



Council

Notice of Meeting
Tuesday May 28, 2014
4:30 PM – 6:30 PM
Needles Hall room 3001

AGENDA

Time	Open Session	Page	Action
4:30	1. Agenda/Additional Agenda Items		Decision
4:35	<p>Consent Agenda*</p> <p>BIRT Council approves and/or receives for information by consent items 2-4 of the agenda.</p> <p>2. Approval of the minutes of April 22, 2014 meeting</p> <p>3. Appointments & Resignations</p> <p>New appointments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jessy Parokaran Varghese-Kinesiology • Janelle Saldanha – Peace & Conflict • Nahan Haydon – Philosophy • Matthew Perrone – Civil & Env Eng • Ahmad Basalah – MME • Kristen Leal – Earth & Env. Sci. • Dan McRoberts – At-Large Geography • Vikkie Chen - Architecture <p>4. Executive Reports</p> <p>Regular Agenda</p>	3	Decision
4:40	5. Q&A	7-14	Discussion
5:00	<p>6. Council Committees Appointments</p> <p>View Council Standing Rule #2 - Committees for terms of reference, and Appendix A on page</p> <p>“BIRT Council approves the appointments of members to council committees omnibus as noted on appendix A”</p> <p>“BIFRT Council authorizes the chair of each committee to fill vacancies and report to Council additional members.”</p>	24	Decision

5:15	7. Appointment of Chief Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer. CRO & DRO duties “BIRT Council appoints _____ as CRO and _____ as DRO for the 2014-2015 administrative year”.		Decision
5:25	8. External Affairs Report, Makahnouk	15	Information
5:35	9. GSA Graduate Talk-Info Seminar, Coleen Even, VPCE		Information
5:40	10. Other Business		Discuss/Info
6:00	Confidential Session		
6:30	11. Adjournment		Decision

*To allow council to complete a number of matters quickly and to 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 and 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 a director so requests. Directors are supplied with the appropriate documentation for each item and all items will be approved by means of one omnibus motion. The Council will then move immediately to consideration of the items on the regular agenda.

Sonia Rahman,
GSA VP Internal, Chair

May 21, 2014



GSA COUNCIL MEETING

April 22, 2014 at 5:00 pm
Graduate House Green Room

MINUTES

Present:

Michael Makahnouk, VP Internal, Chair
Robert Henderson, President
Maryam Shahtaheri, VP Communications & Events
Matthew Gaster, VP External
Coleen Even, VP Student Affairs
Taya McGillivray, Director (on line)
Michael Piazza, Director
Dan McRoberts, Director
Isabelle Messa, SPHHS
Allison Mascella, Economics
Ryan Kirkby, History
Amin Haghnegahdar, Civil & Environmental Engineering
Ahmad Basalah, Mechanical & Mechatronic Engineering
James Sebele, School of Planning
Alexander Pokluda, Computer Science
Ty Ghaswala, Pure Mathematics
Matthew Edwards, Chemistry (on line)
David Pomaranski, Physics & Astronomy
Samantha Shortall, School of Pharmacy
Krista Mathias, At-Large Councillor
Kristen Leal, At-Large Councillor
Rose Vogt, GSA General Manager (minutes)

Regrets: Maya D'Alessio, Helen Broom, Ikdip Brar, Jessica Dyck, Cristina Balaita, Celia Huang, Steven Cheung, Miriam Ho/Vikkie Chen, Nanjing Kang

Absent: Kimberly Lopez, Virginia Shay, Thomas Choukroun, Madeliene Merrick/Alex Winnicoff, Drew Weatherhead, Ahmed Abdel-Aziz, Artur Sokol, Fahmida Homayra, Brianne McCallum.

Quorum is achieved. The chair called the meeting to order at 5:06 pm. Rose Vogt is taking minutes.

1. Agenda/additional items.
The agenda is approved by consensus.

Consent Agenda

Motion: To approve/or receive for information by consent items 2-4 on the agenda. (Leal/Shahataheri) Approved unanimously.

Items 2) Approval of the February 27, 2014 minutes, 3) Appointments & Resignations, and 4) Executive reports.

Regular Agenda

5. Q & A

- a. International Student funding issues, Amin Haghnegahdar.
GSA Executives met with Councillor Amin Haghnegahdar last week to discuss the level of funding and expenses for international students. The net pay for all graduate students is below the suggested minimum standard of living posted on the GSO website. It is great that doctoral graduate students receive a minimum guarantee package, but it does not cover expenses. The suggested limit on the GSO website will most likely not fit in the universities operating budget.

