



BOARD MEETING MATERIALS

Wednesday, May 20, 2026

Hybrid: Microsoft Teams & UC Room # 441

5:30 PM

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GSA May Board Meeting Agenda

Please send regrets to gsa@uoguelph.ca no later than **May 19, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.**

5:30 p.m. | Call to Order: Kent Fletcher, Chair

Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the University of Guelph resides on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We recognize the significance of the Dish with One Spoon Covenant to this land and offer our respect to our Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Métis neighbours as we strive to strengthen our relationships with them. Today, this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and acknowledging them reminds us of our important connection to this land where we learn and work.

Approval of Agenda:

MOTION #1: B.I.R.T. the Agenda for the May 20, 2026, GSA Board Meeting be approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION #2: B.I.R.T. the GSA Meeting Minutes of April 22, 2026, be approved as presented.

5:40 p.m. | CUPE 3913 Update: Grace Goderre, Vice President External

5:50 p.m. | Faculty of Graduate Studies Update: Dr. Ben Bradshaw, Assistant Vice President (Graduate Studies)

6:00 p.m. | General Director Appointment: Spandana Chereddy, GSA Vice President Internal

- Melody Agbedanu – Black Student Representative
- Harnoor Khehra – Department of Computer Science
- Nick Horton – Department of Chemistry
- Sam Avery – Department of Sociology

See the Board Meeting Materials Package below for the personal statements

MOTION #3: B.I.R.T. the GSA Board of Directors appoints Melody Agbedanu as General Director for the Black Student Representative position, effective immediately.

MOTION #4: B.I.R.T. the GSA Board of Directors appoints Harnoor Khehra as General Director representing the Department of Computer Science, effective immediately.

MOTION #5: B.I.R.T. the GSA Board of Directors appoints Nick Horton as General Director representing the Department of Chemistry, effective immediately.

MOTION #6: B.I.R.T. the GSA Board of Directors appoints Sam Avery as General Director representing the Department of Sociology, effective immediately.

6:30 p.m. | Campus Safety Office Referendum Fee Preamble and Question: David Lee, Director - Campus Safety Office

MOTION #7: B.I.R.T. the GSA approves the Campus Safety Fee referendum question as presented, to be included as part of the Summer 2026 referendums.

6:50 p.m. | Food4U Program Update: Lindzie O'Reilly, Registered Dietitian – Vaccarino Centre for Student Wellness

7:05 p.m. | Overview of The Lookout Financial Statement for 2025-2026: Mike Calvert, Senior Operations Manager – University Centre Services

7:20 p.m. | Department and Committee Updates

Executive Updates:

7:30 p.m. | President & CEO – Hrishikesh Patil

7:40 p.m. | Vice President Internal – Spandana Chereddy

7:50 p.m. | Vice President Finance – Ayush Chawla

8:00 p.m. | Vice President Academic – Lokesh Kumar

8:10 p.m. | Vice President Community Engagement – Himashree Ponrajan

8:20 p.m. | In-Camera Session

MOTION #8: B.I.R.T. the GSA board meeting moves 'in-camera' for discussion.

MOTION #9: B.I.R.T. the GSA board meeting 'in-camera' session ends.

Adjournment



GSA April Board Meeting Minutes

April 22, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

ATTENDEES PRESENT

GSA Executives	
Yusra Hasan	President and CEO
Ayush Chawla	Vice President, Finance
Olivia Gibson	Vice President, Academic
Spandana Chereddy	Vice President, Community Engagement
General Director	
David Bahrami	Biomedical Science
Mavis Opoku	Black Student Representative
Michael Capperault	Chemistry
Lokesh Kumar	Computer Science
Sarah Kingsley	Environmental Science
Himashree Ponrajan	Interdisciplinary Engineering
Hrishikesh Patil	
Barbara Hyde-Lay	Human Health and Nutritional Sciences
Grace Goderre	LGBTQ2SIA+ Student Representative
Erin Howard	Pathobiology
Samantha Dobson	
Ishrat Zahan	Plant Agriculture
Bibek Ghimire	
Staff	
Kathleen Nolan	Chair
Harrison Barretto	GSA Administrative Assistant
Michelle Morris	GSA Business Operations Manager
Guests	
Benjamin Bradshaw	Assistant Vice President Graduate Studies
Jayson Dale Capistrano	CBS Grad Symposium – PDR Applicant

Regrets: Jenna Ford, Management; Ruitian (Sky) Chen, International Student Representative; Amna Jaleel, Population Medicine; Jenna Scharnowski, Environmental Science

Absent (no regrets received): Zayd Al Kassem, Human Health and Nutritional Sciences;
Nicole Loyola Andrade, Biomedical Science

5:40 p.m. | Call to Order: Kathleen Nolan, Chair

The meeting was called to order at 5:40 p.m.

Territorial Acknowledgement

The Chair shared the territorial acknowledgement.

Approval of Agenda

MOTION #1: B.I.R.T. the Agenda for April 22, 2026, GSA Board Meeting be approved as presented.

Moved by O. Gibson, seconded by S. Chereddy.

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes

MOTION #2: B.I.R.T. the GSA Meeting Minutes of February 25, 2026, be approved as presented.

Moved by O. Gibson, seconded by S. Chereddy.

MOTION CARRIED

5:43 p.m. | CUPE 3913 Update: Grace Goderre, Vice President External

G. Goderre provided the following updates:

CUPE 3913 Tabling Sessions

- Tabling sessions are scheduled from May to August, with an invitation extended for GSA to participate.

Door-Knocking Campaign

- CUPE 3913 plans to engage international members through a departmental “door knocking” campaign during the summer term. GSA has been invited to participate.

Monthly Executive Meetings

- CUPE 3913 invited a GSA representative to speak at their monthly executive meetings during the summer.
- July and August meetings will be combined.

Discussion / Questions

- S. Chereddy noted that the GSA would like to meet with the CUPE President, Scott Duchesne, along with G. Goderre if available, to discuss the transition of the

incoming VP Community Engagement. She also noted that an international mixer event is tentatively scheduled for October and is expected to be co-hosted by CUPE 3913 and the GSA.

**5:46 p.m. | Faculty of Graduate Studies: Ben Bradshaw, Assistant Vice President
Graduate Studies**

B. Bradshaw presented the following updates:

Leadership Searches

- The Assistant Vice-President Academic (AVPA) will serve as interim Provost until a permanent University Provost is appointed.
- A search committee for the Provost position is being established.
- The Vice-President Research and Innovation search is nearing completion; the GSA President has been serving on the committee.

AVP Graduate Studies Term Transition

- Dr. Bradshaw's term as AVP Graduate Studies concludes July 1. He will serve as interim AVP International, and a new AVP Graduate Studies will be appointed.

Compassionate Bursary

- A review of the bursary's terms and conditions was initiated by GSA and OGPS approximately six months ago due to a surplus exceeding \$300,000 and underutilization.
- GSA is encouraged to consider ways to utilize the surplus, particularly to support international students facing extraordinary circumstances (e.g., conflict zones, financial instability, currency devaluation).
- An additional \$100,000 from OGPS Scholarships will be allocated, increasing the total bursary to approximately \$430,000.
 - These funds originate from a graduate student fee approved by referendum.

Discussion / Questions

- A. Chawla referenced prior correspondence regarding guidelines for disbursing bursary funds and requested clarification on the definition of "conflict zones" and related eligibility criteria.
 - Dr. Bradshaw clarified that the GSA is to set eligibility rules and advised inclusive criteria with flexible adjudication. He also noted that such discretionary funding is uncommon, except at Queen's University.

- A. Chawla inquired whether the additional \$100,000 is expected to be fully utilized.
 - Dr. Bradshaw indicated that full utilization is the preferred outcome.
- Dr. Bradshaw further noted that Student Financial Services is offering increased flexibility in tuition payment timelines; however, tuition obligations cannot be waived.

