



**NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING**

**Date: Wednesday November 27, 2013**

**Time: 4:30 pm – 6:20 pm**

**Place: J.R. Coutts Hall (RCH) 306**

**Agenda**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>SESSION</b>	<b>PAGE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
4:30	1. Chair's Remarks		
4:35	2. Agenda/Additional items		
	<b>Consent Agenda</b>		
4:40	<b>Motion:</b> To approve and/or receive for information by consent items 3-5 below.		Decision
	3. Minutes of the October 28, 2013 meeting Confidential Session minutes (hardcopy)	3	
	4. Appointments and resignations		
	5. Reports from the GSA Executive	6 - 34	
	<b>Regular Agenda</b>		
4:45	6. Q & A		Discussion/Information
5:00	7. Council Committees, Coleen Even a. Graduate Orientation Committee b. Ad-hoc Theft Prevention Committee c. Student Affairs Committee		Information/Decision
5:30	8. CASA update		Information
5:45	9. Other Business		
	10. Next meeting		Information
	<b>Confidential Agenda</b>		
6:00	11. Report of the VP Internal		Information
6:20	12. Adjournment		Decision

Note:

To allow the Council to complete matters quickly and devote more of its attention to major items of business, the agenda has been divided between items that are to be approved and/or received for information by consent, and those that are to be presented

individually for discussion, decision and/or information. A consent agenda is not intended to prevent discussion of any matter by the Council, but items listed under the consent sections will not be discussed at the meeting unless requested by a Councillor. Documentation for each item will be supplied with the agenda and all items will be approved by omnibus motion in the consent agenda. The Council will then move immediately to address items on the regular agenda.

Please send regrets to Rose Vogt by email to [rvogt@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:rvogt@uwaterloo.ca)

Michael Makahnouk, Vice President Internal, November 19, 2013.



**Graduate Student Association**  
UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

## **COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Monday October 28, 2013 at 16:30 in RCH room 206

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### **Present:**

Robert Henderson, President, Chair  
Maryam Shahtaheri, VP Communications & Events  
Matthew Gaster, VP External  
Michael Makahnouk, VP Internal  
Coleen Even, VP Student Affairs  
Helen Broom, Director  
Maya D'Alessio, Director  
Michael Piazza, Director  
Taya McGillivary, Director (on-line)  
Devan McNeil for K. Lopez, Recreation & Leisure  
Gobi S. for Isabelle Messa, SPHHS  
Allison Mascella, Economics  
Ryan Kirkby, History  
Alex Winikoff for Madeliene Merrick, Political Science  
Celia Huang, Sociology  
Artur Sokol, Management Sciences  
Boyd Panton, Mechanical & Mechatronics Engineering  
James Sebele, School of Planning  
Amenda Chow Applied Mathematics  
Kexue Zhang, guest, Applied Mathematics  
Alex Pokluda, Computer Science  
Ty Ghaswala, Pure Mathematics  
Brienne McCallum, Biology  
Nathan Cleven, Earth & Environment Studies  
Samantha Shortall, School of Pharmacy  
Krista Mathias, At-Large Councillor  
Rose Vogt, General Manager (minutes)

Regrets: Dan McRoberts, Ikdip Brar, Virginia Shay, Amin Haghnegahdar, Matthew Edwards, Steven Cheung, Optometry

Absent without regrets: Ahmed Abel-Aziz, Miriam Ho, Fahmida Hodayra, Kristin Leal, David Pomaranski

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1. Chair's Remarks  
Quorum is met.  
The meeting is called to order at 16:35.
2. Council approves the agenda with an additional item- 6a.) Issue from GSRC, Robert Henderson. (Henderson/D'Alessio)

### **Consent Agenda**

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**Council approves and/or receives for information by consent items 3 – 5 of the agenda.** (Panton/Gaster)

### **Regular Agenda**

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6. **A.) Issue from the GSRC, Robert Henderson**

Henderson brought the issue of graduate students in science delay in receiving their award and pay by the faculty/department to the Graduate Student Relations Committee. Henderson met with the Dean of Science and the Associate Provost Graduate Studies. The issue is resolved and the students have been paid, but the payment was delayed.

In future terms the Dean said the awards will be paid at the beginning of term as they are supposed to be paid. That this was a unique circumstance. The current graduate calendar incorrectly states that these awards will be paid at the end of the month. Council expressed concern that there is a total lack of ownership for this occurrence and that there was no formal apology to students.

This follows to policy on keeping records for students/TAs. This impacts the use of the TA hours allocation form. Support for the form by graduate students is necessary for the greater good, especially those departments where TA hours allocation are less formal.

**B.) Q & A**

Makahnouk explains that his report was not submitted in time for the agenda due to a death in the family. He will summarize his report for the next meeting.

7. **CRO Report: SWAG Referendum**

The report was submitted with the agenda package. Vogt confirms with Council that the SWAG referendum was passed by its membership. The result of the referendum date was too late to be added to the University of Waterloo Board of Governors and thus the new fee will not be applied in January. The fee will begin May 1, 2013.

8. **uWaterloo's Student Leadership Strategy**

Presentation by Jeff Henry and Theresa Nystrom.

Council heard a presentation of the SSO strategy to better support student involvement at uWaterloo. See handout attached.

Councillors are recruited for:

- Focus groups in early November,
- Short surveys for release at the end of November, March, and May.
- Student panel-convene on more regular basis.

Council heard that it is important receive the graduate student perspective and that it is important to bring graduate students to the table. Professional skills development provisions are relatively minimal and less articulated to graduate students. The intent is to gain date and create tools that are meaningful to graduate students.

All parties need to be involved in the development of tools, and acknowledgement that graduate students may not necessarily be focused on a career in academia.

## **9. Other Business**

- a. Campus bike thefts, and thefts of personal property in general.  
D'Alessio reports that there is no reaction or response on campus to address the theft issues. She raised the issue to Senate and there is not reaction. The issue is not solely theft of bicycles, but theft in PAC lockers, the library, and in all areas of campus. Safety on campus is an important issue and may include personal safety. The GSA should take a leading role to raise awareness to this issue.  
D'Alessio, Vogt, Even will begin a working group to evaluate what actions may be possible. Any Councillors wishing to take part in the working group may contact Maya D'Alessio. The working group will report to Council at the next meeting.

Item 10- Discussed in Confidential Session.

11. **Next Meeting:** TBA – November, 2013

12. **The meeting adjourned at 17:35.**

WRMM:rv



**Report of the President to GSA Council  
Robert D. E. Henderson  
November 2013**

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**Conferences**

**Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (Annual Conference)**

*Montreal, QC | November 3-5*

The Faculties and Offices of graduate studies in universities across the country meet (represented by their deans, associate deans, student association executive) once a year to discuss the climate of graduate studies across Canada and around the world, and to share information.

A more detailed report is presented at the end of this document.

**Conference of Ontario University Board Members**

*Toronto, ON | November 8-9*

All members of the boards of universities in Ontario were invited to this two-day event in Toronto where there were talks and panel discussions on recent developments and future predictions for post secondary education, with emphasis on the role of boards and board members. Several high-profile individuals were invited speakers, including: our former university president and currently the Governor General of Canada, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston; Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Deborah Newman; Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities Brad Duguid, and our own board chair, The Honourable Kevin Lynch.

A more detailed report is presented at the end of this document.