The GSA will form a committee to review and investigate the complex aspects of graduate student funding. This may be a sub committee of either the GSA Funding Committee or the GSA Student Affairs Committee. Council suggested the following topics for investigation:

- Find ways to get more money to graduate students. (Net funding)
- international students do not qualify for all the bursaries and awards available to domestic students.
- The completion award is a needs-based assessment, as done through the OSAP process. If the completion award was made available to more students then funding from other sources will be available to support a guaranteed 4-year minimum funding.
- Domestic students have a number of resources available for financial support, but not international students. One strategy would be to make some of the other sources available to everyone.
- The tuition set aside amount funds bursaries for needs based students. There is a surplus in this fund at Waterloo. The set aside has to be lobbied at the provincial level as the government mandates this money.
- If such funds are in surplus, then the GSA could investigate why there is a surplus and recommend how to distribute the awards.
- This year, funding for international student has increased but not for domestic students.
- Review enrollment data (via IAP) and see how graduate student funding

will impact enrollment numbers.

-It is important to hear from councilors so that GSA has feedback of how the processes are actually working within their departments.

-Understand how the current level of minimum funding was determined, and how are increases realized.

- b. A Class Z official policy for TA rates is now effective May 1, 2014. The nature of the policy is not an academic issue so it does not require Waterloo Senate approval. The GSA will continue to recommend graduate student specific policies designated to the Class Z category.
- c. Ad hoc Anti-Theft Committee, Coleen Even
Motion as defined in the GSA VPSA report.

BIRT Council approves the implementation the Ad-hoc Anti-Theft Committee. (Even/McRoberts)

motion carries unanimously.

The terms of reference for the committee were included in the agenda package.

- d. Chair thanks everyone for his or her contributions to Council this year.

6. Chief Returning Officer Report

Council hears the CRO report announcing the incoming Executive and Directors.

7. GSA-UW Memorandum of Agreement

The current agreement has not been amended for five years and needed some housekeeping. Added clause to require graduate students who are representing grad students at university level committees report back to Council. For eg. The UW parking committee did not have a grad student on it. Ty will be sitting on that committee and reporting information back to Council. GSRC is moving slowly on the approval. The content can be approved separately. The MoA will be submitted to the GSRC electronically.

Motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the GSA and UW. (Hendrson/Shahataheri) Passed unanimously.

Discussion:

The MoA is important because the GSA is not unionized. The GSA is involved in the collective bargaining with Waterloo. In the collective bargaining process, the trend is seen that every group on campus is treated fairly. We are involved in the discussions for graduate students as their sole representatives.

This motion brings the MoA to Council as an endorsement. The power of Council is respected.

8. Other Business

- a. Even announces the recipients of the following awards:

Councilor award, Boyd Panton

Director award, Helen Broom

Volunteer award, Sandy Wong

- b. Vogt reports on the GU15 conference.

GSA leaders and key staff from nine research-intensive universities across Canada attended the conference. The conference was held on April 2 – 4. The GU15 provides an opportunity for members to compare, discuss, and examine procedures, policies, and operations with each other.

Most attendees commented on the professionalism of the conference, from the planned agenda/sessions to guest services, such as entertainment and meals.

A renewed interest in formalizing the GU15 group was discussed.

A mid-year session is planned for the late summer / early fall in Montreal and the next annual meeting will be hosted by University of Calgary.

In camera session begins at 5:58 PM (Gaster/Leal) Approved.

In camera session ends at 6:21 PM (Gaster/Leal)

9. Adjournment 6:22 PM

Report of the President to the GSA Board
Maryam Shahtaheri,
May 2014

Summary of Meetings

Meetings/Committees	Date	Notes
Orientation Committee- Transition Meeting	May 5, 2014	Met with VPSA, VPCE, Krista Mathias, and GM
Executive Meeting	May 7, 2014	Coordinate regarding items of the May board meeting, board and exec retreat, etc.
Meeting with GM	May 7, 2014	
Allocation of New Execs to University Committees	First two weeks of May	
Meeting with GM	May 8, 2014	Coordinate regarding CASA conference, office keys.
SLRP (Student Long Range Planning Committee-Senate)	May 8, 2014	
Meeting with VP internal and Mike Makahnouk	May 8, 2014	Mike provided some background on CASA
CASA Conference	May 9-13, 2014	CASA foundation conference-attended with VPIN
Senate Graduate and Research Council	May 12, 2014	
Board Meeting	May 14, 2014	
Grad Student Activity and Participation Discussion	May 15, 2014	To attend with VPCE and VPSA
Lunch with GSO staff	May 21, 2014	
Graduate Student Relations Committee	May 22, 2014	
Senate and Board of Governance-Governance Basics	May 23, 2014	
--** AWAY**--	May 27-May 31	Wisdom Teeth Removal ☺

**Report of the Vice-President Communication & Events to Board
Coleen Even**

May, 2014

Committee Updates

Activity Committee, April

- In April, the current committee met to discuss events and games to organize for Fall orientation. We agreed to start separating tasks so that decisions regarding activities would be clear and we would be able to know in which direction to go as the new GSA term would start.

The recruitment for new members has started and we will keep working on getting volunteers for Orientation to be in charge of:

- Kids bags & face painting activities
- Draw (tickets)
- Matching game (deck preparation, prizes...)

