



GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION—UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO COUNCIL NOVEMBER 2020

To the Graduate Student Association Council:

Please accept this monthly update on the activities of the GSA Executive Team.

I would like to highlight the following recent accomplishments of our team:

- 1. Graduate Student Townhall:** On October 2nd, the GSA and GSPA held a joint townhall with over 70 graduate students in attendance. An overview of GSA services was provided. Questions pertaining to service delivery, academic policy, and the ongoing pandemic were addressed. Additionally, this townhall led to follow-up discussions with uWaterloo's government relations team on matters pertaining to COVID-19 and permanent residency applications.
- 2. National Graduate Student Alliance:** The GSA has agreed to be part of discussions with other U15 graduate student associations on the formation of a national graduate student alliance, with the immediate aim of influencing federal COVID-19 relief funding to support graduate students. Further discussions will continue over the coming months.
- 3. President's Community Impact Award Committee:** The GSA is supporting this year's review of on- and off-campus applications for the President's Community Impact Award. Award recipients will be selected by committee decision in November 2020.
- 4. Winter Term Fees:** Discussions on winter term fees have commenced with the GSA, WUSA, Provost of Students, and Finance.
- 5. Social Events:** The GSA ran several social events in October, including a pumpkin carving competition, an international student networking session, trivia at the Grad House, and a haunted walk.
- 6. Finance:** The GSA worked with UW Finance to streamline the fee refund process. Further, we worked with campus partners to provide clarity for sessional instructor tuition payment on UW's website.
- 7. Graduate Student Relations Committee:** The GSA reports on municipal housing issues and graduate student parents were tabled at the GSRC. Follow-up meetings with campus stakeholders are being scheduled to action select recommendations within each report.
- 8. Town and Gown:** On October 27th, the GSA participated in the regional Town and Gown committee to ensure that graduate student interests are integrated into municipal planning and policy. The GSA's report on municipal housing issues was tabled to support the development of the Region's housing strategy.

In addition to these accomplishments, the GSA has been actively involved in numerous on campus committees and student advocacy issues. Additionally, I would like to remind members of Council that our Graduate House is open – and would appreciate everyone's support for our on-campus space over social media. Please stop in for a pint or some food!

Should you ever want to chat about ideas, issues, or initiatives, please don't hesitate to contact me at GSA-President@uwaterloo.ca.

Regards,
David Billedeau