**CASA Advocacy Week**

*Ottawa, ON | November 17-22*

I will present an oral report to Council, and a full report will be included in this year's EAC annual report. In the interim, I will say that as I write this (halfway through the conference) I have met with 4 MPs in formal meetings and engaged with others informally while on Parliament Hill, and my colleagues in attendance (Kristen Leal and Helen Broom) have had similar experiences. While here, we are focusing on raising issues of importance to graduate students (e.g., student seats on the Tri-Council governing boards, increasing access to the Canada Student Loans Program) with members of parliament to ensure that our constituents are well served. Thanks to

Kristen's additional efforts, we have scheduled additional meetings with MPs whose constituencies are in and around Waterloo so that we may

## **Special Projects**

### **Registrar Search Committee**

The search for a new Registrar is underway. Discussions are confidential, and interviews/consultation sessions are not listed in my summary of meetings.

### **Policy Reviews**

Work continues on the review of ADDS policy (how and when a faculty member is allowed to sole-supervise a PhD student) and the new Class Z policy development. The former's progress has been discussed at the November meetings of the Graduate Student Relations and Faculty Relations Committees. The Class Z working group will be meeting again in early December.

## **Summary of Meetings**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Highlights</b>
<b>Senate</b>	October 21	In addition to routine business, Senate decided to consider the university's strategic plan (again) at the November meeting. This was because changes to the plan after prior approval did not go back to Senate before Board of Governors approval.
<b>Meeting on Student Advocacy Project</b>	October 23	Met with Chris Read, VPSA and EA to discuss progress on this project. This is moving forward, and next steps will be consultation with FEDS on the scope of this office.
<b>GSA Executive, Lunch with the new SSO Director (Pam Charbonneau)</b>	October 23	Introduced GSA executive to the new SSO director.
<b>Senate Long Range Planning Committee</b>	October 23	Heard updates from the Provost on the strategic plan implementation process, new university budget model, and strategic enrollment management project.
<b>Meeting with Geoff McBoyle, VP Academic and Provost</b>	October 24	General updates on GSA projects; discussed office space options, the TA form, and strategic plan.
<b>Meeting with UW Staff Association President, Carlos Mendes</b>	October 24	Discussed items of mutual interest, including the Grad House membership framework.
<b>University Registrar Search Committee</b>	October 28	First meeting. Discussions are confidential.
<b>GSA Board of Directors</b>	October 28	General financial and corporate matters of the GSA.
<b>Task force on ADDS status (policy on sole supervision of PhDs)</b>	October 28	Agreed on a report to send to Graduate Student Relations and Faculty Relations Committees.
<b>Copyright Advisory Committee</b>	October 28	Provided feedback on new fair dealing advisory documents for students, staff and faculty.
<b>GSA Council</b>	October 28	See minutes of previous meeting.
<b>Meeting with Bud Walker (Associate Provost, Human Resources) and Kimberly Snage (Assistant Director,</b>	October 29	Preliminary meeting to discuss the TA time allocation form's retention procedures. Next steps are for HR to research current graduate student

<b>HR)</b>		employment records procedures and bring them in line with retention policies.
<b>Board of Governors</b>	October 29	Heard updates on the strategic plan implementation, discussed the new gift acceptance policy, new building projects (e.g., a filling in HH courtyard for new student space), and general corporate matters of the university.
<b>UW President's Reception</b>	October 29	Attended as a representative of the Board of Governors to meet and mingle with donors of the university.
<b>Meeting with Beth Jewkes (Associate Provost, Resources)</b>	October 31	Discussed the prior two years of business carried out by the Graduate Student Support Advisory Committee. Beth is the chair, and a review of the committee is necessary.
<b>Canadian Association for Graduate Studies Annual Conference (Monreal)</b>	November 3-5	See separate report.
<b>Senate Executive Committee</b>	November 4	Mike Makahnouk (VPIN) attended on my behalf while I was away at CAGS. The committee agreed to a November Senate agenda, which included consideration of the strategic plan.
<b>Meeting with Chris Read (Associate Provost, Students)</b>	November 6	Discussed ongoing projects within the AP Students portfolio pertaining to graduate students, in particular athletics, student services fees and protocols.
<b>Meeting Re: Student Advocacy Office</b>	November 7	General project update.
<b>UW Strategic Plan Theme Steering Committee for "A Vibrant Student Experience"</b>	November 7	First meeting of this group to carry out this part of the strategic plan. I will be in touch with council on aspects of this implementation plan for further consultation.
<b>Dinner with Interuniversity Captain's Council Executive and Athletics Staff</b>	November 7	Invited to meet with varsity captains (who are also executive of the captain's council) to discuss athletics on campus, our respective leadership roles, and how we can collaborate in the future.
<b>Conference of Ontario University Board Members (Toronto)</b>	November 8-9	See separate report.
<b>Senate Graduate &amp; Research Council</b>	November 11	Approved a number of curricular modifications and new graduate awards.
<b>Meeting with Larry Smith</b>	November 11	Discussed entrepreneurship/career initiatives and projects targetted to graduate students. We'll be keeping in touch on this topic.
<b>Copyright Advisory Committee</b>	November 11	Sent feedback on agenda material but could not attend because of other meetings.
<b>Meeting with SSO Staff Re: Orientation Roles</b>	November 12	Ongoing discussions with SSO on orientation planning.
<b>Student Services Advisory Committee</b>	November 12	Information meeting to get the reporting and fee determination cycle going.
<b>Meeting with Pam Charbonneau, SSO Director</b>	November 13	Attended with Krista Mathias, EA, to discuss the forthcoming orientation report.
<b>GSA Student Affairs Committee</b>	November 13	Sent regrets due to a conflicting meeting.
<b>Graduate Student Relations</b>	November 13	Chaired this meeting. Discussed a number of current



<b>Committee</b>		issues pertaining to graduate students.
<b>Meeting with Feridun Hamdullahpur (President) and Geoff McBoyle (Provost) Re: Strategic Plan</b>	November 13	Discussed the strategic plan and Senate's consideration of this plan at the November meeting.
<b>Meeting with Geoff McBoyle, VP Academic and Provost</b>	November 14	Updated on a number of issues, including: GSA office space, strategic plan, GSSAC cycle and graduate funding, and TA salary issues. Will follow-up at a subsequent meeting to discuss the Class Z policy.
<b>Meeting with David Porreca (President, UW Faculty Association)</b>	November 14	Met to discuss topics of mutual interest.
<b>University Registrar Search Committee</b>	November 14	Second meeting. Considered feedback from university community. Discussions are confidential.
<b>CASA Advocacy Week (Ottawa)</b>	November 18-22	I will have an oral preliminary report to Council at the meeting.
<b>GSEF Board of Directors</b>	November 18	Regrets (CASA)
<b>Senate</b>	November 18	Regrets (CASA)
<b>UW Strategic Plan Theme Steering Committee for "A Vibrant Student Experience"</b>	November 25	
<b>Meeting with HR Staff</b>	November 26	
<b>Meeting with Chris Read (AP Students) and Adam Garcia (FEDS VP Education)</b>	November 26	
<b>Meeting with Pam Charbonneau, SSO Director</b>	November 26	
<b>GSA Long Range Planning</b>	November 26	
<b>Meeting with Mahejabeen Ebrahim (Director of Equity)</b>	November 27	
<b>Ancillary Fee Protocol Working Group</b>	November 27	
<b>GSA Council</b>	November 27	

**Graduate Student Association – University of Waterloo  
REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

**Canadian Association for Graduate Studies - Annual Conference  
3-6 November, 2013  
Montreal, QC**

**Background**

The Faculties and Offices of graduate studies in universities across the country meet (represented by their deans, associate deans, student association executive) once a year to discuss the climate of graduate studies across Canada and around the world, and to share information. This meeting was one of the largest CAGS conferences that have been held; I met with many of my counterparts in other graduate student associations.

