ANNUAL REPORT AND STRATEGIC PLAN
Graduate Student Association at the University of Waterloo

Contact Us
gsaoffice@uwaterloo.ca
Mission

We serve the graduate students of the University of Waterloo with dedication and commitment to enhance the quality of their academic and social experience.

Key Objectives

1. Every graduate student at the University of Waterloo has an overall positive social and academic experience.
2. Graduate students and their interests are represented and promoted in the university community.
3. Graduate students and their interests are represented and promoted to federal, provincial, and municipal levels of government.
4. Individual graduate students receive assistance with specific problems they face in the university community.
5. Graduate students at the University of Waterloo are in social, intellectual, and political contact.
6. Every graduate student at the University of Waterloo has good physical and mental health.
7. The University of Waterloo considers the long-term environmental sustainability of its operations to be a top priority.

Strategic Direction 2019-2020: Steps towards the Key Objectives

- Ensure highly relevant portfolio of GSA services to continually improve the graduate student experience;
- Empower the graduate student community to jointly advocate and represent graduate students interests and rights;
- Increase engagement and communication within the graduate student body, between the GSA, graduate students, and UW, and with various institutions at the local, provincial, and federal levels;
- Improve GSA internal governance and operations and ensure long-term organizational sustainability.

What to Get Involved? Here Are Some High Priority GSA Activities

- Resist and overturn the Province’s regressive OSAP cuts and defend against its attacks on lower-income students and student representation.
- Develop a complete operational planning system, centred on student needs and results, and improve key performance indicators (affordability of education, student mental wellness, and academic support).
“The Rose Vogt Award of Excellence, the organization’s highest award and named after the General Manager of the organization from 2011 to 2018, may be presented once per year to an individual (or in exceptional circumstances, individuals) who demonstrates selfless dedication to graduate students.”

Rose Vogt was an integral part of the GSA since she joined the organization in 1998. She was initially hired to “turn the Graduate House around”. As its manager, Rose breathed new life into the Graduate House, introducing community events and warm touches such as freshly baked bread. She emphasized locally sourced food and established strong connections with farmers and suppliers. In 2011, as the organization continued to grow, Rose became the General Manager of the GSA and took on several new responsibilities, including financials, governance support, and student advocacy. Rose distinguished herself as a resourceful and persistent advocate for graduate students and fully embraced her mission to serve them with dedication and commitment. Over her last three years with the organization, Rose supported a major professionalization of the GSA that saw its governance and operations totally transform. Rose moved to the UW Staff Association in October 2018 to become its President. Before coming to the GSA, Rose graduated from the Man & Environment program at the University of Waterloo and worked with the Federation of Students. In her personal life, Rose enjoys gardening, guitar, golfing, running, and weight lifting.

In February 2019, the GSA Board of Directors established a Recognition policy and created the Rose Vogt Award of Excellence to honour Rose and continue her legacy. The inaugural award will be presented to Rose herself at a ceremony immediately following the Annual General Meeting on April 16, 2019. Nominations for the award will be accepted starting Fall 2019.

**Excerpt from Policy GP-17: Recognition**

Individuals who make significant contributions, directly or indirectly, to achievement of the Ends [GSA key objectives] may be recognized for contributions that go above and beyond what would normally be expected of such an individual. Recognition will normally be honorific with no monetary component; in-kind gifts are permitted.
Table of Contents

SUMMARY TABLE OF ANNUAL REPORT..................................................................................... II
ROSE VOGT AWARD OF EXCELLENCE ................................................................................... III
LETTER FROM THE EDITOR .................................................................................................. VI
LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD ........................................................................ IX
LETTER FROM THE SPEAKER OF THE COUNCIL ................................................................. X
LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT ........................................................................................... XII
STRATEGIC PLAN .................................................................................................................. 15

OVERVIEW ............................................................................................................................. 16
THE PRIORITIES OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN ...................................................................... 16
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .......................................................................................................... 19