5:59 p.m. | General Director Appointment: Olivia Gibson, GSA Vice President Academic

Candidate – Bibek Ghimire (Plant Agriculture)

The candidate's statement was shared with the Board.

Discussion / Questions

- Y. Hasan noted that the candidate's statement was compassionate and inspirational.

MOTION #3: B.I.R.T. that the GSA Board of Directors appoint Bibek Ghimire as a General Director representing the Department of Plant Agriculture, effective immediately.

Moved by Y. Hasan, seconded by M. Capperauld.

MOTION CARRIED

6:10 p.m. | PDR Application: College of Biological Sciences Graduate Student Symposium: Jayson Capistrano

J. Capistrano presented the following:

Event Overview

- Annual graduate student-led conference-style event providing opportunities for oral and poster presentations.
- Aims to support research communication, skill development, and interdisciplinary networking.

Event Details

- Date: May 5, 2026
- Location: Waasamowin Atrium
- Total registrations: 151, including 114 graduate students

Funding Summary

- Total requested funding: \$8,000 from multiple sources

- GSA PDR request: \$1,000
- Increased costs attributed to venue, catering, and event enhancements
- GSA funds to be allocated toward venue rental and catering

Discussion / Questions

- A. Chawla requested clarification on the allocation of the \$1,000 PDR funding.
 - J. Capistrano confirmed funds would be used for venue rental and catering, as outlined in the submitted budget.

Post-Presentation Discussion

- Y. Hasan expressed support for the application, noting the funding supports a significant number of graduate students.
- A. Chawla recommended including a condition requiring submission of receipts for post-event verification.
- K. Nolan and B. Hyde-Lay supported the application based on prior experience with the event.

MOTION #4: B.I.R.T. that the GSA Board of Directors approves the allocation of \$1,000 to the Research and Graduate Officer, Abiran Sritharan, in support of the 2026 College of Biological Sciences Graduate Student Symposium.

Moved by O. Gibson, seconded by S. Chereddy.

MOTION CARRIED

6:20 p.m. | 2026 – 2027 GSA Board Meeting Dates: Olivia Gibson, GSA Vice President Academic

O. Gibson presented the proposed Board of Directors meeting schedule for the 2026–2027 fiscal year.

- Meetings are scheduled for 5:30 p.m.
- In months with four weeks, meetings will be held on the third Wednesday; in months with five weeks, on the fourth Wednesday.

MOTION #5: B.I.R.T. that the GSA conduct its monthly Board of Directors meetings at 5:30 p.m. on the following dates for the 2026–2027 term:

- May 20, 2026
- June 17, 2026

- July 22, 2026
- September 23, 2026
- October 21, 2026
- November 18, 2026
- December 16, 2026 (*Virtual Meeting Only*)
- January 20, 2027
- February 17, 2027
- March 24, 2027 (*AGM*)
- April 21, 2027

Moved by A. Chawla, seconded by H. Ponrajan.

MOTION CARRIED

6:22 p.m. | 2026–2027 GSA General Director and Executive Elections: Olivia Gibson, GSA Vice President Academic

O. Gibson presented the proposed timeline for the 2026–2027 General Director and Executive elections.

MOTION #6: B.I.R.T. the GSA’s annual General Director and Executive elections for 2026–2027 be held on the following dates:

General Director Elections	Date / Time
Nomination Period	September 16, 2026 @ 8:30 a.m. – September 28, 2026 @ 11:59 p.m.
Campaign Period	September 29, 2026 @ 8:30 a.m. – September 30, 2026 @ 11:59 p.m.
Voting Period	October 1, 2026 @ 8:30 a.m. – October 2, 2026 @ 11:59 p.m.

Executive Elections	Date / Time
Nomination Period	March 17, 2027 @ 8:30 a.m. – March 22, 2027 @ 11:59 p.m.
Campaign Period	March 23, 2027 @ 8:30 a.m. – April 5, 2027 @ 11:59 p.m.
Voting Period	April 6, 2027 @ 8:30 a.m. – April 8, 2027 @ 11:59 p.m.
Results Announcement	April 9, 2027 – April 12, 2027

Moved by A. Chawla, seconded by L. Kumar.

MOTION CARRIED

6:24 p.m. | Campus Safety Office Referendum Fee Preamble and Question: Yusra Hasan, GSA President & CEO

Y. Hasan presented the following referendum fee preamble and referendum question:

The Campus Safety Office graduate student referendum fee preamble was shared by the GSA President & CEO.

The Campus Safety Office graduate student referendum question was shared by the GSA President & CEO.

Discussion / Questions

- A. Chawla raised concerns regarding the annual indexation of the fee to cost-of-living adjustments (COLA), noting that the fee would increase each year.
 - He also expressed concern that the referendum may be outside the scope of the student body, and that graduate students should not be funding campus policing services.
- K. Nolan noted that the referendum may conflict with the Student Choice Initiative, as the proposed fee does not include an opt-out option.
- Y. Hasan highlighted potential benefits of the proposed fee, including expanded safety programming, experiential learning opportunities, specialized training, mental health support, and increased student engagement. She emphasized that the decision should ultimately be made by the broader student body and supported allowing the referendum to proceed to a vote.
- B. Hyde-Lay inquired about how the proposed CSO fee compares to other graduate student fees and whether undergraduate students would also be subject to a similar fee.
 - A. Chawla clarified that undergraduate students would also vote on and be subject to the fee through a separate referendum.
 - He further noted that, by comparison, the GSA Bursary fee is \$3.42 and provides direct financial support to graduate students through bursary access.
- B. Hyde-Lay asked whether GSA could request that the CSO amend the referendum to remove indexation to COLA before resubmission.

- Y. Hasan noted that the referendum timeline had already been delayed due to prior miscommunication.
- K. Nolan indicated that amendments could not be made at this stage without CSO agreement but suggested that the GSA Executive could raise concerns and request revisions.
- K. Nolan added that if the motion does not pass, the matter could be revisited at a future Board meeting, potentially with CSO representatives present to address questions.

MOTION #7: B.I.R.T. that the GSA approve the Campus Safety Fee referendum question as presented, to be included as part of the Winter 2026 referendums.

Moved by Y. Hasan, seconded by M. Capperault.

MOTION NOT CARRIED

6:46 p.m. | Amendments to GSA Bylaws: Spandana Chereddy, GSA Vice President Community Engagement

S. Chereddy presented proposed amendments to the GSA Bylaws, as outlined in the Board materials:

- Correction of a typographical error in Section 9.11, updating “Vice-President Community Engagement” to “Vice-President Community Engagement.”
- Clarification of General Director removal conditions in Section 8.6, to include:
 - Absence without regrets from three (3) or more regularly scheduled Board meetings, including the AGM;
 - Absence from five (5) or more regularly scheduled Board meetings, including the AGM, regardless of whether regrets were provided;
 - Failure to fulfill duties as outlined in Article 8.1 for three (3) consecutive months.
- Separation of the Executive Committee and Appointed Officers into distinct articles.

MOTION #8: B.I.R.T. that the GSA Bylaws be amended to reflect the following changes, as outlined in the Board materials:

- **correction of a typographical error;**
- **clarification of General Director removal conditions; and**

- **separation of the Executive Committee and Appointed Officers into distinct articles.**

Moved by A. Chawla, seconded by L. Kumar.

MOTION CARRIED

6:50 p.m. | Amendments to GSA Board Policies: Spandana Chereddy, GSA Vice President Community Engagement

S. Chereddy presented proposed amendments to the Board Policy Manual:

- Update to Section §1.5 to reflect the correct Executive positions:
 - President and CEO
 - Vice President Internal
 - Vice President Finance
 - Vice President Academic
 - Vice President Community Engagement
- Update to all Bylaw article references to align with the March 2026 Bylaws numbering.
- Renaming of the “Activities Coordinator” role to “Events Coordinator,” along with updates to the role’s hours.

