall not exceed five (5) minutes. The Board of Directors shall be permitted to ask questions of the presenter following the presentation, after which any individual present connected with the Activities Grant being discussed shall leave the meeting until a decision has been made.

10.0 Financial Procedures

10.1 Signing Authority

10.1.1 The President and CEO, Vice President Internal, Vice President Finance, GSA Office Manager, and Grad Student Lounge Manager will have authority as bank signing officers for the GSA. All Executives may sign on behalf of the GSA for matters relating to their portfolio.

10.1.2 The signatures of two (2) signing officers must be present on all financial documents (including, but not limited to, cheques and contracts), one of which must be an Executive. No Executive signature shall be required for Grad Student Lounge operational expenses with a value of less than three hundred dollars (\$300.00).

10.1.3 No financial documents (including, but not limited to, cheques and contracts) beyond those required for regular business operations may be created or signed without the approval of the President and CEO in consultation with the Vice President Internal and Vice President Finance.

10.2 Investments

10.2.1 Upon receipt of student fees each semester, bus pass, health and dental plan, and GSA membership fees shall be entered into short term Guaranteed Investment Certificates (GICs) until the funds must be dispensed according to contractual obligations (bus pass, health plan, dental plan) or required for GSA operations (GSA membership fees).

10.2.2 Section 10.2.1 is subject to budgetary considerations as may be determined by the Executive.



10.3 Savings

- 10.3.1** Budget permitting, five percent (5%) of GSA membership fees received each semester are to be deposited into a savings instrument.
- 10.3.2** These funds may be spent only upon approval by the Board of Directors.
- 10.3.3** Decisions of the expenditure of such funds must receive two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members of the Board of Directors in attendance at a duly called meeting of the Board of Directors.
- 10.3.4** Such funds are only to be spent on capital expenditures and special initiatives of the GSA.
- 10.3.5** Such funds may not be spent to support legal costs of GSA members or initiatives that are not endorsed by the GSA.

11.0 Grad Student Lounge and GSA Staff

11.1 Grad Student Lounge, Grad Student Lounge Manager

- 11.1.1** The Grad Student Lounge is owned and operated by the GSA, with the Grad Student Lounge Manager serving as a hired agent working on behalf of the Board of Directors.
- 11.1.2** Duties of the Grad Student Lounge Manager are as per the contractual agreement on file in the GSA Office.
- 11.1.3** A financial summary shall be presented to the Board of Directors once per term.
- 11.1.4** A draft budget shall be presented for information at the Annual General Meeting and a finalized budget shall be presented for approval by the Executive in September.

11.2 Activities and Communications Coordinator

- 11.2.1** The Activities and Communications Coordinator shall be hired by the GSA Executive and Staff and work under the direction of the Graduate Student Lounge Manager and guidance of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.
- 11.2.2** Duties of the Activities and Communications Coordinator are as per the contractual agreement developed by the Executive Committee with input from the GSA Office Manager and Grad Student Lounge Manager. These duties include but are not limited to:
 - a) creating and distributing at least one (1) newsletter per month to update graduate students on any GSA or graduate student-related business, and GSA Board Meetings, effective August 1st, 2020;
 - b) sitting on the UC Digital Signage Review Committee, effective August 1st, 2020;
 - c) maintaining Facebook, and Instagram pages for The Fifth according to the GSA Social Media Standard Operating Procedures document; and,
 - d) maintaining Facebook, and Twitter pages for the GSA in conjunction with the Vice President External, according to the GSA Social Media Standard Operating Procedures document.
- 11.2.3** The Activities and Communications Coordinator must provide updates to:
 - a) the Grad Student Lounge Manager every week;
 - b) the Executive Committee and Staff at monthly Executive meetings; and
 - c) General Directors at monthly meetings of the Board of Directors.
- 11.2.4** The Executive shall be responsible for fulfilling the responsibilities of the Activities and Communications Coordinator while the position is vacant.

[11.2.5 The Activities and Communications Coordinator would need approval of -President or -----](#)



GSA executives committee for all events sponsored by GSA. In case that a proposed event or activity requires more than \$150 from GSA reserves, then the **Activities and Communications Coordinator** would require to present the details about the event to the **Vice President finance and executives committee**. Depending on the requirements of funds, it may require subsequent approval from the finance committee on discretion of **Vice President Finance**.

11.3 GSA Office Manager

11.3.1 The GSA Office Manager shall oversee the operation of the GSA office in accordance with the Bylaws of the GSA.

11.3.2 The GSA Office Manager shall report directly to the President, followed by the Vice President Internal, Vice President Finance, and Vice President External.

11.3.3 The GSA Office Manager shall act as a liaison to the Board of Directors, the GSA membership, and the University community.

11.3.4 Duties of the GSA Office Manager are as per the contractual agreement on file in the GSA Office.

12.0 GSA Bylaws and Policy Development

12.1 Amendments

12.1.1 Any member of the Board of Directors may recommend amendments to the current Bylaws governing the activities of the GSA at a meeting of the Board of Directors.

12.1.2 Amendments to the Bylaws can include the addition of Appendices containing pertinent information in relation to any section of the Bylaws.

12.1.3 Motions presented to the Board of Directors requesting amendment(s) to the Bylaws shall require two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors to be implemented.

12.1.4 Any such recommendations for amendments to the Bylaws may be referred to the Bylaws Committee for further discussion if deemed necessary by the Board of Directors. The Bylaws Committee will present their recommendation(s) at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors.

12.1.5 The Board of Directors may not decide on matters influencing any graduate student fee, or on pre-existing contractual obligations, and such matters may only be decided by referendum, as per Section 8.0.

12.1.6 Amendment(s) to the Bylaws adopted by the Board of Directors will be presented for ratification by the GSA membership at the AGM. Voting on all such amendments accruing over the year may be done en masse at the AGM during the Bylaws ratification.