Other tasks regard connecting with Athletics and departmental GSAs. This is an ongoing project and I will report frequently through my council report!

If you are interested in partaking in orientation, email me gsa-vpce@uwaterloo.ca

- Upcoming: blog team, to create and administer a virtual interface where students can voice their opinion!

GSA – Orientation committee

Over the first few weeks of May our committee members transitioned and identified the main communicator in charge of coordinating meetings and activities with the SSO. Orientation has been an ongoing project and requires continuity in handling tasks as well as a good breadth of knowledge. We reviewed the updated schedule and will keep moving forward over summer. (Upcoming – Live Chat, Orientation website updates, FAQ, communication with new students, activities for the Welcome Reception and the weekend).

Special Projects

Committee vacancies –

Over the month of May and in preparation of our 2014-2015 term I spent time checking our GSA council committees and whether students desired to remain members. Vacancies should be filled on May 28th.

Graduate Student Talk – Mike and I are collaborating on a Grad talk for the beginning of June. More details to come (date: June 3rd EV3-1408 4:00 to 6:30)

News – Social media enhancement (ongoing)

The GSA now has its own twitter account: @GSA_UWaterloo to enhance communication with other administrators and partners. Building partnerships with them will be a continuing effort throughout this year.

Departmental Donations:

Please note that GSA donations for social events to departments and clubs are open. 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.

For more information contact gsa-vpce@uwaterloo.ca or rvogt@uwaterloo.ca

Summary of Meetings

Committee - Meeting	Meeting Date	Highlights
Rose Vogt – Transition VPCE	April 30	Transition into VPCE – review of duties, tasks, templates, deadlines...
Maryam Shathaheri	May 2	Transition – exchange of documents, templates, information
GSA - Orientation	May 5	Transition, decision on main communicator
Advocacy	May 5	Krista, Rose, Robbie and I met to write the job description for the ombudsperson on campus
Senate Executive	May 5	Committee of Senate, discussions related to Senate agenda & Chancellor nominations
Mike Makahnouk	May 6	Planning of Graduate Student talk for June – Killer jobs, Graduate professionalization and differentiation of skill set
Executive meeting	May 7	Transition – review of committee memberships, administration
GSA – orientation budget Connor Hart	May 7	Connor and I met to draft a budget based on cost projections (Find attached to this report)
Work inspection – (VPSA delegate)	May 8	Inspection of workplaces (AccessAbility, Registrar’s Office, Secretariat, Office of the President)
Advocacy	May 12	Job description – ongoing – decision to connect with

		Chris Read for in depth work regarding the job of an ombudsperson on campus
SGRC	May 12	Review of different centers and research institutes -
Mini Town Hall	May 12	Presentation on Graduate Professionalization and developments that the University has the intention to unfold (view the mini town hall sessions here)
SIAG	May 12	Regrets
Steering Committee English	May 12	Report to the Provost on English Competency at the University of Waterloo. Recommendations, review of last draft and changes. (The GSA provided comments before submission).
Board -	May 14	Business of the corporation – filling board committees vacancies – discussions on orientation budget and other items
Graduate Affairs Group	May 15	News from grad ops, GSO summer activity (simplification of scholarships and funding), changes in deadlines to come forward make sure you stay posted (FACULTY OF ARTS)
Graduate Orientation – speaker’s notes	May 15	In preparation for orientation we met with our speaker to determine topics, timing and other logistics element
WIN - constitution	May 16	Met with students from WIN to help them with their constitution (writing and structure)
Graduate Orientation – FAQ live chat	May 16	Orientation website updates – Gear FAQs if necessary to our graduate audience
Senate	May 20	
GSO – GSA lunch	May 21	
GSRC	May 22	
Council	May 28	

**Vice-President External Report to the GSA Board
Ghazal Memartoluie,
May 2014**

Summary of Meetings

Meetings/Committees	Date	Notes
Transition Meeting	February 11, 2014	Met with Matthew Gaster to talk about VP-EX duties in detail
CASA Conference	March 13-16, 2014	Conference held in PEI and I attended as an incoming executive
Orientation 2014	April 8, 2014	This meeting was with Activity Committee about planning the Orientation activities for coming September
Town and Gown	April 15, 2014	Annual student and council met and I attend to introduce myself as an incoming executive
Spring Orientation Executive Meeting	May 4, 2014 May 7, 2014	Attend to introduce myself Discussion about the duties , policies and traditions in GSA
CASA Pre-Meeting	May 8, 2014	Met with Mike Makahnouk and gsa-pres to talk about CASA's formation and policies
CASA Conference	May 9-13, 2014	TBD
Board Meeting	May 14, 2014	TBD
Meeting with Sue Horton	May 21, 2014	TBD

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Report of the Vice-President Internal to the GSA Board
Sonia Rahman
May, 2013