MOTION #9: B.I.R.T. that the Board Policy Manual be amended to reflect the following changes, as outlined in the Board materials:

- **correction of the Executive positions list; and**
- **recognition of the Events Coordinator and Communications Coordinator as separate roles.**

Moved by A. Chawla, seconded by O. Gibson.

MOTION CARRIED

6:52 p.m. | Expansion of Travel Grant Eligibility Criteria: Ayush Chawla, GSA Vice President Finance

A. Chawla presented a proposed expansion to the Travel Grant eligibility criteria:

- Increased student interest in research-related travel was noted, with several applications previously denied due to ineligibility.

- It was proposed that students conducting research or data collection, supported by appropriate documentation, be eligible for Travel Grant funding.

Discussion / Questions

- O. Gibson asked whether food costs would be included under the expanded eligibility.
 - A. Chawla indicated that this could be considered and may be brought forward for Board approval at a future meeting.

MOTION #10: B.I.R.T. that the Board of Directors approve the expansion of Travel Grant eligibility criteria to include graduate students engaged in thesis-based research.

Moved by O. Gibson, seconded by A. Chawla.

MOTION CARRIED

7:02 p.m. | Discussion on the \$100,000 OGPS Fund for International Students: Yusra Hasan, GSA President & CEO

Y. Hasan initiated a discussion regarding the \$100,000 funding allocation from the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (OGPS).

Discussion / Questions

- Y. Hasan requested clarification on whether the funding would be designated exclusively for international students or include domestic students.
 - A. Chawla clarified that B. Bradshaw intended the funding to support international students, as the existing Compassionate Bursary already applies to both domestic and international students.
- A. Chawla noted that the funding is intended as a summer pilot program, primarily supporting international students with families affected by global conflicts.
- A. Chawla raised concerns regarding administration of the funds, noting that OGPS currently manages approvals and disbursements for the Compassionate Bursary.
 - It was noted that administration details and eligibility guidelines will be further discussed at an Executive meeting and brought forward at a future Board meeting.
- Y. Hasan indicated that acceptance of the funding should be subject to Board approval.
- A. Chawla noted potential challenges in disbursing the funds within the summer term if eligibility criteria are not finalized prior to implementation.

- K. Nolan clarified that the Board could approve acceptance of the funds while delegating authority to the Executive to determine eligibility criteria and begin disbursement.
- K. Nolan suggested that implementation details and outcomes be presented at the May Board Meeting for review and feedback.

MOTION #11: B.I.R.T. that the GSA Board of Directors accept the \$100,000 funding from OGPS to expand the Compassionate Bursary for international students through a pilot program.

Moved by Y. Hasan, seconded by S. Chereddy.

MOTION CARRIED

7:10 p.m. | Department and Committee Updates

General Directors provided updates on behalf of their respective departments and committees.

Department of Population Medicine – Olivia Gibson

- The 3-Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition was held.
- A student from Population Medicine placed first; the second-place winner was from Biomedical Sciences.

School of Computer Science – Lokesh Kumar

- The 3MT Competition was held across departments within the College of Computational, Mathematical, and Physical Sciences (CCMPS).
- A new Dean was appointed for CCMPS.
- The School of Computer Science participated in College Royal and the Open House for the first time.
- The research lab that L. Kumar is part of presented a robot developed by students.

Department of Interdisciplinary Engineering – Himashree Ponrajan

- The College of Engineering hosted its inaugural 3MT Competition.
- Workshops were conducted to gather feedback.
- The first Graduate Student Symposium (GSS) is upcoming.

7:13 p.m. | Executive Reports

President & CEO – Yusra Hasan

Y. Hasan provided the following updates:

- Ran the Governance policy and student support priorities on behalf of the GSA.
- AGM was held successfully.
- Annual University of Guelph Budget presentation was held, and participated with many student leaders for an ongoing discussion on institutional financial planning and implications for graduate students.
 - Policy development around the non-academic space booking working group was also discussed. Y. Hasan joined a subgroup for this.
 - This is for improving the accessibility and the processes for graduate students utilizing the campus spaces.
- Y. Hasan has held a meeting with the incoming GSA VP Academic - L. Kumar, AVP Graduate Studies - B. Bradshaw, and incoming GSA President & CEO – H. Patil, to discuss training and onboarding.
- Y. Hasan held other meetings with students, staff, administration, GSA, and noted that good working relationships should be continued with CUPE3913 and CSA.
- The GSA contributed \$33,333 recently to support the Food for You initiative, and Y. Hasan expects the GSA to do more than this in the coming years.
- Y. Hasan has been in contact with the CSO regarding the referendum fee increase.
- Involved in the GSA summer trivia host interview process, supporting student engagement and community-building initiatives.
- Volunteering as support, with no honorarium, for the vacant Events Coordinator position, and will be overseeing the upcoming GSA events.
- Scheduled a meeting with the GSA Executive Committee.
- UC Governance Board Meeting was held.
- Y. Hasan is currently in the process of coordinating an executive onboarding meeting to support a smooth transition for the incoming leadership.
 - Transition documents are to be shared.

- Knowledge gained over the term is to be shared.
- Y. Hasan will be supporting the newly appointed VP Internal, S. Chereddy, with further details and logistics due to the role currently being vacant.
- Contract Amendment for the GSA Business Operations Manager to ensure compliance with the bylaw 5.2.1, consistency, and annual evaluation for the position.

Vice President Finance – Ayush Chawla

A. Chawla provided the following updates:

- Working on the GSA Business Operations Manager contract amendment with Y. Hasan.
- Reevaluated the budget to ensure more refreshments could be supplied for the GSA Board Meetings.
- Acknowledged that last year, there wasn't so much the GSA could do for students affected by global conflicts, but this year, there will be a substantial change in this with the \$100,000 fund provided by OGPS.

Vice President Academic – Olivia Gibson

O. Gibson provided the following updates:

- Student Consultation
 - Many students across the institution are having issues with their advisors
 - O. Gibson noted she made a great impact on advocacy for the students by creating direct change.
- Met with the newly appointed VP Internal Executive, L. Kumar, to discuss ongoing student advocacy cases to ensure a smooth transition.
 - O. Gibson noted that she has volunteered to assist with L. Kumar for the month of may incase any further questions may arise in the role or about the ongoing cases.
- Coordinated the GSA Executive Election.

Vice President Community Engagement – Spandana Chereddy

S. Chereddy provided the following updates:

- MintOT's contract is coming to an end.

- The Executive Committee decided they do not want to sign the new contract but instead leave it for the new executive team, as they will be the ones administering it.
- Informed MintOT that the new contract is to be discussed by the Executive Team and approved by the Board of Directors in May, for them to begin their programs in June.
- Attended GSA Executive committee meetings.
- Chaired Equity Committee Meeting.
- Coordinated with CUPE3913 to co-host an international mixer event with them on October 22. Timing is yet to be confirmed.
- Transition planning and discussion with newly appointed VP Community Engagement, H. Ponrajan, is ongoing.
- Summer Bus Pass Initiatives
 - April 22 is the first day for early bird opt-in
- Attended Black and Racial Graduate Student Support Network.
 - Provided GSA Merchandise as prizes for some of the attendees.
- Met with Crystal from Student Wellness Services
 - They have noted they are happy to continue with their one-on-one drop in mental health support for the Summer term, every Thursday from 2:30 to 4:30 pm.
- VP Internal Responsibility
 - Took on the responsibility for the bylaws changes to help support the vacant role.

7:30 p.m. | In-Camera Session

The meeting moved into an in-camera session at **7:30 p.m.** with only voting members present.