**Sessions**

**Meeting of all GSAs:** This was a roundtable discussion where each GSA presented an overview of the issues they are facing at their respective schools. Not surprisingly, many other GSAs are dealing with very similar issues as Waterloo, the top issues being **funding, student-advisor relationships, flexibility to pursue professional development, and mental health**. In the interest of brevity and to not reinvent the wheel, I have attached a summary compiled by a colleague in attendance.

**Plenary Sessions and Panels:** There were several sessions which discussed the landscape of graduate studies in Canada, particularly: the evolving nature of research funding and pressure on universities to produce commercialisable outcomes; the need for strategic enrollment management; the employability of graduate students; and changes to the Tri-Council funding framework.

**Takeaways**

Considering the discussions from the conference, it is my recommendation that graduate students explore policies and issues pertaining to these specific areas, and to consider aligning provincial and federal lobby efforts accordingly (these are, of course, in addition to our intra-university efforts we have already identified):

1. Tri-Council funding, governance and harmonization, and the need for student representation on their governing councils,
2. The possibility of a federal post-secondary Act or Ministry,
3. The critical need for graduate students to have professional development and gain other transferrable skills during their studies, in addition to research experience.

**Graduate Student Association – University of Waterloo  
REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

**Conference of Ontario University Board Members  
8-9 November, 2013 Toronto, ON**

**Background**

All members of the boards of universities in Ontario were invited to this two-day event in Toronto for talks and panel discussions on recent developments and future predictions for post secondary education, with emphasis on the role of boards and board members. Several high-profile speakers were invited, including: our former university president and current Governor General of Canada, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston; Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Deborah Newman; Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities Brad Duguid, and our own board chair, The Honourable Kevin Lynch.

**Sessions**

**Address by Deborah Newman (MTCU):** Deputy Minister Newman provided an overview of the province's differentiation plans for PSE, with the aim of increasing accountability and transparency and reducing the overall cost to the province. A particularly striking point was the university inflation is at 5% while government is growing by 1.1%; this is clearly unsustainable with the current funding scheme. Universities will be expected to increase their global competitiveness and increase productivity. There was an emphasis on the critical role of governing bodies in universities.

**Panel Discussions:** various discussions were held with heavy question and answer components covering: the increased emphasis on public accountability of governing boards; the recent tendency for boards to dive deeper into the day-to-day operations and strategies of universities; the public perception of universities; the importance of the relationship between board chairs and their university presidents; the importance of engaging alumni; effects of internationalization and the risks in relying on them as a source of income. Of special note was a discussion on presidential and senior administration recruitment, selection and succession planning, and the evaluation of the performance of university presidents.

**Governor General's Address:** His Excellency gave an engaging speech on the importance of PSE and the role of governing bodies in their function as a very symbiotic relationship with administration, faculty and students.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

Our university should increase communications between institutions to share information on policy and procedures (in particular, on succession planning and evaluation of administration), and graduate students should increase policy research and lobby efforts on the provincial level so that we are included in the conversations on the evolution of PSE in Ontario. Therefore, the role of OGSA will be critical in the coming years.



**Graduate Student Association**  
UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

**Vice-President Communications and Events Report to GSA Council**  
**Maryam Shahtaheri,**  
**November 2013**

Meetings/Committees	Date	Notes
Board of Directors Meeting	October 28, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Items included:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At large director appointment</li> <li>SWAG referendum</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Developing a summary (meeting minutes) regarding the reward program meeting with VPSA	November 4, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting minutes included:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions with Mark Beadle and Marc Iturriaga on how to implement the reward program more effectively</li> <li>Path-forward</li> <li>What it the GSA's role in this program</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
November E-News Release	November 5, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Included:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Announcement of appointing Dan McRoberts as Director At- large to the GSA Board of Directors</li> <li>GH regularly trivia nights, open mic nights, free food nights, and pub nights</li> <li>Legal Aid</li> <li>S-Trip: Mount Tremblant: January 23-26, 2014 (Further info)</li> <li>Call for The Elections Oversight Committee (EOC) Members</li> <li>Trip to Laser Quest</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Following-up on the S-trip event	November 1, 2013-November 30, 2013	Arranging this event included a lot of time for organizing and arranging. VPCE and GM worked on this together
CWRA @UW club	November 8-November 19, 2013	Canadian water resources association became an official GSA club
Trivia Manic Society club	November 10, 2013	Trivia Manic Society club became an official GSA club
VPCE-GM meeting	November 12,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This meeting was regarding</li> </ul>

<b>Meeting with VPSA and Connor Hart</b>	<b>2013</b> <b>November 12, 2013</b>	VPCE's position in the university wide orientation related matters (for the future) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on athletics program which contains student engagement</li> <li>• Discussion on how we can pitch-in and how to expand the program in the future</li> </ul>
<b>SGRC Meeting</b>	<b>November 13, 2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TA hours allocation form</li> <li>○ Presentation on previous campus wide orientation, strength and weaknesses</li> <li>○ Discussion regarding the ADDS taskforce</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>2013 UW CGPSS survey sent by Jana Carson</b>	<b>November 19, 2013</b>	Data sent by Jana Carson to VPSA and VPCE and very good information on what our graduates need and how we can get them involved on other level than academia TBD
<b>Meeting with Jenny Mackay, VPSA</b>	<b>November 21, 2013</b>	
<b>Meeting with GM</b>	<b>November 21, 2013</b>	(TBD): Update and discussion on hosting events. Such as English sit and mingle for grad exchange students.
<b>Next Activity Committee Meeting</b>	<b>TBD</b>	
<b>Departmental Donations</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review, approval of donation requests from departmental GSA and Clubs.</li> </ul>

### **Departmental Donations:**

Please note that the GSA awards donations for social events to departments and clubs. The details of the procedure, eligibility and the application form are available on the GSA website. Donations are per term, and reimbursements are made in accordance to event receipts up to the approved amount.

1. Working on having an event before Christmas which our graduate students will be able to sell "hand-made" items. Proposed date is November 29, 2013. VPCE, GM, and Ghazal Memartolouei (activity committee member) will be working on this together.
2. Committee members are encouraged to submit event ideas to Maryam to discuss at the next meeting.

I welcome event ideas from the Council and please send comments to me by email: [gsa-vpce@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:gsa-vpce@uwaterloo.ca)



**Graduate Student Association**  
UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

**Report of the Vice-President External to GSA Council**  
**Matthew Gaster**  
**November 2013**

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**Summary of Meetings**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Highlights</b>
<b>GSA Board Meeting</b>	Mon Oct 28	* Appointed new at large director. Reviewed unaudited financials from 12-13.
<b>GSA Council</b>	Mon Oct 28	* Presentation on UW's Student Leadership Strategy.
<b>Arts Faculty Council</b>	Tues. Nov 12	* The Provost delivered general university updates to the faculty of the Faculty of Arts, forecasted what the next couple years might hold and took questions from attendees. Further the Dean of Arts discussed the extension of HH to create a covered student space in the current courtyard.
<b>GSA External Affairs Committee</b>	Tues. Nov 12	* Discussed issues to raise at T&G. Discussed strategy for GRT Working Group. Discussed plans for creating a page on the GSA website devoted to External Affairs and lobbying.
<b>GSEF Board Meeting</b>	Mon. Nov 18	* Reviewed approved and denied Funding projects. Approved the selection of a new treasurer.
<b>Town and Gown Committee Meeting</b>	Tues. Nov 26	* Meeting with representative across the city. I will be introducing various issues to be discussed including: tenancy issues, and bike theft.
<b>GSA Long Range Planning Committee</b>	Tues. Nov 26	*
<b>GSA Council</b>	Wed. Nov 27	*

**Note:**

Over this past month I have had to limit my work load more tightly in order to prepare for my first Comps Area Exam at the beginning of December.