APPENDIX A: GSA SERVICES ............................................................................................... 21
APPENDIX B: GSA FEES ........................................................................................................ 22
APPENDIX C: GSA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART .................................................................. 23
APPENDIX D: LIST OF STAFF & VOLUNTEERS (AS OF APRIL 10, 2019) ............................ 24

Table of Figures

FIGURE 1: SAVINGS WITH GSA SERVICES .......................................................................... VI
FIGURE 2: MAJOR ISSUES FACING GRADUATE STUDENTS ................................................... VII
FIGURE 3: (PHOTO) COUNCILLORS DISCUSS STRATEGY AT THE 2019 GSA STRATEGIC RETREAT. .......... XI
FIGURE 5: MISSION OF THE GSA ......................................................................................... 15
FIGURE 6: TIMELINE AND PROCESS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN .............................................. 15

FIGURE 4: (PHOTO) PARTICIPANTS DISCUSS SURVEY RESULTS AT THE GSA 2019 STRATEGIC RETREAT. ..... 19
Letter from the Editor
Norman M. Kearney

Anyone doing a graduate degree knows that maintaining your mental health can at times be difficult. Courses, teaching, conferences, defences, publications – it all adds up. On top of studying, teaching, and research, we all have private and social lives; families and domestic responsibilities, part-time jobs, etc. Factor in the sometimes competitive and often lonely aspects of graduate studies, and pile on financial burden, and it’s easy to see why graduate students setup the GSA in the first place.

Earlier this year, the Provincial Government announced the Student Choice Initiative, which puts the future of the GSA in question. Starting September 1st, it’ll be up to you whether you pay the GSA fee, but before you decide whether to opt out, we’d like you to consider a few things. While it only costs you $22.80 per term to be a GSA member, the amount that you save through the GSA’s negotiated contracts is well worth it. For example, you pay $429 per year for the GSA Health & Dental plan, but an equivalent private plan could cost you much more* (see for yourself by trying out any of the free online insurance quotation services). Through the GSA, you save hundreds of dollars per year on your health and dental expenses. For students who take advantage of the GSA bus pass, the benefits are even greater**. Even if you don’t use your GSA bus pass, its cost is more than offset by the savings that you enjoy on your health and dental expenses.

While we’re proud of the savings that we’ve achieved for you, there are even more important reasons for you to remain a member of the GSA. Graduate students at the University of Waterloo have told us that they feel isolated – one in ten graduate students feel totally isolated, both socially and academically – and overburdened by the cost of their education (almost half of graduate students feel this way). Financial burden distracts from the educational experience, diminishes academic output, and exacerbates mental illness. We hope that the University will work with us to ensure that all graduate students feel included and receive sufficient financial support to cover the cost of their degree and the regional cost of living. But hope is not enough,

* Health and Dental savings based on a 26-year-old in Ontario seeking minimal coverage with SureHealth on Dental & Drug coverage who is not taking more than 3 prescriptions on a regular basis. Your savings will vary. This example is illustrative and does not constitute an endorsement.

** Comparison is based on the GRT Adult monthly pass, which is $86 per month
and over the past few years we’ve been working tirelessly to strengthen the GSA so that we can better advocate for our collective interests. Below, I briefly highlight some of that work and describe a few things that we have planned for the future.

Over the past few years, the GSA has made major improvements in the areas of finance, services and operations, and governance and representation. On the financial side, the GSA increased its investment returns, while divesting from fossil fuels. Higher investment returns mean more resources for staff and services. The GSA also improved its internal pay equity, committing to a living wage and setting a fair wage cap, which is good for morale. Together, these financial reforms have improved our capacity to get results for graduate students. With respect to services and operations, the GSA reduced the number of its paid executives from six to two, freeing up additional resource for support staff and higher service levels. We hired an experienced hospitality consultant to evaluate our flagship service, the Graduate House, which led to several changes, including a new menu, preferential pricing for graduate students, and a coupon that allows you to redeem most of the value of your Graduate House fee. We’ve been investing heavily in activities organized by graduate students, supporting dozens of activities each year ranging from departmental socials to professional workshops and conferences. Finally, in terms of governance and representation, the GSA transitioned to the Policy Governance system, which dramatically improved the Board and the Council’s capacities to oversee and direct the organization. We also conducted an extensive consultation with graduate students, the Vital Signs survey, which with more than 1000 responses has provided the GSA with deep insight into the needs and interests of graduate students (e.g. the isolation figure mentioned above).