MOTION #12: B.I.R.T. the GSA board meeting moved to an 'in-camera' session at 7:30 p.m., with only voting members present.

Motioned by A. Chawla, seconded by Y. Hasan.

MOTION CARRIED

No motion was made to end the in-camera session, as quorum was not met.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at **7:44 p.m.**

The next GSA Annual General Meeting (AGM) is scheduled for **May 20, 2026**.

Minutes Submitted by:	Minutes Approved by:	
Harrison Barretto GSA Administrative Assistant	Olivia Gibson GSA Vice President Academic	Kathleen Nolan Chair

GENERAL DIRECTOR APPOINTMENT

Personal Statement – Melody E. Agbedanu, Black Student Representative

Hello, my name is Melody E. Agbedanu. I am a Black MSc student in the Department of Food, Agriculture and Resource Economics (FARE) with a minor in International Development Studies (IDS). I am writing to self-nominate for the position of Black Student Representative on the Graduate Student Association.

I recently served as a council member on the Anti-Racism and Inclusion Advisory Council (ARIAC) at the Guelph Institute of Development Studies, where I contributed to anti-racism and inclusion initiatives, including the design of an Instagram awareness campaign advancing GIDS' Calls to Action.

I have also had the opportunity to attend two of the BRGSSN events, and I genuinely enjoyed both experiences. They reminded me of the importance of intentional community-building for students and inspired me to want to contribute my own quota to that work.

What encourages me even more is seeing that this space is led by women, that sense of community and sisterhood makes me want to be part of this tribe and give back in a meaningful way. I believe my experience in advocacy and inclusion work positions me well to represent and amplify the voices of Black graduate students at Guelph.

Thank you

Melody E. Agbedanu

GENERAL DIRECTOR APPOINTMENT

Personal Statement – Harnoor Khehra, Department of Computer Science

I am interested in serving as a General Director because I want to represent Computer Science graduate students while contributing to a supportive and engaged graduate student community.

I would be a strong fit for this role because I am approachable, responsible and willing to listen to student concerns with care. As a first-year PhD student, I understand how important it is for graduate students to feel supported, informed and connected, especially when adjusting to a new academic environment and balancing academic responsibilities.

If appointed, I hope to improve communication between Computer Science graduate students and the GSA, increase awareness of available resources such as funding, wellness supports, professional development opportunities and student services and encourage greater student participation in GSA initiatives.

The Board should appoint me because I am genuinely motivated to learn, collaborate, and advocate for graduate students in a thoughtful, respectful and committed manner. I am eager to contribute positively to the GSA.

Harnoor Khehra

GENERAL DIRECTOR APPOINTMENT

Personal Statement – Nick Horton, Department of Chemistry

I would like to become a General Director in the Graduate Student Association to help graduate students have a stronger voice and address the challenges they face, particularly regarding compensation issues that place unnecessary stress on the students.

I am a strong fit for this role as I have personally experienced these challenges. I have been underpaid, overpaid, and required to repay a full semester's funding, all during financially demanding times. These experiences, combined with the communication, organizational, and teamwork skills developed throughout my graduate studies, have prepared me to advocate effectively for my peers.

As General Director, I hope to provide resources that help graduate students identify what they need to succeed in their degree, understand what their desired careers require, and set meaningful goals for life beyond graduate school.

Nick Horton

GENERAL DIRECTOR APPOINTMENT

Personal Statement – Sam Avery, Department of Sociology

I'm especially interested in this role because it aligns with both my professional experience as a blossoming careerist and my personal interests as an MA candidate. First and foremost, I've recently completed a two-year teaching assistant position at the UoG, where I've developed skills that I'll value for life: the ability to understand people and the world they live in.

Secondly, I've also earned a BA degree, double majoring in sociology and psychology. I spent five years becoming someone I'm genuinely proud of: someone who loves to learn and educate; someone who's empathetic, passionate, and skilled in the art of helping people to achieve their goals. Ultimately, I'd hope to become a safe space and a reliable source of guidance, contributing to the same university that helped me to accomplish my own goals.

Thank you for reading my application, and I would love to support the UoG.

Sincerely,

Sam Avery

Campus Safety Office Graduate Student Referendum Fee

Preamble

Since 1967, the University of Guelph's Campus Safety Office (CSO) has provided safety and security patrols, emergency response, and student-focused programs to support a safe and welcoming campus environment.

At present, the CSO receives base funding from the university to cover legislated responsibilities. When available, the CSO also seeks one-time funding opportunities from grants to help support additional programming and services. The CSO is designed to provide services to students, staff, faculty, and visitors, and students are the most served population. Currently, there is no student fee in place to help support the Campus Safety Office (CSO).

The CSO is asking full-time graduate students to support the introduction of a \$4.00 per semester fee, and \$2.00 from part-time graduate students. Both fees would be indexed annually to the Statistics Canada Consumer Price Index (CPI). This cost-of-living adjustment will help ensure that the fee and its application toward services stay closely aligned with annual inflation. These fees would not be eligible for an opt-out option.

With the introduction of this fee, the CSO will be able to:

- **Sustain and enhance critical safety programs** such as safety-based Apps, the lock-4-lock program, and the E-Bike Patrol Program.
- **Expand experiential learning opportunities** giving students hands-on training, mentorship, and leadership experience in the areas of dispatch and community-based policing.
- **Enhance specialized training** in mental health support, victim-centred approaches, domestic violence response, and crime prevention, improving the quality of service and response for students and including applicable student groups in relevant training when appropriate.
- **Increase student engagement and awareness** through in-person and online, safety campaigns, workshops, and education events, and programming that foster a safer, more connected campus community.

Campus Safety Office Graduate Student Referendum Question

The Campus Safety Office (CSO) is requesting the introduction of a \$4.00 per semester fee, to be collected from all full-time and \$2.00 from part-time graduate students, to support campus safety through student-focused services, programs, education, and training. The fee would be adjusted annually based on the Statistics Canada Consumer Price Index (CPI) average for Ontario and would not be subject to an opt-out option. Do you support the establishment of this fee, beginning in Fall 2027, for all full-time and part-time graduate students?

Food4U Program Summary, 2024-2025

Summary

Food4U is a program that provides students experiencing food insecurity with a weekly amount of money to spend on food. It represents a concrete example of the University of Guelph's commitment to the creation of a supportive and inclusive campus environment. The financial support provided through this program is instrumental in supporting a whole-person approach that recognizes the connection between physical wellbeing, psychological well-being and financial safety. The program exists in conjunction and collaboration with existing efforts to increase student access to affordable food and to alleviate food insecurity. Gift cards are administered by a graduate student program coordinator, who also helps connect students with other food security initiatives and supports both on- and off-campus. The structure of the program prioritizes student engagement by offering participants several opportunities to provide input on program design via pre- and post-program surveys and qualitative co-design sessions.

Program Design

Students can select the program group that best meets their needs

1. \$25/wk Hospitality Service gift card to support purchases at the on-campus sliding scale market and prepared food through Hospitality Services
2. \$50/2 wks PC Gift Card to support grocery purchases

Funding Sources

This year, the Food4U program received funding from:

Compulsory Fees committee: \$36,000

GSA: \$33,333

The salary for the program coordinator was funded by SWS

With this funding, the program was able to expand to support 114 participants each semester (12wks of support/semester). This is an increase from 62 participants last year.

In addition to the provision of gift cards, funding this year was used to facilitate a cooking workshop, to allow students to share a meal together while participating in co-design sessions, and to provide compensation to students attending a co-design session.

The above funding from the Compulsory Fees Committee and the GSA was fully allocated to students. \$750 went towards the provision of food to students during events and all remaining funds went towards gift cards provided to students.