Meeting	Meeting Date	Highlights
Transition Meeting with GM, Rose	April 4	Discussion over the VPIN activities, role and duties.
Transition Meeting with Mike and Rose	April 9	Discussion over role of VPIN, fiduciary and other duties and activities.
Meeting on International Funding Issues	April 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion over the funding issues of international graduate students. • Possible solutions • Future steps to take the issue in front of the administration
Transition Meeting with GM, Rose	May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up Council list, list server • Discussion of process to enlist councillors •
GSA – Executive committee	May 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee reforming • Finalize the date for exec, board and council meeting • Discussion about recent issues
Graduate House Staff Meeting	May 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met current and new staff for the first meeting of the spring term.
Town and Gown Reception	May 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending opening reception at QNC representing GSA
GSA Board meeting	May 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First meeting of the Board
Met with GSA-GM	May 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed the responses for continuing council members.
Luncheon with GSO	May 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with Dr. Sue Horton and GSO staff

**Report of the Vice President Student Affairs
to the GSA Board of Directors**

Robert D. E. Henderson

May, 2014

Since my last report to Council, I have one major item of business: the Graduate House lease was renewed for 20 years, and now includes outdoor space (10m on all sides). The final lease was circulated to the board in an e-mail and included in this report for information. Mike and I can elaborate on a few noteworthy aspects of this new lease.

The VP Communications and I have started working closely on matters pertaining to orientation planning, with the VP Communications taking the leading role given Coleen’s heavy involvement with orientation over the past year.

Summary of Meetings

Committee	Meeting Date	Highlights
Student Fee Protocol Review Meeting	April 21	Continuation of previous discussions to develop a new ancillary fee protocol. When a final draft is ready, Coleen and I will bring necessary particulars to the executive and/or Board.
Task Force on ADDS Meeting	April 21	Similar to the fee protocol discussions, but pertaining to sole-supervision of PhD student privileges.
Senate	April 21	See Senate minutes posted online (with the Secretariat).
GSEF Long Range Planning Committee	April 22	Working on the development of new ways to use funding and policies on the distribution of funds, as well as a general review of many aspects of GSEF.
GSA Board of Directors	April 22	See minutes.
GSA Council	April 22	See minutes.
Meeting with Dennis Huber	April 30	Meeting of Mike Makahnouk (previous VPIN), Dennis Huber (VP Administration & Finance) and Geoff McBoyle (provost) to sign the new Graduate House lease. See the Daily Bulletin article that was circulated to Council.
Transition meeting for Orientation	May 5	Met with new VP Communications (formerly VPSA) and President (formerly VP Communications) to transition some aspects of orientation to my new VPSA portfolio.
Meeting Re: Student Advocacy and UW Ombudsperson	May 5	Met with Krista Mathias and Rose to discuss the new ombudsperson job description.
Senate Executive Committee	May 5	Approved the May Senate agenda, and discussed striking a task force to look at the prospects for a fall break at UW.

Executive Meeting	May 7	Discussed several items of business to complete transitions into new roles.
Building & Properties Committee	May 9	
Meeting Re: Student Advocacy and UW Ombudsperson	May 12	
GSEF Long Range Planning	May 12	
Town and Gown Association of Ontario Symposium	May 13-14	
GSA Board of Directors	May 14	



**University of Waterloo Graduate Student Association
External Affairs Committee
2013-14 Report**

Committee Members

Matthew Gaster (chair)
Helen Broom
Matthew Edwards
Robbie Henderson
Kristen Leal
Michael Makahnouk
Boyd Patton
Rose Vogt (secretary)

Introduction

The External Affairs Committee is expected to submit a report to council annually that summarizes lobbying efforts through external organizations for which the GSA is a member (as outlined in Council standing rule 2.5, section 2). This year the GSA was actively involved in numerous external lobbying efforts at all levels of government (Federal, Provincial, and Municipal). In addition to a detailed report on our continued involvement in the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA), this report will also highlight our developing role in the Ontario Graduate Students' Alliance (OGSA) and our new involvement with the city of Waterloo's Town and Gown Committee.

Recommendations from the 2012-13 report will be reviewed to evaluate successes this year. As well as this report will present recommendations to ensure that the 2014-13 external affairs committee remains productive and effective as the GSA continues to expand its lobbying efforts.

Canadian Alliance of Student Associations

Mission

Through its member-driven structure and grassroots approach, CASA's mission is to advocate for students through policy development and research, awareness campaigns, government relations, and partnerships with other stakeholders.

CASA Structure

CASA was formed in 1995 after a series of large cuts were made to post-secondary education. It was felt that a different, more effective, lobbying approach was needed to address these and future cuts. Since this time, student lobbying efforts have been quite effective and the same level of funding cuts has not taken place. The CASA head office is located in Ottawa and supported by staff consisting of an Executive Director, a Government Relations Officer, two Policy and Research Analysts, a Manager-Stakeholder Relations and an Office Manager. This year, CASA hired a new Executive Director, Jonathan Champagne, after Zachary Dayler finished his three years in the position.