This year, the GSA continued to strengthen itself to fight for graduate students. Included in this report is an Interim Strategic Plan with strategies and targets up to the end of 2020. This plan is the first of its kind for the GSA and represents an evolution in the Association’s governance and operational capacity. In the next few months, the GSA will be mounting a campaign to resist...
and overturn the Provincial Government’s regressive higher education policy (described above). Ultimately, our sights are set on the core issues facing graduate students: building community, and improving affordability, mental wellness, and academic support.

The work of the GSA would not be possible without the support of its loyal and hardworking staff and volunteers (see Appendix D for a current list). I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge a few individuals who have made outstanding contributions during my time with the Association. First, let me thank everyone involved in the writing of this report and the development of the interim strategic plan. Their names can be found on page 19. On the Board, I would like to thank Evan Andrews, Sondra Eger, Beth Timmers, Amanda Joynt, and Allison Sachs for their constant dedication, support, and ingenuity. Russ Freure has represented history students for several years as their soft spoken yet perceptive councillor. Jen Reid has served her constituents in Physics with passion as their dedicated and outspoken representative on Council. As President from 2016 to 2018, Robert Bruce led the staff through the most difficult period of adjustments to the Policy Governance system. He also led the GSA’s negotiations over the SLC/PAC expansion and secured space and privileges that will benefit graduate students for years to come. Jessica Brake, Indi Madar, and I worked together on the Vital Signs survey, and they were indispensable to its success. With the support of Management, Cam Bartel and his team have renewed the Graduate House, making it a great place to eat and a pleasant place to be. Rose Vogt’s countless contributions are recognized on page iii. Externally, I would like to thank Chris Read and Matthew Erickson for their invaluable guidance and support over the past three years.

I invite you to review this report, which contains letters from the senior leaders of the GSA and a summary of the 2019-2020 Interim Strategic Plan. I hope that these letters and our plan will provide you with a strong rationale for remaining a member of the GSA and continuing to support the important work that we do to enhance the experience of all graduate students. On behalf of the Board, the Council, and the staff, thank you for your time and attention, and please be in touch with the GSA if there is any way that we can help you.

Norman was the Student Affairs Officer and the Chair of the Council (2016-2017), the Chair of the Board (2017-2018), and a GSA director (2016-2019). He is a fourth-year PhD candidate in the School of Environment, Resources, and Sustainability.
Letter from the Chair of the Board

Allison M. Sachs

What does the board of directors of the Graduate Student Association (GSA) do? Ultimately, we make sure that the GSA is achieving reasonable goals at reasonable cost to you, and we do so by setting the foundational policies for the organization. What does that translate into for you? We believe that better governance means we can advocate better for you, put on better social programming, and provide a better political forum through the GSA council for all graduate students.

This year’s GSA board has focused on shaping the GSA into an organization that can better serve you. We’ve given the president more autonomy to direct the GSA, thereby enabling her to be more responsive to graduate student needs. At the same time, we’ve ensured that there are clear and reasonable limitations on the president’s actions—thus ensuring your resources are used responsibly, carefully, and legally. We’ve also empowered the GSA council—your representative body and political forum—by clarifying their mandate. The board of directors serves graduate students—and only graduate students—by creating the structure needed for graduate students to speak in one voice. We are stronger if we can act together.

These years of improvements, both big and small, add up. This document you are reading is a testament to our growth. It represents the organization’s first structured attempt at building a strategic plan. This plan will guide us in the next year and a half; we will be focusing on increasing your satisfaction with our core services, revamping all facets of our advocacy on your behalf, and improving the connectedness of graduate student community across campus. I hope you see your own aspirations for graduate students reflected as you read through these pages.