Program Participants

Most students became connected with Food4U via a network of on-campus staff who have

one-to-one conversations with students about food and who can act as prescribers for the program. Thanks to the above funding sources that allowed for an expansion of the program this year, we were able to create a wider network of prescribers that supported the program in reaching a more diverse range of students.

	Fall 2024	Winter 2025
U of G student participants	90	89
Dependents of U of G students	24	25
Grad students & dependents	55	57
Undergrad students & dependents	59	57
Participants selecting on-campus support	13	15
Participants selecting off-campus support	101	99

Evaluation of Impact

The Food4U program provides financial support to students in a way that supports dignity, autonomy and choice. Students shared that having access to gift cards allowed them to select culturally appropriate foods and “what I consider my own balanced diet”. Another student shared that they “...felt like the whole experience was very dignified, I felt like a human being. People are generally cold to me and this program was different”

Students expressed appreciation for the opportunity to connect with a program coordinator as she was a friendly and positive face who got to know them personally. They felt that the program coordinator role fostered a sense of community and social connection as she could share information with them about resources and relevant upcoming events.

Receiving cards on a regular basis, rather than as a lump sum, supported students in making intentional food purchases and ensuring financial support for the entire semester.

“It keeps us in check...You know it’s \$50, so you make a plan”

The Food4U program supported students in purchasing more nutritious food, in accessing essential non-food items like shampoo, and in managing health issues:

“I would not be able to have fruits and vegetables at all, milk, without it”

“It allowed me to eat in a way that is better with my diabetes”

“When I didn’t have those cards, I definitely bought whatever was cheap that gave me a lot of food”

With support of the program, participants were able to focus more on their academics, benefiting from lower stress levels, fewer work hours, and less time spent on food

preparation (for students receiving on-campus gift cards).

“Actually, I don’t worry about food anymore, I have enough”

“Before the card, you really worry. What am I going to eat tomorrow”

Based on feedback received, we will continue to explore opportunities to support students in purchasing a range of food options (i.e. many students requested the option to receive a gift card from Ethnic Supermarket) as well as strategies to make card pick-ups more convenient (i.e. pick-ups in multiple locations on campus vs. only in JTP). Graduate students in particular expressed that a program that runs through the summer semester would be immensely beneficial for them and this is something we will continue to explore.

Food4U Program Summary, 2025-2026

Summary

Food4U is a program that provides students experiencing food insecurity with a weekly amount of money to spend on food. It represents a concrete example of the University of Guelph’s commitment to the creation of a supportive and inclusive campus environment. The financial support provided through this program is instrumental in supporting a whole-person approach that recognizes the connection between physical wellbeing, psychological well-being and financial safety. The program exists in conjunction and collaboration with existing efforts to increase student access to affordable food and to alleviate food insecurity. Gift cards are administered by a graduate student program coordinator, who also helps connect students with other food security initiatives and supports, both on- and off-campus. The structure of the program prioritizes dignity and student engagement by offering participants opportunities to attend educational sessions and to provide input on program design via qualitative co-design sessions.

Program Design

Students can select the program group that best meets their needs

1. Hospitality Service gift card to support purchases at the on-campus sliding scale market and prepared food through Hospitality Services
2. PC Gift Card to support grocery purchases

Funding Sources

This year, the Food4U program received funding from:

Compulsory Fees committee	\$17,780.63
GSA	\$33,333.33
AAD Highest Priority Fund	\$40,000.00
The President’s Office	\$25,000.00

(funding from the President’s Office was used to enroll additional students in the program in February 2026 and to double the

weekly amount provided to students in February 2026 and March 2026)

The above funding was fully allocated to students. The majority of the funding (99%) was provided directly to students in the form of gift cards with 1% of funding used to purchase food for students during events.

The salary for the program coordinator was funded by SWS (\$8,970.00)

	Fall 2025	Winter 2026
Number of enrolled participants	135	153
Amount provided/participant	\$300/semester (\$25/week x 12 weeks)	\$500/semester (\$25/week in January, \$50/week in February & March)
Educational and/or social events for participants	Grocery Shopping 101 workshop	Cooking workshop Recipe Exchange program

Program Participants

Thanks to the above funding sources, Food4U was able to enroll additional participants again this year (an increase from 114 in 2024-2025, 62 in 2023-2024). Many Food4U participants remained enrolled in the program from the 2024-2025 academic year. Many new program participants became connected with the program this year via word of mouth from existing program participants. Food4U continued to accept referrals from an established network of on-campus staff who have one-to-one conversations with students about food and who can act as prescribers for the program.

	Fall 2025	Winter 2026
U of G student participants	94	96
Dependents of U of G students	41	57
Grad students & dependents	74	99
Undergrad students & dependents	61	54
Participants selecting on-campus support	11	9
Participants selecting off-campus support	124	144

Evaluation of Impact

The Food4U program provides financial support to students in a way that supports dignity, autonomy and choice. Participants emphasize that the program's benefits are wide-ranging, including decreased financial stress, improved mental and physical health, enhanced academic focus, increased social connection, and reduced stigma.

Most students collect their cards from a Program Coordinator (Omo) during weekly office hours; a model providing social support and connection in addition to financial support.

Interactions with Omo were consistently described as friendly, welcoming, and personal, contributing to participants feeling comfortable, valued, and “at home” in the program. Participants shared that “you just talk to her like a friend would to someone” and “she makes it so effortless for us to be ourselves.” They appreciated that Omo remembered their names and asked about their well-being, fostering a meaningful, personal connection.

Participants identified numerous benefits of participating in Food4U, with a consistently reported benefit being a reduction in financial stress. One participant shared they are “a lot less worried about food and whether or not [they] can afford it.” This alleviation of financial strain translated into improved mental health and increased focus on academics, with participants sharing, “I have little or no anxiety about what I will have for food tomorrow... and really that has improved my mental health” and, “[we are] able to focus more on the main goal, which is school.”

Participants also reported improvements in physical health. Many reported shifting from reliance on low-cost, low-nutrition foods to being able to purchase a wider range of nutritious options, such as fruits, vegetables, and protein sources. This shift enhanced diet quality and helped alleviate nutrition-related health concerns, including chronic constipation and vitamin and mineral deficiencies. One participant shared, “before the cards, I was literally just eating oats and that’s all I could afford,” while another noted, “it changed the way I used to eat to include more healthy varieties of vegetables.” Beyond food access, participants described positive changes in food-related behaviours and skills. Many reported cooking more frequently, engaging in meal planning, shopping more strategically, and even exploring new hobbies, such as baking. The program reduced stress and uncertainty around food, with participants expressing increased confidence and stability while purchasing groceries, and many reporting that they now shop more regularly.

Thanks to funding received from the President’s Office in February 2026, the amount provided to participants was doubled in February and March 2026. This provided an opportunity to assess the impact of two different levels of support. Many indicated that the initial amount (\$50/two weeks) was sufficient to cover some food expenses and that they learned to make it work through making a strict grocery list and relying on low-cost food staples. With the increased funding (\$100/two weeks), participants reported feeling significantly more comfortable and found the amount to be much more adequate in meeting their food needs. They noted that the higher amount enabled them to purchase higher-cost items such as fresh produce, bulk goods, more expensive protein sources, and non-food essentials such as a mop and bucket that they were previously unable to afford. Many described the increase as a

“breath of relief,” allowing for greater flexibility when shopping as well as social benefits; rather than adhering to a strict list, they could afford occasional additional items that they enjoy. Participants described sharing meals, hosting others, meeting classmates for coffee, purchasing items such as a birthday cake for a friend, and even pooling gift cards together to host a gathering in their community. As one participant explained, “It impacts everything around – I have food, I’m okay. Even your social life will increase. The way you relate with one another. Having food improved almost everything.” Participants consistently shared that, while the initial amount was very helpful in allowing them to increase their energy and nutrient intake, the increased amount allowed them to honour additional reasons for eating such as enjoyment, pleasure and socialization, resulting in increased food dignity.