CASA was founded on four pillars: Policy and Research, Advocacy, Communication, and Membership. Over time these pillars have been strengthened to make the organization more effective. The following points outline recent developments under each category and will be expanded upon in the following sections.

Policy and Research: Until recently, CASA's policy and research revolved around short policy documents regarding a specific issue such as "Canada Student Loan Vehicle Exemptions." This specific issue was researched and a document was written following the format identifying the issue, its pertinent research and providing specific lobby asks (Whereas "a,b,c", Be It Resolved "x,y,z"). Over the past year CASA membership identified that it wanted to engage in more comprehensive research projects and a more robust policy framework. To address this desire, one of the Policy and Research Analysts produced a comprehensive policy document on Mental Health in PSE this year. Additionally, at AGM CASA members approved a new policy framework, that would create larger more comprehensive policies (for instance instead of a single policy on "Canada Student Loan Vehicle Exemptions" and another on in study earning exemptions, CASA would combine these policies into one comprehensive policy on Canada Student Loans). Furthermore, these

policies will now be formatted around a “Principles, Concerns, Recommendations” model. This new format is intended to allow CASA to create more focused policy documents that more systematically investigate the issues. These comprehensive documents will still be used to create more concise advocacy briefs for specific lobby purposes.

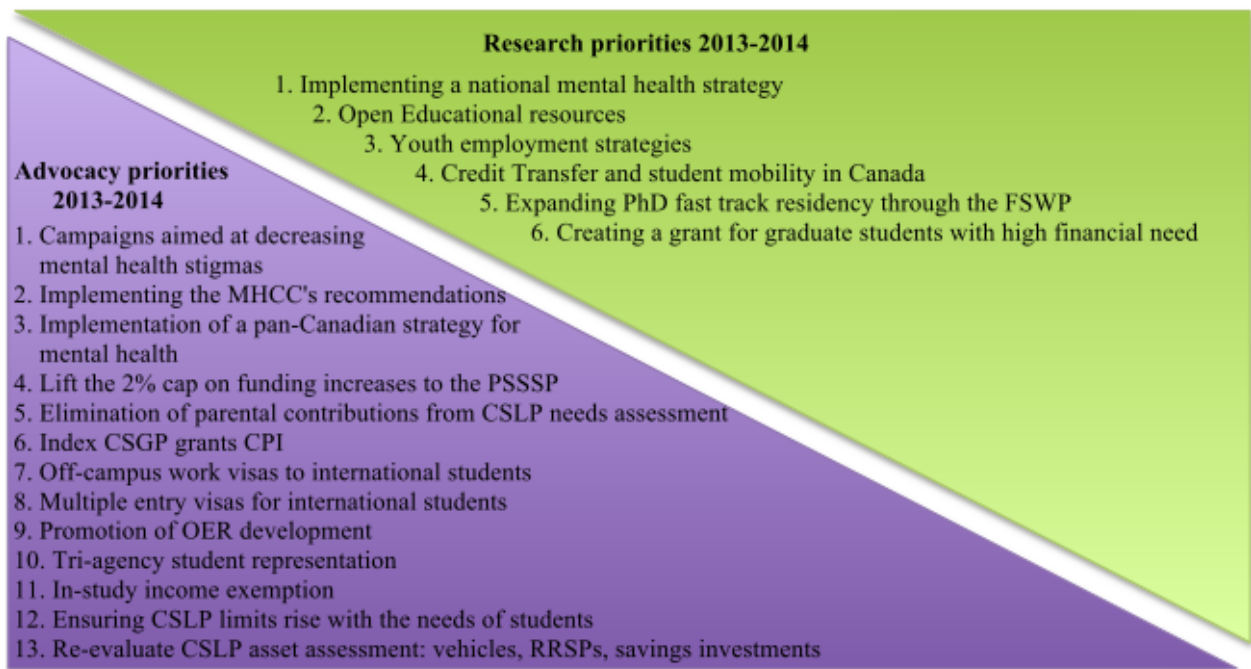
Advocacy: CASA’s ongoing goal is to drive the conversation in Ottawa and currently CASA is punching above its weight. Over the past year CASA had over 1000 points of contact with members of parliament and senators including a very impressive 150 in-person meetings during Advocacy Week in November. These meetings resulted in 6 mentions of CASA in the house of representatives, including from the Prime Minister, and a presentation to a Parliamentary Committee. CASA also continues to work with relevant stakeholders in Ottawa, participating in 4 collaborative projects this year. In addition to the work in Ottawa, some CASA members also participated in a “Wall Of Debt” Campaign. While our GSA did not participate in this campaign, due to its primary focus on undergraduate issues and timing, this campaign received a significant media profile. Finally, also on the advocacy front, CASA Grad Council members, including the GSA, will be participating in a letter writing campaign to the members of the Tri-Agency Governing Councils to petition for a student representative on these councils. This letter writing campaign is another step forward in advocating for a CASA policy that has already received significant political traction.