Finally, remember that the lifeblood of your graduate student association is you: you and your needs are why we exist. As volunteers, you populate the board of directors, council and dozens of university committees. Your feedback keeps us moving in the right direction. And, of course, you sustain us with your membership fee. This fee, in turn, funds advocacy and core GSA services, and most critically it supports our dedicated staff, who will support you through any trial that graduate studies throws your way. The provincial government is moving to restrict the GSA’s assessment of fees, which were democratically approved by you. This summer, I want you to join the GSA in pushing back against the recent suite of damaging education legislation, including OSAP cuts and the so-called “student choice initiative”—which doesn’t give student bodies a choice at all.

Allison was a GSA councillor for the Department of Physics (2016-2017) and a GSA director (2017 – present). They are a second-year PhD student at the Institute of Quantum Computing.
Letter from the Speaker of the Council

Christopher van Bommel

The GSA Council is the social, political, and academic body of the Graduate Student Association, and works to ensure that your needs and aspirations are reflected in the GSA’s operations (i.e. our services), which includes advocacy to the university and all levels of government. For example, Council recently adopted a stance calling on the University to divest its endowment fund from fossil fuels and to make no new fossil fuel investments, reflecting graduate students’ interests in protecting the environment and combating climate change. In addition to our work on safeguarding our collective long-term well-being, Council is focused on addressing your immediate material needs, i.e. ensuring you receive the compensation that you deserve for your contributions as a graduate student.

This year, Council renewed the mission of the GSA, establishing a list of key objectives, or “Ends”, for improving the lives of graduate students. Most recently, Council added an objective related to diversity. This addition arose from the realization that while diversity services, such as The Glow Centre for Sexual and Gender Diversity and RAISE (Racial Advocacy for Inclusion, Solidarity and Equity), are offered to undergraduate students, similar services are not available to graduate students. The GSA President will now be required to make efforts to ensure such services become available to graduate students.

Council serves as the primary conduit between graduate students and the GSA President. This division of labour between representatives and advocates has proven effective. For example, Council advised the President on issues related to the new GRT tap cards. As a result, the GSA President advocated for, and successfully negotiated, a grace period that allows graduate students to ride the GRT buses while getting fees arranged at the start of the term. In addition, Council advised the GSA President on graduate student perspectives on the University’s new Fall Break initiative, which is being implemented as a three year pilot project. Specifically, graduate students expressed concern that they be able to take full advantage of the Fall Break, in light of their unique position as both students and employees.

Finally, Council has worked on becoming a more democratic and deliberative space where issues facing graduate students can be discussed with staff and translated into improved outcomes. Efforts have focused on improving internal processes to streamline Council meetings. For example, Council has setup a suite of standing advocacy committees, which will monitor university, local, provincial, and federal activities that relate to the interests of graduate students. The committees will work proactively to produce advocacy positions and policy briefs in order to influence key decisions. The committees cover the following areas: Finance & Economy; Study, Teaching, and Research; Social & Environment; and Elections. The Elections committee will be responsible for developing tools and guidance for graduate students ahead of elections, in order
to improve the voting clout of the graduate student body. We are still looking for commissioners to head the Finance & Economy and Elections standing advocacy committees, as well as individuals to serve on these committees; please reach out to the GSA if you are interested in serving in this capacity, or if you would like to get involved as a councillor representing your department.

I am proud of the efforts made by Council over the past year and look forward to seeing its efforts in the future.

Christopher was a GSA councillor (2016-2018) for the Department of Combinatorics and Optimization. He is a fourth-year PhD Candidate in the Department of Combinatorics and Optimization, Faculty of Mathematics.
When I took up this position, one thing was clear—that I was going to stand for all graduate students and to answer the call to passionately advocate and represent their needs and priorities. At each turn, therefore, my team’s and my goal has been to ensure that none is left without a voice. Consequently, one of our initial challenges put us right to the test on our commitment to serving all students. I am referring to challenges that some students faced between Fall 2017 and Fall 2018 when old WatCARDs were being transitioned to the new Tap-Cards. We worked with Grand River Transit (GRT) to solve the problems related to the new tap cards and were also successful in implementing a process that provides a 3-week grace period at the beginning of each term for students to continue to ride the bus while becoming fees arranged. We are also finalizing negotiations over an amendment to the GRT contract that will allow graduate students in exceptional circumstances to continue participating in the GSA bus pass program, e.g. students who have gone inactive due to health concerns or parental leave and students with accessibility needs.