In addition to expressing numerous ways in which Food4U has contributed to improvements in physical and mental health, social connection and a reduction in financial stress, participants also provided valuable feedback that will allow for ongoing small changes to program design in order to best meet student needs. Key opportunities include increasing program awareness among at-risk student populations, expanding culturally appropriate food access, offering more flexible group options, and establishing a consistent pick-up location in the UC. Providing support during the summer break and transitional support for graduating students were also identified as priorities.

Food4U Prescribers

Thank you for agreeing to support the Food4U program. Your role will be to identify students experiencing food insecurity and to refer them to the Food4u team.

When referring a student, we ask that you please identify if the student is a graduate student or an undergraduate student.

To qualify for the Food4U program, students must answer “often true” or “sometimes true” to either question below. Please ask these questions to confirm eligibility prior to telling the student about the program.

<i>“For each statement, please tell if it was often true, sometimes true, or never true.”</i>	Often True	Sometimes True	Never True
1. Within the past 6 months, I was worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more.	☐	☐	☐

2. Within the past 6 months, the food I bought just didn't last and I didn't have the money to get more.	☐	☐	☐
"Often true" or "sometimes true" to any statement indicates the student is at risk for food/nutrition insecurity.			

If the student does not qualify for Food4U based on the above screening tool, please still share community food resources that you feel they might benefit from

- Grocery apps such as Flash Food or Too Good To Go
- Information about the on-campus sliding scale market (follow uofguelphmarket on Instagram for weekly updates)
- The Community Fridge
- Guelph Wellington Food Access Guide - <https://www.gwpoverity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Guelph-Food-Access-Guide-2023.pdf>

Once a student at risk has been identified, please ask if they are interested in participating in the Food4U program.

Are you interested in participating in an on-campus program called Food4U? This program would provide you with a weekly amount of money that you could use to purchase food.

Participating in this program means you provide me with consent to connect you with the Food4u team. The Food4u team will discuss the program with you in more detail.

Once a student agrees to participate in the program, please send the Food4u team an email and cc the student.

food4u@uoguelph.ca

Email title: Food4u Enrollment

[student name] [student number], who I have cc'd here, is interested in participating in Food4U.

[student name] is a [graduate/undergraduate] student.

If this student has family members or dependents, please include this in the email as well. We can enroll multiple household members in the program to provide a larger weekly allotment. We are defining a dependent as an individual that physically lives with the student and who is financially dependent on them.

This could look like:

[student name] lives with their spouse and two children. Their family members are also interested in participating in the Food4U program.

Overview of The Lookout Financial Statement 2025-2026

The Lookout: Patio + Grad Lounge

Schedule of Income and Expenses

For the 12 Periods Ending April 30, 2026



REVENUE						
	Current YTD	% Sales	Previous YTD	% Sales	Difference YTD	
Draught Beverage Sales	\$ 21,596.58	16%	\$ 26,238.99	19%	\$ (4,642.41)	
Cost of Product	\$ 10,010.91	46%	\$ 11,150.47	42%	\$ (1,139.56)	
Total Gross Margin	\$ 11,585.67	15%	\$ 15,088.52	18%	\$ (3,502.85)	
Liquor Beverage Sales	\$ 10,190.24	8%	\$ 7,046.71	5%	\$ 3,143.53	
Cost of Product	\$ 1,982.57	19%	\$ 1,319.62	19%	\$ 662.95	
Total Gross Margin	\$ 8,207.67	10%	\$ 5,727.09	7%	\$ 2,480.58	
Beer Beverage Sales	\$ 3,526.74	3%	\$ 4,137.05	3%	\$ (610.31)	
Cost of Product	\$ 1,199.75	34%	\$ 1,948.15	47%	\$ (748.40)	
Total Gross Margin	\$ 2,326.99	3%	\$ 2,188.90	3%	\$ 138.09	
Non-Alcohol Beverage Sales	\$ 10,798.97	8%	\$ 9,382.54	7%	\$ 1,416.43	
Cost of Product	\$ 2,465.40	23%	\$ 2,082.93	22%	\$ 382.47	
Total Gross Margin	\$ 8,333.57	11%	\$ 7,299.61	9%	\$ 1,033.96	
Food Service Sales	\$ 82,768.89	63%	\$ 76,793.43	56%	\$ 5,975.46	
Cost of Product	\$ 37,506.54	45%	\$ 34,986.97	46%	\$ 2,519.57	
Total Gross Margin	\$ 45,262.35	58%	\$ 41,806.46	50%	\$ 3,455.89	
Other Miscellaneous Sales	\$ 2,475.00	2%	\$ 12,321.25	9%	\$ (9,846.25)	
Total Revenue	\$ 131,356.42	100%	\$ 135,919.97	100%	\$ (4,563.55)	
Total Cost of Sales	\$ 53,165.17	40%	\$ 51,488.14	38%	\$ 1,677.03	
Gross Margin	\$ 78,191.25	60%	\$ 84,431.83	62%	\$ (6,240.58)	
EXPENSES						
Personnel / Labour - Service	\$ 57,392.08	44%	\$ 56,257.75	41%	\$ 1,134.33	
Personnel / Labour - Food	\$ 39,659.52	30%	\$ 39,216.61	29%	\$ 442.91	
POS Rental / Transaction Fees	\$ 3,066.82	2%	\$ 3,567.15	3%	\$ (500.33)	
Telephone	\$ 924.00	1%	\$ 924.00	1%	\$ -	
Work Order / Maintenance	\$ 2,732.01	2%	\$ 3,976.48	3%	\$ (1,244.47)	
Operating Supplies	\$ 3,397.43	3%	\$ 4,147.31	3%	\$ (749.88)	
Total Expenses	\$ 107,171.86	82%	\$ 108,089.30	80%	\$ (917.44)	
Income (Loss) Before Fees	\$ (28,980.61)	-22.1%	\$ (23,657.47)	-17.4%	\$ (5,323.14)	
Capital Improvements	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -	
Management Fee (7.5%)	\$ 9,851.73	7.5%	\$ 10,194.00	7.5%	\$ (342.27)	
Profit-Sharing or (Share-of-Loss)	\$ (14,490.31)	-11.0%	\$ (11,828.74)	-8.7%	\$ (2,661.57)	

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Animal Bioscience

Report:

Report by:

Biomedical Science

Report: No new updates to report.

Report by: David Bahrami

Black Student Representatives

Report:

Report by: Mavis Opoku

Business Administration/Management

Report:

Report by:

Chemistry

Report:

Report by:

Clinical Studies

Report:

Report by:

Computing & Information (Computer Science)

Report:

Report by:

Economics and Finance

Report:

Report by:

Engineering

Report:

Report by:

English & Theatre Studies

Report:

Report by:

Environmental Design & Rural Development

Report:

Report by:

Environmental Science

Report: Nothing new to report

Report by: Sarah Kingsley & Jenna Scharnowski

Family Relations & Applied Nutrition

Report:

Report by:

Fine Arts & Music

Report:

Report by:

Food Science

Report:

Report by:

Food, Agriculture & Resource Economics

Report:

Report by:

Geography

Report:

Report by:

History

Report:

Report by:

Hospitality, Food & Tourism

Report:

Report by:

Human Health Sciences (HHS)

Report: HHS graduate student representatives are running a photo competition for our graduate students.

Report by: Barbara Hyde-Lay

Report: EDI committee will host a Departmental gathering and fund-raising event for Shelldale Family Gateway on June 22.

Report by: Zayd Al Kassem

Indigenous Student Representatives

Report:

Report by:

Integrative Biology

Report:

Report by:

International Student Representatives

Report: Dean John Cranfield has requested a graduate student volunteer to serve on the SES Director search committee. The meeting schedule is not yet confirmed, and the committee work may continue into the fall. Interested students can contact Marc Habash.