Communication: CASA is working on developing effective ways to communicate to its members and the public in a timely fashion. This year CASA produced over 30 Press releases, had 15 interviews with media outlets and received 50 national media mentions of CASA. In addition to these successes, however, CASA continues to work to improve the ability of the organization to respond quickly to timely issues. As such a working group has been formed to evaluate ways in which home office and the board of directors might be empowered to respond more dynamically to issues as they arise in between the four CASA conferences. The working groups recommendations will be provided at the next CASA conference in May.

Membership: CASA is continually looking to grow its number of engaged members. Currently CASA is the only registered federal lobbying group advocating for student issues, therefore this may open up new opportunities to grow the membership. This issue is particularly pertinent to graduate students as our GSA is currently only one of three Graduate Student Associations that are members of CASA. This year CASA had four schools come and observe CASA conferences, including the University of Alberta's GSA and FAÉCUM (University of Montreal), both organizations which represent graduate students. Despite the interest by new schools in becoming part of CASA, several schools have expressed dissatisfaction with CASA. Particularly, the UW-FEDS have voted to leave CASA after completing their one year as an associate member, while Dalhousie's, Western's and McMaster's student unions have all voted to move down to associate member status, the first step towards leaving CASA (Western and McMaster both moved down within the last couple months). This departure and future potential departures reflect some persistent dissatisfaction with CASA; however, by and large, the remaining membership of CASA remains strong.

CASA 2013-2014 Priorities

This year CASA members voted on separate research and advocacy priorities in June at the Policy and Strategy Conference. These priorities do not limit but rather focus the efforts of committees and staff members throughout the year.



Waterloo Achievements with CASA

This year, the GSA VP External was elected as chair of the Graduate Council, a standing committee responsible for drafting, reviewing and amending CASA political policies affecting graduate students. Through the Graduate Council our GSA was directly involved in promoting Graduate Student Issues to the larger CASA membership with the result that at Policy and Strategy the general membership prioritized several different policies directly associated with Graduate Students. A34: Grant for High Need Grad Students and F06: PhD Stream of the FSW were identified as research priorities, while I07: Tri-Agency Student Representation was identified as an advocacy priority.

Work was completed on both A34 and F06 in time for Advocacy Week in November. Both policies went through a thorough update of background research and new sources were consulted. As well, both policies included modified asks which were passed by the membership during the November plenary.

Further, Grad Council has also approved a letter writing campaign to the members of the Tri-Agency Governing Councils advocating I07. Currently members of the Grad Council (including our own GSA) are working with their home organizations, to coordinate their own letter writing campaign based upon a template provided by home office.

In addition to completing research work on A34 and F06 and our current work on I07, priorities identified by the general membership, Grad Council also worked on I01, an expired policy on Indirect Costs of Research. This policy, identified by FAÉCUM as politically timely, was approved by the general membership at the AGM in March. Although our EAC committee was unsure about the specific benefits to Graduate Students of this policy, CASA will continue to do further research on this policy.

In addition to these policies coming from Grad Council, we have also been consulted on, and contributed to several other policies including AUGSA's policies on commercialization of research and a new policy in the works on student parental leave.

Further, after completing work on A34: PhD stream of the FSW program in the Fall, home office brought to our attention a Toronto Star article highlighting some anecdotal stories of arbitrary and ambiguous rejections from this program. Grad Council decided to follow up on this issue by asking home office to contact Citizenship and Immigration and by requesting further information from our home constituents, attempting to discover if these issues are wide spread or merely a few outlying anecdotes. This data is currently being solicited through members of Grad Council and will be followed up on in the next year. The results of our enquiries may require further revision to the policy asks and/or further advocacy efforts.

In addition to these Graduate Student focused issues, our GSA was also involved in more comprehensive policy development through our secondary delegates involvement on the policy committee. Through our involvement on both Grad Council and Policy Committee, our GSA was deeply involved in all of the policy work done by CASA this year.

Waterloo GSA Meetings with MPs

This year's lobby conference was very successful; politicians from ALL parties were receptive to CASA priorities, with some push back to the requests regarding grants and loans. Each politician was very receptive to the CASA lobby document, where the level of supporting research was acknowledged during meetings with MPs, Senators, and bureaucrats.

CASA Achievements

CASA saw numerous wins for students in 2013. Ranging from regulatory changes all the way to budget investments, 2013 was a successful for CASA and all students across Canada. Some highlights include:

Canada Student Loan Vehicle Exemption – Announced in budget 2014 this was an investment that students have been calling on for years. This exemption means that students will no longer be required to claim the value of one car when applying for student loans resulting in an additional \$7.8 million a year available in student loans.

International student work visas – Recognizing the many challenges that international students face, including significantly higher tuition fees; students were calling on changes that would see fairness when it comes to working off campus. With this change all full-time international students will automatically receive visas allowing them to work off campus.

