

# GSA Annual Report 2022-2023

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**DATE:** April 2023

To the general membership of the Graduate Student Association

I certify that the information contained in this report is factual.

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Julian Surdi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'J'.

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Julian Surdi  
President & CEO  
Graduate Student Association—University of Waterloo

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Please accept this update on the activities of the GSA-UW. I would like to highlight the following recent activities of our team:

### **GSA Services ([GSA Services Webpage](#))**

The GSA-UW currently offers the following services to graduate students:

- GRT & ION Transit UPass
- Legal & Tax Aid
- Academic Support
- Student Advising and Advocacy
- Health & Dental Supplementary plans (Including Mental Health through EmpowerMe)
- Graduate House
- Funding Options through GSEF
- Graduate Student Space
  
- **Services Updates:**
  - GRT fees will increase from \$113.30 beginning Fall 2023
  - Dental plan fee through StudentCare is under review

### **GSA Structure Overview ([Our people & Organizational Chart](#))**

The GSA-UW currently serves around 5500 students, having 1 president, 3 vice-presidents (Administration, Advocacy and Communications), a Board of Directors with 12 members, a Council with approximately 45 members, and a team of staff and volunteers. The current portfolios managed by the GSA are:

- Advising
- Equity
- Student Engagement
- Labor
- Housing
- International Students
- Events
- Communications
- Social Media

### **Recent Accomplishments by the GSA-UW:**

- Internal Changes:
  - Hired a new General Manager (Jeyas Balaskanthan) in October 2022
  - Implemented internal review system for casual staff members
  - Increased training for casual staff to improve quality of deliverables
- Publishing the completed Policy 30

- Contributing to Policy 42 review process
- Expanded new graduate orientation events to improve new student transition
- Negotiating a Funding Increase of 3.86%
- Maintained the Graduate House operational for 1 consecutive year free from COVID-19 shutdown

**Current initiatives by the GSA-UW:**

- Internal Operations Manual
- Workshops and Events
- UW Committees' participation
- BIPOC Collective
- International Student Discord and Blog
- SLC Office and Lounge Operation
- Graduate House Operation

**Current Advocacy Initiatives (See [Advocacy Website](#)):**

- Ombudsman Office
- PhD Scholarship for Black and Indigenous Students
- Labor
- Housing
- Food Security
- Counselling Services
- Minimum Funding Increase

**Ongoing Partnerships:**

- Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (GSPA)
- WUSA
- Writing and Communications Centre
- Alumni Office
- City of Waterloo
- StudentCare
- Grand River Transit
- Organize UW
- Graduate Student Endowment Fund (GSEF)
- Student Success Office

**Future planned initiatives (Starting until December 2022):**

- Develop equity-focused scholarship
- Improve Graduate House infrastructure
- Strengthen Advocacy Initiatives and Partnerships
- Draft new policies or guidelines: RAs and Sessional version of Employment Policy 30
- Work with GradReady to include GSA-UW

- Development of new GSA Strategic Plan 2024-2027