Report by: Sky Chen

Languages & Literature

Report:

Report by:

LGBTQ2SIA+ Student Representatives

Report: Nothing to report

Report by: Grace Goderre

Marketing & Consumer Studies

Report:

Report by:

Mathematics & Statistics

Report:

Report by:

Molecular & Cellular Biology

Report:

Report by:

Pathobiology

Report:

- **Pathobiology Biweekly Co-working Café!**
 - Starting May 6, 2026. Will be every second Wednesday in May and June from 11:30-1:30pm in Room 3826.
 - Snacks & coffee provided!
- **OVC Graduate Student Symposium**
 - Will be held Tuesday July 14th; registration due June 9th.
 - Abstract submission due Tuesday, June 1st at 11:59PM
 - For more information, click [here](#).
- **2026 ICCI Cancer Research Symposium**
 - Will be held on Tuesday, 23rd June 2026 in Pathology room 1800 and via Teams
 - anyone working in cancer-related research is encouraged to submit an abstract for a poster or 10 minute oral virtual presentation.
 - Abstracts due June 1st, 2026. Apply [here](#).
 - Anyone wishing to attend can register [here](#).
- **Dept New Student Pizza Lunch** is scheduled for **Friday, May 15th**, in PAHL 1800 at **12 pm. ALL faculty/staff/students are invited.**
- The **CAHLN Annual Meeting** will be in **Guelph** this year **May 24-27**. You can still sign up (deadline May 22) using the link here: [2026 CAHLN Conference at University of Guelph Registration](#)

Report by: Erin Howard & Sam Dobson

Philosophy

Report:

Report by:

Physics

Report:

Report by:

Plant Agriculture

Report: The Plant Agriculture Graduate Student Liaison Committee is going to organize **Plant Sale** program. Details of the program:

Date: May 14, 2026

Time: 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Location: Outside Crop Science

Vegetables, Native wildflowers, and other plants.

Payment: Cash, debit, and credit accepted

Report by: Bibek Ghimire

Political Science

Report:

Report by:

Population Medicine

Report:

Report by:

Psychology

Report:

Report by:

Sociology & Anthropology

Report:

Report by:

PhD in Social Practice and Transformational Change (SOPR)

Report:

Report by:

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Alcohol & Substance Abuse Advisory Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Animal Care Committee

Meeting date: May 8 2026

Report: Nothing new to report

Next Meeting: June 12

Report by: Barbara Hyde-Lay

Athletics Advisory Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

By-Laws & Constitution Committee (GSA)

Meeting date: NA – May meeting has not occurred yet

Report: NA – May meeting has not occurred yet

Next Meeting: May 29, 2026

Report by: Sam Dobson

Co-Curricular Experiential Learning Integrity Committee (CELIC)

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Code of Ethical Conduct Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Compulsory Fees Committee (CFC)

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Digital and Technology Advisory Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Equity Committee (GSA)

Meeting date: April 5th, 2026

Report:

- Equity Survey
 - Went over responses to the survey
 - Discussed how to better advertise the survey to get more answers (GSA instagram, linked in, library, ask GDs to distribute to their departments)
 - Possibility of offering an incentive to win a gift card if survey filled out
 - Emails with images don't always load correctly and may not work for graduate students with visual impairments using a screen reader, important to ensure all emails are accessible
- Email frequency
 - Feedback from grad students that they are receiving too many emails and it results in students ignoring and being overwhelmed by emails
 - Email frequency should be decreased from weekly to biweekly or monthly
 - This would also result in special emails being able to be sent out separate from newsletter for
 - Would like to ask for board opinion on email frequency
- Equity committee run event
 - Event to allow students to discuss equity-based issues
 - What format should the event be, when and where should it be held
 - Have someone from wellness come in to facilitate discussion with graduate

students

- o What funding can we apply to for this event

Next Meeting: None scheduled

Report by: Erin Howard

Finance Committee (GSA)

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Grad Lounge Sustainability Committee (GSA)

Meeting date: N/A

Report: N/A

Next Meeting: TBD

Report by: Sky Chen

Health & Dental Plan

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Hospitality Services Advisory Committee (HSAC)

Meeting date:

Reports:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Human Rights Advisory Group

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Judicial Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

OUTline Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next meeting:

Report by:

Student Food Security Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Student Life Award Committee

Meeting date:

Report

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Student Wellness Advisory Group

Meeting date: No meetings in summer

Report:

Next Meeting: Fall 2026

Report by: Grace Goderre

Student Wellness EDI Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Student Experience Advisory Committee

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

Transit Committee (GSA/CSA)

Meeting date:

Report:

Next Meeting:

Report by:

EXECUTIVE & STAFF REPORTS

President & CEO – Hrishikesh Patil

Hello everyone,

I hope you are all doing well.

This marks my first month in office, and during this reporting period, I focused on advancing key governance, policy, financial sustainability, and student support priorities on behalf of the Graduate Students' Association (GSA).

1. Meeting with Dr. Ben Bradshaw

Along with Yusra and the VP Academic, I met with Dr. Ben Bradshaw to discuss ongoing matters related to graduate students.

Dr. Bradshaw raised concerns regarding current global conflicts and their impact on international students, particularly in relation to well-being, academic progress, and overall support systems. He also expressed his continued support for graduate students and emphasized the importance of ensuring they feel heard and supported during these challenging times.

2. Meeting with VP Finance - Understanding the Financial Status of GSA

I met with the VP Finance to review the financial status of the GSA and gain a clearer understanding of our current financial position.

We examined the previous year's budget in detail and discussed the financial planning model for the current term. At present, significant funds are being drawn from reserves to support staff salaries, the MintOT contract, Food4U, Executive honoraria, other general operational expenses, and to offset operational losses for The Lookout.

Further financial details will be shared by the VP Finance. My priority this year is to work toward making the GSA financially sustainable by optimizing resources, improving operational efficiency, and strengthening long-term financial planning.

3. Executive Committee Meeting

During our first Executive Committee meeting, we discussed several key priorities for the 2026-27 term, including:

- Individual executive goals and overall GSA strategic goals
- Financial sustainability and long-term planning
- Renewal of the MintOT contract

4. Scheduling and planning for the By-Laws Review Meeting

This meeting helped establish clear priorities and direction for the year ahead.

5. Meetings with Staff and Executives

I also held several smaller meetings with staff members and executives, including discussions with Business Operations to help streamline administrative processes and improve internal workflow efficiency.

These conversations are important in ensuring stronger coordination across teams and smoother day-to-day operations.

6. Hiring Process - Events Coordinator and Trivia Host

I was involved in the hiring process for the Events Coordinator and Trivia Host positions.

This included reviewing candidates, participating in interviews, and supporting the selection process to ensure we bring in strong individuals who can contribute positively to student engagement and campus life.

Looking Ahead

As I begin this term, my focus remains on strengthening governance, improving financial sustainability, enhancing student services, and ensuring that graduate students feel represented, supported, and heard.

I look forward to working with the entire team to make this a productive and impactful year for the GSA.

Thank you.

Hrishikesh Patil,

President and CEO, GSA

VP Internal – Spandana Chereddy

Hello everyone,

I hope you are all doing well and enjoying the start of the summer season. Wishing everyone a great semester ahead, and congratulations to all students who recently graduated or completed major milestones this term. I hope you all get some time to enjoy the warmer weather and have a great summer.

Key Activities & Updates

1. Onboarding and Transition into the VP Internal Role

This month primarily focused on onboarding into the role of Vice President Internal and developing a stronger understanding of the responsibilities, operational procedures, governance structure, and ongoing initiatives within the GSA. I spent time reviewing existing processes, policies, and current priorities to ensure a smooth transition into the position.