International student multi-entry visas – International students coming to study in Canada are often not able to go home for the duration of their studies. Students saw this as unfair and called on the government make changes. All international students will now by default receive multi-entry visas for the duration of their study period.

Open Access – The federal government spends billions of dollars on research each year. Students were calling on the government to allow research funded with taxpayer dollars to be available in an open access format. All three of the Tri-Agencies (NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR) are adopting an Open Access policy regarding publicly funded research.

Concluding Remarks

CASA has become an effective lobby organization for student associations in Canada, with major improvements continuing to be made as CASA adapts to its ever changing membership and its growing influence in Ottawa. The new Executive Director, Jonathan Champagne seems to be well positioned to continue to lead the organization forward. The finances are quite healthy, with reserve funds for unexpected emergencies in place and a fund to coordinate an effective grassroots movement during the next Federal election that is set to take place in 2015. After a year long process of reviewing and revising the By-Laws of the organization, CASA is also well positioned to maintain compliance with the new standards for not-for-profit organizations. CASA has retained strong relationships with all Federal parties, and is already beginning to plan for the Federal Election in 2015. This is important as CASA plans to be positioned as a leading voice on post-secondary issues in the lead up to the election.

One of the major limitations confronting the GSA's national lobbying efforts with CASA continues to be our organization lack of any sufficient policy documents and official positions. Currently the GSA national lobby strategy in terms of advocacy lies solely on priorities identified during the Policy and Strategy conference by the general assembly of CASA. In order for the GSA to be effective, policy positions must be developing with our association so that we bring policy priorities to CASA on an annual basis. The Graduate Council in CASA has become effective in bringing policies forward within CASA, and the Waterloo GSA must do a better job on bring our ideas to the table for discussion. The members of the external affairs committee must work together to bring more policy priorities to CASA in order for us to be more effective with our advocacy efforts with the federal government.

Finally, undergraduate student associations in Ontario have been dropping down to associate members of CASA. In light of the departure of the FEDS from CASA and the potential departure of more southern Ontario undergraduate schools, the Waterloo GSA needs to be leaders for Waterloo Region and southern Ontario within CASA. It is important for the GSA to reach out to local MPs in the Region in order to bring awareness to graduate student issues to our elected officials. The most effective way to lobby for change and improved PSE in Canada is to develop grassroots relationships with MPs (both locally and nationally).

GSA Expenses for CASA

- \$12,544.00 2014-2014 membership –full member
- \$ 543.94 Travel / accommodation July 2013
- \$ 3582.09 Travel / accommodation November 2013
- \$ 2510.60 Travel / accommodation March 2014-05-13

Total Expense: \$19,180.63

Ontario Graduate Students' Alliance (OGSA)

Since the OGSA was incorporated with Industry Canada (March 2013), a general meeting of members was held in June 2013 to approve the by-laws, establish a policy-setting framework, and elect the board of directors. The GSA VP Internal (2013-14) was elected the inaugural president and has chaired the board of directors.

The board of directors is comprised of the following individuals:

Michael Makahnouk – President (University of Waterloo)
Ashley Coleman – Vice President (Wilfrid Laurier University)
Kaiti Nixon – Secretary (Trent University)
Philip Ferguson – Treasurer (Athabasca University)
Talena Rambarran – At-Large Director (McMaster University)
Pepe Rodriguez – At-Large Director (University of Guelph)
Lokendra Ramotar – At-Large Director (University of Ontario Institute of Technology)
Emilia Garstka – At-Large Director (Lakehead University)

The Province of Ontario released a proposed differentiation policy framework discussion paper in September 2013 and the OGSA issued a response to the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU) in early October. The OGSA President and Vice President met with staff members of MTCU's research and policy branch in late September to discuss the OGSA's short-term goals.

The OGSA hired Jonathon Pukila to serve as a Policy Researcher; his employment will be reviewed in late May. Jon has worked on a Technology Tax Credit policy that will be presented to members at the Annual General Meeting in late May 2014.

To date, the OGSA has worked on the following items:

Audit (completed)
Budget (draft prepared)
Financial Operational Procedures (in progress)
Lobby Registration (in progress)
Membership Fee Schedule (proposal)
Mission, Vision, and Values (completed)
Ontario Ombudsperson Brief (completed)
Payroll (completed)
Technology Tax Credit Policy (draft prepared)
Website (to be launched mid May)
2013-14 Annual Report (in preparation)

The 2013-14 Annual Report will be finalized for presentation to members of the OGSA at the Annual General Meeting (late May). The report will be presented to the UW-GSA Board of Directors in June 2014. This year, the OGSA leadership hopes to hire an executive director and set a fee schedule for member associations.