**Graduate Student Association**  
UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

**Report of the VP Internal to Council**  
**Michael Makahnouk**  
**November 2013**

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**Summary of Meetings**

	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Highlights</b>
<b>ADDS task force meeting</b>	Oct. 1	-met with committee to discuss recommendations for the Provost to consider -hope to present to FRC and GSRC
<b>Walter Bean Lecture and donor relations</b>	Oct. 2	-attended dinner on climate change -spoke at the dinner to thank donors for contributing to graduate scholarships
<b>Student Advocacy meeting</b>	Oct. 3	-met with AP Students, and GSA president and staff to discuss the next steps for the project
<b>Student Leadership Operational Group</b>	Oct. 3	-invited to attend SSO group to discuss student leadership opportunities -would like to identify graduate student opportunities for professional development
<b>Meeting with VP Administration and Finance</b>	Oct. 7	-GSA President and I met with Dennis Huber -discussed matters related to the Board of Governors
<b>Graduate Student Relations</b>	Oct. 9	-packed agenda for the month -see GSA presidents report as he is the committee co-chair
<b>GSA Executive meeting</b>	Oct. 10	-met to discuss various projects -executive is very busy with overlapping efforts
<b>VPAP search meeting</b>	Oct. 11	-all matters are confidential -met to discuss potential candidates and a short-list
<b>Special meeting of the GSA Board of Directors</b>	Oct. 16	-met to review At-Large Director candidates -appointed a new director for the remainder of the year (until April 30, 2014)
<b>Senate</b>	Oct. 18	-regrets (teaching undergraduates on a field trip in Bancroft, ON)
<b>Lunch with Director of Student</b>	Oct. 23	-sent regrets because I had to focus on

<b>Success Office</b>		research
<b>ADDS task force meeting</b>	Oct. 23	-meeting focused on the next steps and preparing a list of recommendations that will be discussed in November at FRC and GSRC
<b>OGSA Board of Directors meeting</b>	Oct. 27	-met to discuss regular business of the board -updated the board on matters of importance
<b>GSA Board of Directors meeting</b>	Oct. 28	- monthly meeting to discuss issues related to the corporation
<b>OGSA researcher interviews</b>	Nov. 3	-interviewed two candidates for the position with Miriam Fine (OGSA staff) and Krista Mathias (Waterloo GSA staff)
<b>Meeting with AP Human Resources</b>	Nov. 4	-meeting to discuss matters related to the GSA
<b>Senate Executive Committee</b>	Nov. 4	-attended the meeting for GSA president -discussed the university strategic plan
<b>Student Leadership Operational Group</b>	Nov. 7	-sent regrets because of travel -spoke with SSO staff and submitted comments
<b>OGSA researcher interviews</b>	Nov. 12	-interviewed final candidate for the position with Miriam Fine (OGSA staff) and Krista Mathias (Waterloo GSA staff)
<b>Graduate Student Relations</b>	Nov. 13	-see GSA presidents report as he is the committee co-chair -raised a concern about the lack of consultation with the university re: differentiation
<b>Meeting with the Provost</b>	Nov. 14	-GSA president, VPIN, and VPSA met with the Provost to discuss issues of importance to the GSA
<b>Meeting with FEDS VPOF and GM</b>	Nov. 15	-GSA VPIN and GM met with the FEDS to discuss the health plan and Waterloo International
<b>VPAP Interviews</b>	Nov. 16/17	- all matters are confidential -the hiring committee conducted interviews of candidates
<b>OGSA Board of Directors</b>	Nov. 18	-met to approve appointment of research and policy staff member -discussed having an in person meeting of the Board on Dec. 7 -meeting will be at Trent U.
<b>Earth Sciences Chair Search</b>	Nov. 18-20	- all matters are confidential -the hiring committee conducted interviews of candidates
<b>Meeting with WLUGSA</b>	Nov. 18	-met to touch base with GSA president



Meeting with VP Administration and Finance	Nov. 18	-picked up cheque for OGSA contribution -met to discuss matters that are confidential, as directed by the president
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**General Comments**

In October, it was reported to the Board of Directors that there was a death in my family and I was helping family with aspects of funeral planning and was not able to report on my monthly activity. I had informed the Board that I would include my October activity in my November report to Board and Council.

A majority of my time in October was spent on Ontario Graduate Students’ Alliance (OGSA) matters, specifically writing a response to a white paper that was released by the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities.

Both the differentiation discussion paper and the OGSA response have been included as appendices to my report, and I will discuss these in the confidential session of council.

In November, my attention with OGSA has focused on hiring a policy researcher to help with policy development. At a recent meeting of the board of directors, a recommendation was made to hire a policy researcher. The Board of Directors will be holding an in person meeting at Trent University in December.

Finally, I have been working with the GSA President and VP Student Affairs on many matters related to university governance and will be more than happy to answer any questions that may arise from my activity for the past two months.



**Report of the Vice-President Student Affairs to GSA Council  
Coleen Even  
November, 2013**

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**Special Projects**

**- Orientation**

We are currently involved in three different projects:

- 1) Finishing work on Fall 2013 campus-wide orientation event

Krista Mathias, GSA executive assistant, presented our first results and comments at the November meeting of the Graduate Student Relations Committee.

Upcoming: presentation at the Graduate Operations Committee (SSO-GSA)

Students who attended the Campus Wide Orientation events were surveyed and we are processing the data in order to develop recommendations, in collaboration with the Student Success Office.

In order to receive qualitative data and comments we organized with the SSO a focus group discussion in which we covered 5 different aspects:

- What were your thoughts on the Campus-Wide Orientation program held in the PAC?
- Were there messages that you heard at multiple orientation events, if so what were they?
- What social events did you attend during Orientation Week?
- What has your transition been like as a graduate student at uWaterloo?
- What advice do you have for new graduate students at uWaterloo?

Results from these data collections will help us develop recommendations for Fall 2014.

As mentioned in previous reports, we have to review the Terms of Reference of the *Ad-Hoc* orientation committee (document provided below) in order to better work on Orientation for Fall 2014 (as well as other orientation events: Winter and Spring). Please provide any comments on the terms of reference, purpose or scope if you wish to, during our council meeting.

- 2) Winter orientation planning

In collaboration with the SSO, our team is working on preparing the different sessions that will be hosted for graduate students joining the University in January, 2014. The event is planned on Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> January. Students will join us for presentations on different services, one of which is the GSA. Executives and volunteers will be present on that day as speakers for different sessions.

### 3) Fall 2013 campus wide orientation vision and roles

We intend to work with the SSO, the GSO and other partners at the University of Waterloo to have an envisioning session during which we will establish the purpose of the groups as well as roles and scopes. We hope to better understand each group and better serve graduate students' needs.