2. Transition Meetings

Participated in transition meetings with previous executives, including discussions related to MintOT and Community Engagement portfolios. These meetings are important regarding ongoing projects, operational workflows, expectations, and areas requiring continued attention moving forward.

3. Executive Meetings and Strategic Discussions

Attended executive meeting where we discussed a wide range of operational and strategic matters, including:

- Budget and financial sustainability discussions
- Student wellness services and support initiatives
- Long-term goals and priorities for the GSA
- Funding-related discussions and planning
- Organizational operations and upcoming initiatives

These meetings helped establish priorities and direction for the upcoming term.

4. Introductory Meeting with CUPE and GSA Executives

Participated in an introductory meeting between the GSA executive team and representatives from CUPE 3913. Discussions focused on collaboration opportunities, communication between organizations, and ways both groups can work together to support graduate students more effectively throughout the year.

5. General Director Orientation

Organized a orientationfor new General Director joined the Board. The orientation focused on introducing governance procedures, board expectations, meeting structure, committee involvement, and overall responsibilities within the GSA.

6. GSA/CCS Teams Chat Retention Discussion

Attended a meeting regarding the GSA/CCS Microsoft Teams chat retention policy, specifically discussing the proposed 45-day chat deletion policy. The discussion focused on operational impacts, communication retention considerations, organizational needs, and best practices for record management and internal communication systems.

Thank you everyone, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Board, executives, staff, and graduate student community throughout the semester.

Kind regards,

Spandana

VP Finance – Ayush Chawla

Hello Graduate Student Community,

I hope you're all doing well. Here's a summary of what I've been working on this month:

Budget & Financial Planning

This month, I began our annual budget and scenario planning process, consolidating all financial data and assumptions into updated financial models.

I've reviewed these in depth with the President and will be briefing the remaining executive team members in the coming weeks. As part of this process, I've also started reviewing contracts up for renewal and assessing our pending liabilities to ensure we have a clear picture of the GSA's current financial standing.

Potential New Work Experience Program

I've opened discussions with a Graduate Program Coordinator at the Lang School of Business regarding the potential implementation of a supplementary work experience program through WEX (Work Experience - Experiential Learning Hub).

The goal of this initiative is to provide graduate students with practical training opportunities that enhance career readiness and post-graduation outcomes. I look forward to sharing more details as these conversations progress.

Expanded Student Support

During our last board meeting, we received encouraging news about a potential international student support fund. The GSA has been identified as a lead in administering this support.

We are currently awaiting further direction from university leadership, but we remain optimistic and fully committed to distributing any resources entrusted to us as effectively as possible.

Finance Committee & Grants

Finally, I will be convening our Finance Committee at the end of this month. If you have any questions about grants, bursaries, or other financial support available to graduate students, please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly.

Thank you for your continued engagement and support.

Best regards, Ayush,

VP Finance, Graduate Students' Association

VP Academic – Lokesh Kumar

Hi everyone,

I am pleased to share my first monthly report in this role. Following a seamless transition facilitated by the outgoing VP Academic, Olivia Gibson, my focus this month has been primarily on student consultation and active participation in academic governance.

Student Consultation

I have been managing several student cases, including pending issues from the previous term and new inquiries received throughout May. My work involved providing guidance and support to graduate students navigating challenges related to academic progression, supervisory relationships, and external geopolitical factors.

Academic Governance Meetings

Registrar Office Meeting: Participated in follow-up discussions regarding the inclusion of additional information on degree parchments, following the recommendations of the recent working group study.

Joint Board of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies: Engaged in ongoing discussions regarding updates to official and unofficial transcripts to better reflect student achievements, based on the working group's findings.

Wishing everyone a productive and successful semester ahead!

Best Regards,
Lokesh Kumar K M

VP Community Engagement – Himashree Ponrajan

I am happy to be a part of the executive team of the Graduate Students' Association at the University of Guelph as the Vice President Community Engagement. Although my term officially began on May 1st, I had already been actively participating in transition meetings with the previous executive team to ensure a smooth transition into the role.

Since officially assuming the position, I have been involved in several responsibilities and initiatives, including:

1. Processed bus pass opt-out requests for three graduate students this semester based on the established eligibility criteria.
2. Assisted eligible students with bus pass opt-ins and addressed inquiries from graduate students regarding bus pass policies and procedures.
3. Attended a meeting with Melinda Scott, Vice-Provost, Student Affairs, to gain a better understanding of her office's role and raised concerns related to graduate student welfare and support.
4. Represented the GSA at the University of Guelph Advisory Committee on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy meeting, where discussions focused on reviewing and finalizing policy drafts.
5. Met with the MintOT team, Tara and Melissa, to introduce myself as the newly elected VP Community Engagement and to learn more about their services. I brought up discussions related to MintOT, including the renewal of their contract for the upcoming term in the executives' meeting. The executive team is currently reviewing funding opportunities and budget allocations for various GSA initiatives and activities before finalizing the MintOT contract.
6. Held a meeting with Crystal Wyllie from the University Wellness Centre to discuss potential collaborations between the Wellness Centre and the GSA. We explored several ideas for services and wellness initiatives aimed at supporting graduate students.
7. Attended an introductory meeting with Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) representatives to learn more about ongoing collaborations and future opportunities for partnership with the GSA.
8. Along with the President & CEO, I will be representing the GSA at the Canadian Federation of Students - Ontario Executive Committee Meeting scheduled for July

2026.

Overall, my first month focused on transitioning into the role, strengthening relationships with campus and external partners, supporting graduate students through ongoing services, and identifying opportunities to enhance student wellness and engagement initiatives.

Cheers,
Himashree Ponrajan
VP Community Engagement.

Business Operations Manager – Michelle Morris

Hello GSA Board Members,

Hope everyone is doing well.

May has been a busy month with team transitions and staff contract renewals. Here are a few key updates:

- Summer 2026 accreditation with the University has now been completed.
- Coordinated executive signing authorities with RBC, and all formalities have now been finalized.
- Coordinated a team photo session for the website and social media platforms. The photographer role was advertised, a photographer has since been selected, and the session is scheduled for next week.
- For the summer term, we plan to hire two Trivia hosts who will alternate sessions to help bring variety and increase participation. Auditions are currently ongoing. Our original host, Luca, will be returning in Fall 2026.
- Ongoing coordination of the furniture purchase for the GSA Boardroom. SLEF funding in the amount of \$1,761.67 has been approved, and we are currently awaiting receipt of funds.
- Worked alongside the VP Finance on the development of the 2026–2027 fiscal budget.
- Communication and coordination with the Food4U program to gather reporting and feedback on past and current funding support, including program utilization, impact, and how the funding provided by the GSA continues to assist graduate students, as well as any ongoing support needs. Coordinated with the Administration and Communications teams to optimize workflows and improve efficiency and consistency.
- Chair interviews have been completed, and a candidate has been finalized. Kent Fletcher is now officially the GSA Chair.
- Completed monthly financial reconciliations and payments.
- Managed bursary disbursements alongside all other recurring monthly payments.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

The weather seems to finally be getting brighter, so hopefully everyone has a chance to make the most of the sunshine in the weeks ahead.

Wishing everyone a relaxing and enjoyable Victoria Day long weekend!

Best,

Michelle

Communications Coordinator – Hannah Vanleeuwen

Hello everyone,

This has been a busy month with many updates to our communication channels as the new Executive Team steps in. Here are some of the key tasks that I have completed this month:

- Informed students of new executive team through social media posts and website updates
- Collected and curated information for the weekly newsletter
- Maintained communications with Student Wellness and the McLauchlan library, making sure their content is visible on our social media channels
- Created posts and advertised for two open positions, GSA Photographer and Food4U Program Coordinator
- Continued maintenance of GSA Website through updates to grant applications and other resources

Best,
Hannah