GSA Expense to OGSA: \$10,000.00 – seed funding

GU15 Conference at Waterloo

The University of Waterloo GSA hosted the annual meeting of Graduate Student Associations (Unions/Societies) from the Group of Canadian Research Universities. Delegates that attended were from the University of Alberta, University of British Columbia, University of Calgary, University of Manitoba, McGill University, McMaster University, Université de Montréal, Simon Fraser University, and the University of Toronto. The meeting was well received from delegates and the group decided that this forum is a great opportunity to get together to share information and discuss issues facing graduate students regarding research. It was also decided that there is no reason for this group to form another national lobbying consortium. The next meeting will be held in Montreal in the summer, and the University of Calgary GSA will host the next annual meeting.

Total Expense of the GU15 Conference: \$450.00 + resources of 2 staff for 3 days.

GRT Contract

The GRT U-Pass contract is set to expire in 2015 and the UW-GSA Board of Directors must consider that the working group of student associations has not met on a regular basis. It is important that the UW-GSA initiates the negotiation process this year, and provides leadership to the working group. The members of the GSA see the bus pass as an important service, and it would be wise that our leaders ensure that this service is affordable for all students in Waterloo Region.

External Affairs Committee Completed Objectives from 2013 Recommendations

- This year our GSA was very actively involved in CASA. While we did not hold a position on the Board (as the recommendations specified), our VP External chaired CASA's Grad Council, while the secondary delegate was a member of both Grad Council and the Policy Committee. Moreover, during Advocacy Week, our GSA sent four delegates to maximize our presence in CASA.
- Following last year's recommendation, the President delegated his role as secondary delegate to a member of the EAC and it was very effective. The secondary delegate was able to contribute far more towards our involvement in CASA than the President would have been able, being an active member of both the Graduate Council and the Policy Committee.
- Last year EAC Report recommended an increased role of the EAC in preparing for and communicating about the GSA's involvement in CASA. This had very limited success this year; however, in preparation for next year, the EAC had begun work on a new web-page to be posted on the GSA site which will provide regular updates to the larger student body.

EAC 2014-15 Recommendations

- GSA delegates should consider running for board of director positions (and/or Chair of Graduate Council) so that our organization can be leaders in CASA on an annual basis.
- The GSA hire a policy and research officer to develop policy positions to improve our ability to lobby effectively with CASA.
- The EAC must be more involved with supporting the CASA delegates with research on specific graduate student issues, policies and official positions, and recommendations for conference discussions and decisions.
- The GSA considers hosting a CASA conference in the future. The University of Waterloo is an ideal location because delegates from Western Canada and staff from CASA home office can fly directly into Waterloo Regional Airport.
- The GSA continue to be leaders in the OGSA

Appendix A

The following vacancies on Council Committees will be filled at the May 28th Council meeting.

GSA Council Committees

1.) Policy & By-Law Review

Membership:

CHAIR: VP-Internal Sonia Rahman

6 other members of Council:

- Maya D'alessio
- David Pomaranski
- Taya McGillivary
- _____
- _____
- _____

2.) Activities Committee

Membership:

CHAIR: VP-Communication & Events, Coleen Even

Full, affiliate or Complimentary Members of the GSA (*as many as are interested in volunteering*)

- Henry Ensley <hwensley@uwaterloo.ca>
- Ty Gashwala
- Connor Hart
- Mike Piazza
- Ghazal Memartoluie
- _____
- _____
- ?????

3.) Student Affairs Committee

Membership:

CHAIR: VP-Student Affairs, Robbie Henderson

GSA President (*ex officio*)

GSA General Manager (*Secretary*)

6 graduate students from each faculty

AHS – _____
ENGINEERING – _____
ENVIRONMENT – _____
SCIENCE – _____
ARTS – Celia Huang
MATH – Sandy Beidu?

- 1 international student at large
- 1 graduate student residing in on campus housing
- 1 graduate student enrolled on a part-time basis
- 1 graduate student from a satellite campus

 Jacqueline Hanley
 Vikkie Chen (Architecture)

4.) Graduate Student Funding

Membership:

CHAIR: VP-Student Affairs, Robbie Henderson

GSA president (*Ex-Officio*)

GSA General Manager (*Secretary*)

6 graduate students from each faculty

- AHS - _____
- ARTS - _____
- ENGINEERING - _____
- ENVIRONMENT - James Sebele
- MATH - Ty Gashwala
- SCIENCE _____

5.) External Affairs Committee

Membership:

CHAIR: VP-External, Ghazal Memartoluie

GSA president

VP-Student Affairs

GSA delegates to student lobbying organizations: ??

2 members of Council – selected by council, for reappointment:

- Kristen Leal
- Matthew Edwards

6.) Elections Oversight Committee

Membership:

CHAIR: Elected by council neither CRO nor DRO

Four other members of the GSA – elected by Council

Note: This committee is under review by the Policy & Bylaw Review Committee.

7.) *Ad-hoc* Theft Prevention Committee

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

Purpose:

To advocate and recommend solutions for the prevention of theft of personal property on campus. 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 security on campus.

Scope:

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

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 - resources

GSA VP-external - resources

Meetings agreements:

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

Notice of meetings as for Council meetings.

Contacts and resources to work with:

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, insurance company