This is an example of many of our efforts on your behalf. My team and I are elated by the continued trust and the opportunity to keep serving our community. The past year was that of transition for the GSA as we adopted a new policy manual to govern our organization. As part of the transition, I ensured that our organization had a stable management team comprising the vice-president, the general manager, a support staff and an administrative assistant to assist with daily execution of services and our Ends. I established a Workplan to provide strategic direction in improving the efforts of the GSA in the areas of internal operations and communications, advocacy and representation, and engagement and wellness.

We’ve made a number of changes to our operations that we hope have improved your experience. Some of the most visible changes are at the Graduate House, where graduate students now enjoy preferential pricing and receive a $5 discount once per month. In Fall 2018 alone, we gave out $6,700 in discounts to graduate students. Another visible change is the redesign of our e-news and website and our features in the UW IMprint, which now make it easier for you to keep up to date and stay engaged with the GSA.

Thanks to our presence on over 60 University committees, the GSA Vice-President and I have been able to influence the development of various policies and practices. Building on the work of previous GSA leaders, my team and I played a key role in the review and update of Policy 42 (Sexual Violence Prevention and Response, Protocol and Procedures) where we provided feedback through extensive consultation with council and general membership. We participated in drafting the new Guide for Graduate Research and Supervision, which outlines key roles and responsibilities for students and supervisors and clarifies expectations at each state of the
graduate program. In light of the difficult transition to UW’s new Workday system, we achieved a commitment from the University’s Human Resources department to provide dedicated Workday support to graduate students starting next term. Working with Columbia Lake Village residences, we arranged for improved snow clearing service, to improve safety and mobility. We also advocated to have clear expectations set out in the academic calendar for teaching assistantships and research assistantships during the reading week in the Fall term. And in collaboration with the Writing and Communication Centre, we provided funding support for the WaterlooWrites project which helped over 600 grad students with enhancing productivity and motivation towards degree completion goals.

Our engagement efforts in the past year have been focused on hearing from you and finding avenues to build the grad student community. We initiated town hall gatherings beginning with the School of Pharmacy and Faculty of Science. In collaboration with the Office of the President and the Federation of Students, we recognized graduate students who have demonstrated exemplary leadership skills in various ways at the University of Waterloo and/or in the surrounding community. In addition, we provided more than $20,000 in funding support to over two-dozen departmental student associations and groups. Some of the events we financially supported include: the Electrical and Computer Engineering GSA Holiday Banquet; the Political Science US midterm election viewing session; the School of Public Health and Health Systems Qualitative Research Community of Practice (QRCoP) workshop; weekly Board game night for grad students in Biochemistry and Chemistry; the Applied Math holiday event; and Waterloo Ecology Network Seminar Series for grad students in the School of Environment, Resources, and Sustainability.

Mental wellness has become one of the GSA’s top priorities. We recognize that mental illness has many deep drivers, including material conditions (i.e. financial insecurity) and environmental factors (e.g. social isolation). While we continue to press the University to increase the minimum funding for graduate students, our efforts this year have focused primarily on providing enhanced coping and crisis support. First and foremost, we set up a working group on mental wellness, consisting of representatives from the GSA, the University of Waterloo’s Counselling Services, and the Region of Waterloo’s Crisis Services. This group has been working to develop tools to help graduate students cope with stressful situations, such as navigating student-supervisor relationships. In addition, we’ve made efforts to reduce social isolation through organizing and supporting a wide variety of events. For example: we organized off-campus recreational trips; hosted social events at the Grad House; provided free massage; and participated in the Thrive week.

Although we have seen some progress on a number of areas, some key challenges remain. The University’s Policy 30, which covers the rights and responsibilities of teaching and research assistants, has been in draft mode for several years, and has gone through multiple revisions. We hope to work with the University to get a student-centered version of this policy off the drafting table and into practice as soon as possible. In addition, the affordability of graduate studies remains a burning issue which we are diligently working to address. My team and I will continue...
to build on our efforts from the past year, and I look forward to implementing further improvements in the coming year to GSA services to better serve you.