#### - **Graduate Student Participation Initiative**

In light of information received during a gathering with Athletics, the GSA was made aware of a current project for a reward program. Due to the overlapping of such programs we set up a meeting with Athletics in order to determine what the plan and program are, what are the goals to be achieved and how the Athletics department wishes to reward students.

We had to review our position and after our meeting with Athletics we will create a body (working group, *ad-hoc* committee) to work on this project. One of the ideas that came up during our discussion following this dinner was to see if (depending on how the Athletics reward program is set up) we could include a GSA component.

#### - **Fee Agreement protocol**

One of our goals this term (2013-2014) is to review the fee agreement protocol signed at the University of Waterloo. The current agreement, signed in 1994, can be found [online](#). Our work and discussions with the Feds as well as the administration of the University of Waterloo will focus on changes and upgrades to the document so that a newer and more accurate version can be agreed on.

#### - **Graduate Students employment records**

As the pilot for the TA allocation form is still in practice in various departments, the question regarding the employment records of graduate students performing these tasks rose. In order to know how to better keep this information, who should keep these files and where, we met with Bud Walker (Associate Provost, HR, interim) and Kimberley Snage, Assistant HR, Director, Operations in order to present the current situation and how students get their contract information.

As a follow up HR will look into the current system used by the various departments and how they receive the information to set the payments. Robbie and I are collaborating on this topic and I later met with Gisella Gazzola, who is working on this project for graduate students and casual workers, in order to explain how students are informed

about their funding (the division in between the TA payments and the scholarship payments done by the University as well as the department). We talked about the admission offer and how students are informed about the amount they will receive in funding and the funding letters that students receive at the beginning of a term. We are compiling information on these and trying to establish where this information is kept and by whom.

## Committee Updates

### **Student Affairs Committee [November meeting postponed due to absences]**

Our first meeting is rescheduled for the first week of December, date to be announced as soon as the participants have provided the information. The agenda has already been distributed as well as some of the material. Please find the agenda below, in the materials attached

If you have any particular recommendations feel free to email me at [gsvpsa@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:gsvpsa@uwaterloo.ca) to have an item added to this agenda.

### **Funding Committee [December 2013]**

Setting up meeting dates for the first week of December. Our committee meeting will review GSSAC recommendations and current issues in order to focus on items for the upcoming meetings.

## Summary of Meetings

Committee	Meeting Date	Highlights
Graduate Student Participation Initiative	October 21	Discussions regarding the contacts to establish with different actors on campus. Communications with the Institutional Analysis and Planning office to receive results from surveys on graduate students (Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey – National College Health Assessment).
Senate	October 21	At Senate, members discussed on-going affairs and particular focus was given to the strategic plan and how the plan was coming back to Senate in the November meeting.
Student Advocacy Office	October 23	Chris Read provided us with updates regarding the on-going discussions with the different offices at stake in this matter
Lunch with new director SSO (Pam Charbonneau)	October 23	We shared our vision and experience in terms of what the GSA has been doing and how we function
Senate Long Range Planning Committee	October 23	Conflict with schedule

<b>Council meeting</b>	October 28	Updates to council – Motion: Maya D’Alessio encouraged the creation of a working group on a safety issue (thefts on campus)
<b>Meeting with Bud Walker (HR), Kimberley Snage, Assistant HR, Director, Operations, Robbie Henderson</b>	October 29	We met with members from HR in order to talk about records for graduate students at the university as employees.
<b>Satellite campuses – Stratford campus director (Ginny Dybenko and director of the program Christine McWebb</b>	October 30	After meeting the students from Stratford I set up meetings with Chris Read so that we could work on the issues raised at that time. He put me in touch with Ginny Dybenko and Christine McWebb with whom I shared the students concerns.
<b>Graduate orientation planning and survey review</b>	November 1	We are collaborating with the SSO for the different orientation events scheduled for the different terms. We reviewed the schedule of Winter orientation and how the different events will be animated. Another item discussed that day regarded the survey to send out
<b>JHSC – workplace inspection</b>	October 31	Inspection of workplaces in on-campus residences (MHR – V1 – MKV) – information will be provided to the JHSC committee
<b>Dean of Arts, Douglas Peers – meeting</b>	November 4	I met with Douglas Peers to talk about a few items of concerns: funding in Arts (5 years), office space (student space), allocation form... Even if our discussion was informative he directed me to Linda Warley who has her hands on most of these project. I have connected with her and we are meeting early in December.
<b>Academic programming – workday -</b>	November 4	Our team met to define our expectations regarding the implementation of this theme area from the strategic plan. Items were discussed, redefined to be more accurate. In light of these discussions we were asked to place them on a timeline in order to set goals and start working towards their achievement.
<b>Gisella Gazzola – Human Resources, Funding letters</b>	November 7	During this meeting and after connecting with the different graduate coordinators on campus I compiled a funding letter template documents to present it to HR and explain how students receive information. I shared with Gisella the different mechanism in place to inform student on the payments they will receive
<b>Student Advocacy Office</b>	November 7	Chris Read provided updates on the discussions he had and mentioned how he will connect with Feds to start discussions regarding this office.

<b>Inter-university captain dinner - Athletics</b>	November 7	We received an invitation from Athletics to join them for dinner with interuniversity captains. We shared information and experiences with Athletics and the diverse departments. The interuniversity captains informed us on their roles and intentions. At this dinner we also learned that the Athletics department is creating a reward program.
<b>SGRC</b>	November 11	Updates on the Physics award were provided as well as other research programs.
<b>GSA orientation</b>	November 11	Members from the <i>ad-hoc</i> committee who have been working with the SSO on the aftermath of orientation met to discuss our role in orientation and in collaboration with the SSO
<b>GSPI</b>	November 12	Connor, Maryam and I met to talk about how if the Athletics department is creating a reward program we will have to review this project. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Discover the Athletics program</li> <li>2) Develop a GSA component if possible</li> <li>3) And/or create an independent program</li> <li>4) Review of data</li> <li>5) Looking for students in various departments who wish to get involved</li> </ol>
<b>Student Services Advisory Committee (SSAC), Mike Grivic, Assistant University Secretary</b>	November 13	Overview. Due to a time conflict I could not attend the meeting the day before. Mike Grivic provided me with the information covered in the meeting, the terms of reference, how the committee works and how the information will be presented to us. We also did a quick breakdown of the different fees set up now and their calculation.
<b>GSRC</b>	November 13	Maya D'Alessio (Director at-large) went to this meeting as a delegate. One of the item on the agenda was orientation and our executive assistant Krista Mathias presented early findings on the campus-wide event organized for Fall 2013
<b>Student Affairs Committee meeting</b>	November 13	Meeting postponed due to lack of participation
<b>Meeting with Geoff McBoyle</b>	November 14	Robbie, Mike and I met with Geoff to talk about office space, GSSAC and differentiation.
<b>[Winter Orientation] – Focus group discussion planning</b>	November 18	We reviewed the focus group discussion plan in order to be prepared for the meeting on Wednesday that week (creation of the script, prompts, division of work)
<b>Senate</b>	November 18	Discussions surrounding the strategic plan happened.