Naima N. Samuel was a GSA councillor (2017-2018) for the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies and GSA President (2018-2019 and 2019-2020). She is a second-year MA student in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, Faculty of Applied Health Sciences.
Over the months of March and April 2019, the GSA produced an interim strategic plan, which lays out seven high-level strategies and accompanying targets for 2019 and 2020. The process for developing the plan involved a survey of directors, councillors, and staff, an intensive one-day retreat, and a series of working group meetings. By the end of May, the Board, the Council, and the staff will have developed operational plans to put the interim strategic plan into action. Monitoring and evaluation will take place periodically until the expiry of the plan at the end of 2020, when a full five-year strategic plan will come into force.

The primary objective of the interim strategic plan is to deepen and solidify the lobbying capacities of the GSA. The GSA exists to get results for graduate students, and this plan, a first for the GSA, demonstrates our commitment to delivering those results. While this plan builds on the progress of recent years, its completion will involve a considerable amount of work. We invite you to get involved in helping to make the GSA the powerful force in postsecondary education that graduate students deserve.
Impact on Graduate Students of the Student Choice Initiative: Two major questions facing the GSA and graduate students over the coming months are: 1) What fraction of the GSA membership fee (currently $22.80 per term) will be subject to the Province of Ontario’s new opt-out legislation, the Student Choice Initiative; and, 2) What, if any, GSA services will graduate students who choose to opt-out be able to access? The Board, the Council, and the staff will be working together to arrive at answers to these questions and will keep you, graduate students, informed as new information becomes available.

Overview

The strategic plan, outlined on the following two pages, consists of seven strategies. Each strategy has two targets: one to be reached by the end of 2019, and the other by the end of 2020. As well, each strategy falls under a more general strategic priority, outlined below.

The priorities of the strategic plan

1. Ensure highly relevant portfolio of services to continually improve the graduate student experience;
2. Empower the graduate student community to jointly advocate and represent graduate students interests and rights;
3. Increase engagement and communication within the graduate student body, between the GSA, grad students and UW, as well with various institutions at local/provincial and federal level;
4. Improve GSA internal operations and ensure long-term organizational sustainability.
GSA Strategic Plan

**Strategy A:** Increase operational effectiveness (e.g. redressing/alleviating student concerns) by developing a comprehensive system for student needs assessment, planning, monitoring, and reporting.

- **Target 2019:** An organizational and individual operational planning system in place, linked with strategic planning, performance appraisal, and relevant reporting (monthly, quarterly and annual reports), and sufficient operational resources (people, time and money) are in place.
- **Target 2020:** An efficient student need assessment system is in place to ensure continued relevance of programs and plans (making use of both primary and secondary data sources).

**Strategy B:** Develop tools to educate and empower graduate students to recognize and advocate for their own rights, institutionalize the defence of those rights (e.g. collective agreement), and ensure visible representation of student needs and interests.

- **Target 2019:** In advance of September, graduate students are actively engaged in responding to the announced OSAP changes and support the GSA interest with regards to the Student Choice Initiative.
- **Target 2020:** An efficient student need assessment system is in place to ensure continued relevance of programs and plans (making use of both primary and secondary data sources).

**Strategy C:** Streamline and improve information flows within and among Board, Council, and Management, and between the organization and graduate students.

- **Target 2019:** Internal communication policy is in place.
- **Target 2020:** External communication system is in place as a tool to engage graduate students in organizational activities and ensure effective consultation on ongoing matters.
**Strategy D:** Develop and institutionalize succession processes for Board, Council, Management, and the organization as a whole, including recruitment, training, capacity building, and transition.

- **Target 2019:** Succession policies and resources for Board, Council, and Management are in place.
- **Target 2020:** Fully staffed Board and Council. All board and council members are able to effectively contribute to the work of the GSA.

**Strategy E:** Diversify the Association's revenue base to reduce long-term reliance on membership fees.

- **Target 2019:** GSA and Graduate House fee refunds stay below 20% (assume this as the best case scenario and plan for worse cases). Plan is in place to increase revenue from non-fee resources.
- **Target 2020:** Revenue from non-fee sources (excluding the Graduate House) is increased to offset any losses from refunds.

**Strategy F:** Audit the current portfolio of GSA service to ensure continued relevance and adjust service portfolio to match existing needs, ensuring that they achieve intended impacts.

- **Target 2019:** GSA services are adjusted to reflect student needs as identified during the Interim Strategic Plan.
- **Target 2020:** New services are added based on improved awareness of priority student needs.

**Strategy G:** Develop tools to educate graduate students about environmental sustainability, institutionalize sustainable practices at UW, and ensure visible representation of sustainability issues and practices.

- **Target 2019:** Increase awareness, partnerships, and pressure related to fossil fuel divestment.
- **Target 2020:** Environmental advocacy framework is in place, developed in extensive consultation with graduate students.
Acknowledgements

**Strategic Plan Facilitators**: Norman M. Kearney and Isidora Sidorovska

**Strategic Plan Survey and Retreat Participants**: Stella A. Arthur, Michelle Ashburner, Cam Bartel, Tracey Beirness, William Chung, Clay Dasilva, Nikhil George, Sajed Haque, Norman M. Kearney, Kevin McKay, Jillian Kendrick, Amanda Parker, Nataša Popović, Jennifer Reid, Nick Revington, Matthew Robbins, Allison M. Sachs, Naima N. Samuel, Lynne Sargent, Isidora Sidorovska, Rebecca Stirling, Christopher van Bommel, Chris Wass, Matt West, and Brayden Wilson

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**Annual Report Editor**: Norman M. Kearney

**Annual Report Graphic Design**: Allison M. Sachs

Special thanks to Isidora Sidorovska for her expertise and guidance throughout the strategic planning process.

Figure 6: (Photo) Participants discuss survey results at the GSA 2019 Strategic Retreat.
## Appendix A: GSA Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core</th>
<th>Health Insurance and Dental Insurance</th>
<th>The GSA provides high quality, cost-competitive plans. For full details and comparisons to private options, visit studentcare.ca.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRT Bus Pass</td>
<td>Unlimited travel on GRT buses and trams. Significant savings compared to the cost of an adult monthly pass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate House</td>
<td>Restaurant, bar, and social club providing preferential service and pricing to graduate students. Take advantage of the new termly coupon and fully redeem the value of your Graduate House fee!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Representation</td>
<td>Each department elects a graduate student to Council, which steers the mission of the GSA, takes stances on social, political, and academic issues affecting graduate students, and advises the Board and staff on GSA services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>The President develops and implements strategies and plans to influence university, municipal, provincial, and federal policy affecting graduate students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case Work</td>
<td>The GSA provides individual graduate students with advice and assistance, e.g. funding issues, student-supervisor conflicts, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legal &amp; Tax Aid</td>
<td>The GSA provides access to professional advice on tax and legal issues at no extra cost to graduate students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Unit Association Support</td>
<td>The GSA organizes and supports student associations at the program, department, and faculty levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate Student Initiatives</td>
<td>The GSA provides funding for social and academic initiatives organized by graduate students. Apply online.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>The GSA provides a variety of additional services, such as community events. Let us know how we can serve you better!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix B: GSA Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core</strong></td>
<td>Health Insurance</td>
<td>$62 per term. Refundable with proof of equivalent coverage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dental Insurance</td>
<td>$81 per term. Refundable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRT Bus Pass</td>
<td>$94 per term. Non-refundable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate House</td>
<td>$23.50 per term. Refundable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy</strong></td>
<td>Representation</td>
<td>$22.80 per term. Partly optional as of September 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Policy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Case Work</td>
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<td>Graduate Student Initiatives</td>
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<td>Other</td>
<td>(Warning: Not paying this fee means you may lose access to some or all GSA services. Please contact the GSA for more information.)</td>
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Appendix C: GSA Organizational Chart