		The motion put forward regarded the endorsement of the plan voted at the 28/08/2013 Board of Governors meeting. This motion after discussions was friendly amended in order to bring awareness to concerns raised about three research areas highlighted in the plan. Another motion was put forward by faculty in order to assert Senate's role but was defeated by 28 vs. 30 votes
<b>Bud Walker – Ahmed – Multi-faith space</b>	November 19	[error in scheduling] Even if I could not attend the meeting, I received updates on how Scott Nicoll from Plant Operations gathered the information necessary to provide students with a room that will meet their needs.
<b>Focus group discussion</b>	November 20	After our campus wide orientation we surveyed students in order to receive feedback on the events organized. We also in collaboration with the SSO conducted a focus group discussion to receive qualitative data
<b>Student Technology Advisory Committee</b>	November 20	
<b>Athletics Reward Program - GSPI</b>	November 21	
<b>Theme area – Academic programming – second meeting</b>	November 25	
<b>JHSC meeting</b>	November 25	Due to multiple conflicts on this date, I will provide the committee with updates on the lab-safety orientation session held during the campus wide orientation in a report so that committee members can reflect on it and provide us with some feedback
<b>Meeting with Michelle Hollis, Assistant HR, director, Client Services</b>	November 26	We are meeting with Michelle Hollis in order to work on the graduate student records. (Informative and sharing knowledge meeting)
<b>Meeting with Lynn Long</b>	November 27	
<b>Ancillary fee – protocol agreement meeting</b>	November 27	
<b>Council meeting</b>	November 27	
<b>Meeting with Geoff McBoyle</b>	November 28	
<b>Winter orientation</b>	December 3	
<b>Class Z policy</b>	December 3	
<b>Associate Dean of Arts - GSA</b>	December 3	
<b>Student Affairs Committee</b>	TBD	
<b>Funding Committee</b>	TBD	

\* Materials attached

- Background to form a standing committee of GSA council (GSA graduate orientation committee) - Terms of Reference *Ad-hoc* orientation committee (for reference)
- Draft Terms of Reference *Ad-Hoc* anti-theft committee
- Student Affairs Committee agenda



## Graduate Student Association – University of Waterloo

Proposal: November 20, 2013

To form a standing committee of GSA Council: Graduate Student Orientation Committee

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### Background

One of the outcomes from the Student Advocacy Report identified that many graduate students felt they needed more or better information during orientation to ensure their success at uWaterloo. The GSA identified the need for a campus wide orientation for all graduate students, and made this a priority project in 2012.

The *ad hoc* Graduate Orientation Committee was formed to plan and initiate a campus wide graduate orientation for fall 2013.

The first campus wide graduate student orientation was a success and moving forward, the VP Student Affairs proposes that Council forms a standing committee that will ensure continued participation of the GSA in a campus wide graduate student orientation.

Reflecting on the planning and execution of events for the fall 2013 campus wide graduate orientation, the GSA team members recognized that the *ad hoc* committee formed last year was too large to be effective, and most of the workload fell upon key players.

Specifically:

- The GSA members (key players) actually met together and in smaller ‘working groups’ with affiliated teams on a regular basis. As the date of the event drew near, these meetings occurred several times per week. Specific tasks were agreed to during these meetings and individuals coordinated with each other to “get the job done”.
- Holding meetings with the greater *ad hoc* orientation committee members was difficult to coordinate, as individual’s commitments prevented the whole team from meeting regularly. These meetings usually included updates of activity and approval of decisions that were made within the working groups, and updates on the scheduling.
- Key players were very active in the planning, research, logistics and managing of the graduate program for the campus wide graduate orientation. They then met with affiliates individually or together as a team.
- Communication between the GSA and affiliated parties needed to be streamlined. There were a number of meetings and emails that made communication scattered and ineffective.
- The GSA cannot mandate the activities of third parties, however the GSA should lead the philosophy and program of the orientation and continue to be leaders in this role.
- The GSA must manage its own volunteers and management on the activities on the “day of the event”.

- The GSA must be visible as leaders representing the graduate students on campus and continue to be respected as such.
- The GSA must be included in the greater uWaterloo orientation planning.

Graduate Student Association – University of Waterloo  
**Graduate Orientation Committee**  
Terms of Reference

**Authority**

The Graduate Orientation Committee is a standing committee of the GSA Council. The GSA Board of Directors must approve the orientation budget, and expenditures as recommended by Council.

**Purpose**

The committee will serve to:

- Research, develop, and advise on content, programming, and communication for the Campus-wide Graduate Orientation, and any workshops.
- Participate in and provide recommendations to greater operational uWaterloo orientation committees and working groups,
- Coordinate with Student Success Office, Graduate Studies Office, Faculties, Departments, FEDs, and support services (Central Stores, Plant Operations) to facilitate and envision orientation events.

**Scope**

GSA's scope:

- Maintain recognition as a leader and representative of graduate students at uWaterloo.
- Philosophy of orientation
- Providing recommendations on content for the overall program
- Develop relevant sessions in collaboration with partners (in light of outcomes – recommendations)
- Direct students to appropriate campus resources

**Membership**

GSA - executives

- GSA Vice President, Student Affairs (chair):
  - Oversees programming, coordinate planning efforts, links with partners
  - Main communicator for GSA with affiliates
  - Provides reports to Council
- GSA Vice President, Communications and Events (vice-chair):
  - Planning of Social activities (Activities Committee or sub-committee for orientation specific activities)
  - Logistics and scheduling

GSA – staff (resources):

- General Manager
- Executive Assistant

**Meeting agreements**

The committee shall meet at least once a term and as frequently as required to execute all tasks. The chair will prepare the agenda and provide materials as needed.

### **Resources and budget**

The GSA Board through the approval of the annual operating budget will approve the budget of the orientation committee. The committee will provide budgetary estimates annually to the GSA VP Internal by June annually.

### **Review**

Review of the Terms of Reference for this committee shall be done once a year in light of outcomes and recommendations following each Fall orientation.

### **For reference:**

#### **Ad-Hoc Graduate Orientation Committee (2012)**

The *ad hoc* Orientation Committee will determine, through consideration of current research and further consultation as necessary, a practical means of implementing an organized and unified graduate student orientation. The committee shall also coordinate efforts and plan with appropriate services on campus, and report to council on a proposed schedule of events for Fall 2013.

#### **Membership**

- GSA Vice President, Student Affairs (chair)
- GSA Vice President, Communications and Events (vice-chair)
- GSA President (*ex officio*)
- GSA General Manager (secretary)
- One staff member from the Graduate Studies Office
- Six graduate students, one from each of the six faculties, at least 3 of whom are members of council.
- One member of the GSA Board of Directors

Representatives (non-voting) of the various student services across campus, invited as necessary by the committee.

## Graduate Student Association – University of Waterloo

**Name:** *Ad-hoc* Theft Prevention Committee

**Terms of Reference:** This will be a subcommittee of the Student Affairs Committee

**Purpose:**

To investigate and recommend solutions for the prevention of theft of personal property on campus and in the general community. Develop a component of best practices to educate and engage community members to thwart theft. May also include or collaborate with efforts to ensure personal safety on campus and in the general community.

**Scope:**

- Collaborate with other associations, committees, groups, and/or agencies internal and external to the uWaterloo.
- Investigate statistics of reported thefts and similar crimes.
- Committee will advise VP External (External Affairs Committee) with direction to take external groups and/or agencies

**Suggested groups:**

FEDS, WLUSU, WLUGSA, City of Waterloo (Town & Gown)-police, fire dept., mayors.  
uWaterloo Communications and Public Relations, Imprint and local newspapers, Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, Police – uWaterloo and Region of Waterloo, uWaterloo Residences Council

**Authority:** GSA Council

The Committee may propose policy to form an official position through Council and/or GSA members as a whole.

**Committee Membership:**

GSA VP Student Affairs delegates a chair for this committee

Chair

1 x Council member

1 x At-large member

1x At-large member from residences

GSA General Manager - resource

**Meetings agreements:**

Chair sets agenda, calls meetings, and is responsible for minutes.

Notice of meetings as for Council meetings.

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Discussion points:

- Issue is how to determine who should not be on campus and/or in specific areas on campus, such as the libraries. i.e. parking registration requirement to use meters and lots, mandatory watcard swipe to enter library
- Put cameras where the bike racks are and vice versa.
- Promote educational component, such as a drive to register personal products using the uw police online form, best practices, etc.
- Lock down the libraries- turnstiles ie monitoring enter/exit of the library.
- Statistics in the record state theft is up (May 2013), uw states it is down.
- Determine protocol needed to gain access to reports etc. from the police.
- Environmental scan of the region in general of thefts, etc.

**Graduate Student Association - University of Waterloo**

**STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
Notice of Meeting  
TBD  
Agenda**

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
00:00	1 Introductions	Information
00:05	2 Remarks from the Chair	Information
00:10	3 Orientation – [Even] Updates Terms of Reference	Information / Decision
00:20	4 Health & Safety [Even] Updates on report of injuries <i>Ad-Hoc</i> Anti-Theft committee ToR	Information
00:35	5 Advocacy office update [Even, Mathias]	Information / discussion
00:45	6 Student Services and Fees* [Even] Protocol* Memorandum Student Services Ancillary Fees* MTCU Compulsory Ancillary Fees (non-tuition related)*	Information Discussion Discussion
1:05	7 Space issues – [Even]	Discussion
1:10	8 Graduate Student Participation Initiative [Even] Project – plan Health and Wellness Next steps -	Discussion
01:25	9 Other business	Decision
01:30	10 Adjournment. Next meeting: TBD	

\* materials attached

- Committee terms of reference
- Protocol for establishing student services fees
- Memorandum Student Services Ancillary Fees
- MTCU Compulsory Ancillary Fees
- GSPI project – to be edited for pilot

Please convey regrets to Rose Vogt: [rvogt@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:rvogt@uwaterloo.ca)

6 November, 2013

Coleen Even

GSA Vice President Student Affairs

**Terms of Reference  
Student Affairs Committee  
of the  
Graduate Student Association**

This is a standing committee of the GSA council, and reports to council.

**Mandate**

The Student Affairs Committee shall act as a forum to receive, consider and take appropriate action on items brought to its attention that pertain to the non-academic affairs of graduate students at the University of Waterloo. Such affairs will normally be related, but not limited, to campus life, on and off campus housing, international student issues, human rights, and non-academic aspects of graduate education in general.

**Roles**

- **Receive** and document issues of student affairs on campus.
- **Advise** the GSA council on large-scale issues within the committee mandate.
- **Recommend** and take action on specific concerns raised by members of the graduate student community within the committee mandate.
- **Advise**, on behalf of graduate students, with the endorsement of the GSA council, various non-academic student services on campus as requested by council or those services.

**Meetings and Reports**

The committee will normally meet at least once per term, or more frequently as items of discussion arise. The committee shall report to council at least once per year, but will normally do so through the Vice-President Student Affairs in his or her monthly report, as required.

**Membership**

- GSA Vice-President Student Affairs (chair)
- GSA President (*ex officio*)
- GSA General Manager (secretary)
- Six graduate students, one from each of the six faculties, at least three of whom must be members of council\*
- One international graduate student at-large\*\*
- One graduate student residing in on-campus housing
- One graduate student enrolled on a part-time basis; (to be approved for council motion)
- One graduate student from a satellite campus (within Ontario); (to be approved for council motion)



- Representatives (non-voting) from various student services on campus (e.g., Housing Office, International Students Office, GSO, etc.) who are invited by the chair from time to time.

\*,\*\* The chair must ensure that the committee has both domestic and international graduate student representatives, and may modify (\*\*) as necessary.

**CONFIDENTIAL SESSION – November 27, 2013 – GSA Council**

Report of the GSA VP Internal

The following document is confidential and is not to be reproduced nor distributed by any means until authorized by the GSA VP Internal.



Hon. Brad Duguid, MPP  
Minister of Training, Colleges, and Universities  
3rd Floor, Mowat Block  
900 Bay St.  
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

October 11, 2013

Re: Ontario's Proposed Differentiation Policy Framework

Dear Minister Duguid:

Executives of the Ontario Graduate Students' Alliance (OGSA) recently met with members of your Research and Policy Branch, and we were asked to submit comments re: the Proposed Differentiation Policy Framework discussion paper. It is obvious that post secondary education in Ontario is at a crossroad in terms fiscal responsibility and long-term sustainability, and we acknowledge and understand the Government's desire to chart a different course for universities and colleges. Graduate students in Ontario believe that the priorities of education sometimes neglect graduate programs because the number of undergraduates overshadows the graduate student perspective.

Our general discussion of this document is from the perspective of students in graduate studies centered on freedom of research opportunities and concerns on the impacts of differentiation on the student experience. It is our intent to highlight areas where the proposed differentiation model could impact graduate studies and the priorities of the Government of Ontario.

Please find below the response from the OGSA to the Proposed Differentiation Policy Framework discussion paper.

Sections to this document

1. Comments on the Differentiation Framework Components
2. General Comments on Differentiation

Thank you for considering our feedback, we truly appreciate to be included in this important discussion.

Sincerely,

Michael Makahnouk, M.Sc.  
OGSA President

Kaiti Nixon  
OGSA Secretary

## 1. Comments on the Differentiation Framework Components

### a. Teaching and Learning

Graduate students are in the unique position of being both students and teachers, but surprisingly are not addressed in the metrics currently proposed. They are also a paraprofessional liaison between faculty members and undergraduate students, playing a crucial role in material delivery, learning, and ultimately the undergraduate student experience at universities. With this in mind, we have several suggestions for this component. First, in the current draft it was unclear to us how student satisfaction rates will be measured from the KPI data as the current statistics centre on post-graduate employment. Additionally, the National Survey of Student Engagement surveys only undergraduate students<sup>1</sup>, so we are concerned that the needs of graduate students may not be realized. In response, we suggest that the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (CGPSS) be included as a metric for learning and student satisfaction at the graduate level. Indeed, this survey has already showed a decrease in student satisfaction between 2007 and 2010<sup>2</sup>; however since the CGPSS is a relatively new measure we recognize there is no trend illustrated as of yet.

In principle, we support the introduction of teaching only faculty. Using this as a metric of differentiation, however, could be faulty as no baseline has been established to give context to the value of this type of faculty. Until a teaching focused program has been established and appropriate measures of its success are developed, we recommend that such a metric not be used to evaluate differentiation. Looking forward, we have additional concerns that if this measure is used repeatedly, a school with an increasing number of teaching-only faculty members would have a reduction in graduate student allocations due to a limited output based on the metrics in the Research component. This could potentially reduce the undergraduate student experience if the course design benefits from graduate teaching assistants, as do many popular or large courses. This negative impact could be compounded by a lack of resources available for research/teaching faculty to support larger research groups, which could limit new research or smaller projects like undergraduate research projects.