- **Board**
  - **Council**
  - **Membership**
  - **President**
  - **Executive Director**
  - **VP & Main Office Staff**
  - **Line Managers**
  - **Staff & Volunteers**

- **University & Government**
  - Day-to-day leadership
  - Operational leadership
  - Strategic & operational support

- **Council**
  - Representation
  - Strategic leadership & advocacy

- **Govt.**
  - Oversight & strategic leadership
  - Strategic plans, governance, monitoring & compliance, risk management

- **Members**
  - Representation of operational plans, finance

- **Staff & Volunteers**
  - Operational activities that directly benefit members
  - Strategic & operational plans, budgets, operating procedures, lobbying

- **Line Managers**
  - Implementation of operational plans, finances, supervision of line managers

- **Presidents**
  - Operational delivery

- **Elect/appoint**
  - Lobby
direct/advise
## Appendix D: List of staff & volunteers (as of April 15, 2019)

### Board of Directors
- Allison M. Sachs, Chair
- Emily Cyr, Vice-Chair
- Rebecca Stirling, Corporate Secretary
- Evan Andrews
- Sondra Eger
- Julia Goyal
- Norman M. Kearney
- Graham Mayberry
- Nick Revington
- Naima N. Samuel, ex-officio
- Isidora Sidorovska

### Council (2018-2019)
- Christopher van Bommel, Speaker
- Clay Dasilva, Deputy Speaker
- William Chung, Kinesiology
- Vinurshan Selvaratnam, Recreation & Leisure Studies
- Amanda Parker, School of Public Health and Health Systems
- Ashley Irwin, English Language & Literature
- Zakary Griffith, French Studies
- Russ Freure, History
- Samantha Lynne Sargent, Philosophy
- Jacqueline Harber, Political Science
- Michelle Ashburner, Psychology
- Sharon Kashani, Public Service
- Tanvi Kundilwal, Architecture
- Prabhjot Kaur Bhogal, Chemical Engineering
- Oluremi Oyediji, Civil & Environmental Engineering
- Takin Tadayon, Electrical & Computer Engineering
- Kissan Mistry, Mechanical & Mechatronics Engineering
- Ifeanyi Okwuchi, Systems Design Engineering
- Nataša Popović, Geography & Environmental Management
- Clayton Dasilva, Global Governance
- Monica Mic, School of Environment, Enterprise, and Development
- Andrew Moraga, School of Environment, Resources, and Sustainability
- Brayden Wilson, School of Planning
- Tuan Ahn Bui, Computational Mathematics
- Sajed Haque, Computer Science
- Nikhil George, Biology
- Serxho Selmani, Biochemistry & Chemistry
- Jillian Kendrick, Earth & Environmental Science
- Jennifer Reid, Physics & Astronomy
- Heidi Fernandez, Pharmacy
- Amritha Stalin, Vision Science/Optometry

### Council Commissioners
- Chris Wass, Study, Teaching, and Research Standing Advocacy Committee
- Matthew Robbins, Social and Environment Standing Advocacy Committee

### Management
- Naima N. Samuel, President
- Stella A. Arthur, Vice President
- Kevin MacKay, General Manager
- Cam Bartel, Graduate House Assistant Manager

### Main Office
- Tracey Beirness, Administrative Assistant
- Robert Sproule, Accountant
- Somto Udegbunam, Executive Support

### Graduate House
- Cam Bartel, Assistant Manager
- Matt West, Supervisor
- Jiwoun Back, Cook
- Amber O'Brien, Social Media & Events
- Pedro Alguindigue, Kitchen
- Steph Barr, Cashier
- Aneta Bienada, Housekeeping
- Lauren Blanch, Cashier
- Natun Dasgupta, Kitchen
- Adriano Gonnella, Kitchen
- Ben Hennin, Kitchen & Housekeeping
- Tanya Iljas, Cashier
- Zabeen Khamisa, Housekeeping
- Jude Kurniawan, Housekeeping
- Keilah LeClair, Kitchen & Cashier
- Chris Martin, Kitchen
- Kyle Massia, Cashier
- James Valitchka, Housekeeping