Supportive faculty supervisors are a key element in student success and a current issue in other forums in the province. A metric that highlights the average number of graduate students per faculty supervisor could inform how different graduate studies programs are distributing supervisory responsibility. In addition, time to completion rates could be useful in determining the general efficiency of the graduate program. However, we would caution that there are drastic differences between disciplines, and the shortest time to completion is not always representative of the best education, so a measure of student productivity could be useful. Conferences, presentations, and student participation in field specific working groups all contribute to developing broader competencies for graduate student. These are not covered in any of the metrics identified in the Research

component, and are relevant to the learning aspect for graduate students. A general measure of this is addressed in the CGPSS as well.<sup>3</sup>

*General recommendation: Include the CPGSS results as a metric of student satisfaction and student productivity and remove teaching-only faculty as a metric until the position is active in Ontario and can be measured. Measurements of time-to-completion balanced by a measure of student productivity could inform the effectiveness of a university in integrating their graduate students into the respective fields.*

#### b. Student Population

The location of an institution can impact its affordability for students<sup>4</sup>. If institutions are differentiated based on individual strengths and programs are limited to focus on those strengths, students who cannot afford to move to different communities will be limited in the education that they can attain. Presumably there would be a greater impact on institutions farther away from regular transit routes, with a larger impact on students in Northern Ontario. Although it would be unfair to assume that the groups identified in this component currently are going to be limited economically, a reasonable measure to include would be the percentage of the student population who are local – from within the same city or a certain radius. An institution that services a significant proportion of the local population would benefit from offering a very broad scope of programs.

*General recommendations: Differentiation must ensure that accessibility and affordability be maintained for local students looking to pursue post-secondary education. A metric that includes a measure of local enrollment would be beneficial.*

#### c. Jobs, Innovation, and Economic Development

Graduating students are carrying unprecedented debt levels<sup>5</sup>, and it has been documented that young adults are living with their parents longer in order to pay down debt amassed from pursuing a post-secondary education<sup>6</sup>. Such behaviour limits their ability to buy a home after graduation, which is one example of how these individuals do not contribute in an impactful way to the economy because they have to pay down debt loads. A suggested metric to include would be average debt load carried by graduates from each institution. While this may not inform the success of the programs in finding students a job, it does speak to the general financial burden that students are expected to carry to fund the institution. In combination with the measures of sustainability, this may differentiate schools that have effective financial aid programs (especially from outside sources).

Finally, although experiential learning is vital for broadening the competencies of all students in Ontario; students should not be expected to seek un-paid internships in order to gain experience. An addition to the proposed metric would be a measure of whether the partnerships with other sectors are paid or unpaid work terms.

*General recommendations: Include a measure of average debt load for students graduating from each institution as well as expand the metric regarding partnerships with other sectors to evaluate paid vs. unpaid work terms.*

d. Strategic Enrolment

In this discussion paper, there are no identified metrics that would inform or guide strategic enrolment, other than those proposed by Universities and a notional value set by the Ministry. Although we discussed many concerns with changes in enrolment, the lack of any proposed metrics suggests that this will be decided on a case by case basis. Our general comment is that graduate student enrolment needs to keep pace with available technical and faculty resources at the institution.

e. Research

One proposed metric for evaluating research would be the number of completed theses per institution. As masters programs can be course based or thesis based, this would highlight institutions with more research based graduate work. Undergraduate research programs are also very beneficial for students, and could be captured in this metric.

Extrapolating how much funding is brought to the institution by graduate students would have been a helpful metric. Unfortunately, the recent downloading of the Ontario Graduate Scholarship program to individual institutions removes a key differentiator for quality in the province as the program is not based on a merit based competition across the province.

*General recommendations: Include a metric that address the number of theses and dissertations published by the University as a measure of student research success.*

f. Program Offerings

At the graduate level, the title of the program is not usually indicative of the scope of learning that happens within that program. Presumably, the niche program metrics would only be applied to undergraduate programs. If this metric is intended to be applied to graduate programs as well, a clear definition of how a niche program would be identified would be useful.

g. Institutional Collaboration

The metrics proposed in this category really reflect the governments stated goal of increasing student mobility through the Ontario PSE landscape, however, it has missed important collaborations for higher levels of education. Graduate students can benefit immensely from the feedback and support of graduate committee members at other institutions. A metric that examines the incidence of adjunct faculty or faculty at other institutions who sit on graduate student committees would show how well that university reaches out to the broader community for academic excellence.

*General recommendation: Include a metric of inter-institutional graduate student supervision.*

#### h. Sustainability

Like the strategic enrolment component, the sustainability component will have to be examined on a case by case basis. The Government of Ontario should ensure that measures of fiscal sustainability are incorporated into new policies pertaining to post-secondary education.

## 2. General Comments on Differentiation

#### a. Funding for Students

A serious concern about differentiation is how this policy change will impact student expenses. The OGSA supports the logic behind that proposed framework, but it must ensure that the costs of education start to converge to the Canadian average. Furthermore, students believe that universities must do more to become less opaque and more fiscally responsible to all stake holders in the province.

One issue facing post secondary education in the Province of Ontario is the level of affordability for students. It was stated in the discussion paper that "the government will continue to focus on making postsecondary education accessible on the basis of a student's ability to learn, not ability to pay." This statement is quite contradictory, because Ontarians have faced increases to student tuition that is outpacing the rest of the country. Further still, per student funding in terms of basic income units compared to total university funding seem to be decreasing over time.

It is very apparent that individual institutions have to make difficult decisions to cope with annual inflation ranging from 5-8%. There are concerns from the student perspective because institutions are moving to activity based budget models and this will have a direct impact on quality. We believe that the differentiation discussion must set fair criteria for program development that will eventually lead to steady state tuition increases that are index to CPI. One drawback to activity based budgeting is that departments will be rewarded based on student enrollment. Differentiation must ensure high quality education for all students while maintaining a level of affordability that makes postsecondary education accessible on the basis of student merit and ability.

The largest concern that the OGSA has with differentiation is whether student support for graduate students will be improved. Students believe differentiation should consider that some of the funding directed to universities be dedicated to fund students beyond teaching assistantships and bursaries. The government must provide adequate support for graduate students by expanding grants and scholarships programs. Graduate students

represent the front line of research and academic excellence in the province and are the engines that move universities' research agendas forward. These contributing members of the province should receive their fair share of funding in the province. An example that supports this concern has to do with recent shift in scholarship policy, by where the Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS) program has been "downloaded" to individual institutions. This decision removes a key differentiator for quality in the province. By giving a quota for the awards to the various institutions, there are no real mechanisms for ensuring that the scholarship is awarded to students based on individual merit.

b. Rural Students

The location of an institution can impact its affordability for students<sup>6</sup>. If institutions are differentiated based on individual strengths and programs are limited to focus on those strengths, students who cannot afford to move to different communities will be limited in the education that they can attain. Presumably there would be a greater impact on institutions farther away from regular transit routes, with a larger impact on institutions in Northern Ontario.

c. Student Success and Retention

It also cannot be overlooked that withdrawal or transfer between universities is "success" when considered from the individual student's perspective. Further still, retention should not be 100% for each university in the province as students it is not realistic for everyone to graduate. This is highlighted as a discussion point because universities are deploying resources to mirror student retention at Queens University, and it is mostly because of income based arguments.

## References

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<http://heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Final%20CGPSS%20ENG.pdf>
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