Get involved at the GSS

Be a voice for UBC graduate students at university and government levels, and make changes important to you.

Our work
The Graduate Student Society (GSS) is driven by graduate students. We organize events, and represent the graduate community on important issues in the University and to government. You can be a part of our community that is inclusive, diverse, and responsive to the needs of graduate students.

Getting involved
Getting involved at the GSS means taking action to collaborate, share ideas, and create change in matters important to you. Through the GSS you can make new friends, implement new ideas, organize events or work to improve the lives of graduate students at UBC. Find your reason and step up to be part of the GSS!

“Every student is an individual, but when they group under the umbrella of a society they become a very powerful unit, which can influence decisions.”
Taran Dhillon, GSS President 2017–2018
How you can join us

There are many ways to get involved with the GSS. This includes volunteering as a representative for your department, as an external representative, voting, and sharing your ideas to make the graduate student experience the best it can be.

Council

The Council is the Society’s most important decision-making body. It is made up of the executives and graduate student representatives elected from each graduate department of the University. It meets once a month in a Canadian parliamentary fashion, and debates and decides on all matters of relevance to the academic and personal lives of graduate students.

If you want to work on behalf of your department improving its academic and personal life, and if you are interested in the work of other departments, run to become your departmental representative. Reach out if you have questions on how to do this.

Committees

The work of Council is supported by several committees. Each committee focuses on a specific function of our day-to-day operations or a specific topic important to graduate students. As a graduate student you can any attend committee meetings as a non-voting member, or you can join committees when there are vacancies and work on issues important to you. Our committees currently include:

- Academic & External Affairs Committee
- Code & Policy Committee
- Elections Committee
- Executive Oversight Committee
- Governance & Accountability Ad Hoc Committee
- House Finance Committee
- Human Resources Committee

Hear from our volunteers

Peter Musser
GSS Councillor
MLIS Candidate 2018, Library & Information Studies

Peter joined the UBC Grad Council after being recommended the position by a friend in 2017. Over his term, Peter has been working to analyze the procedures of the GSS in order to optimize its efficiency.

“I’ve learned a lot about how organizations are run and gotten a really good feel for a lot of the little things that a small business/non-profit needs to operate.”

“...Being in GSS has given me a lot of exposure to the grad student experience outside of my own program, which has been really invaluable. It’s really easy to find yourself siloed from all of the really great things going on at UBC, and GSS is a really potent way of breaking out of that.”

Natalie Marshall
GSS Councillor
PhD Candidate 2019, Microbiology & Immunology

As a volunteer Natalie joined the UBC Grad Council after beginning her PhD in 2016. Over the last six years she has worked on projects to increase undergraduate research opportunities, develop a strategic plan for the GSS, and more recently to improve supervision for graduate students.

“Graduate students always mention the relationship with their supervisors as one of their main concerns, along with finance and career readiness, but it’s a sensitive topic and a challenging one to address. Thankfully, Grad Council provided a way to get this topic on the agenda as they were looking at how to provide better training for supervisors. I felt we needed to pounce on this opportunity to add the grad student voice into these discussions.”
Who are we?

We are run by graduate students for graduate students. We are mainly comprised of a 5-person elected student executive team and the departmental & external representatives that serve on our council & committees.

Meet our student executive team

John Ede | President
president@gss.ubc.ca
I am the public face of the GSS and I lead on communication with the University and National lobbying bodies, as well as carrying out the decisions made by council. I'm always keen to hear from graduate students who have ideas for the society or on policy questions.
MA Candidate
Public Policy & Global Affairs, 2017–2019

Pouya Rezaeinia | VP Students
vpstudents@gss.ubc.ca
I design and develop fun, informative and useful activities for students on and off campus. These can include sports leagues, language classes, hikes, policy discussions, cultural events, information sessions, graduate student orientation, and much more. If you have an idea for an event, please share!
PhD Candidate
Management Science, 2017–2022

Gurjot Singh | VP External Relations
vpexternal@gss.ubc.ca
I advocate on behalf of graduate students at UBC at the provincial and federal government level, and in the local community. I work to protect student rights and lobby for causes important to students. If you have an issue on campus that you want to discuss, please come talk with me.
MSc Candidate
Experimental Medicine, 2017–2019

Sara Izadi-Najafabadi | VP University & Academic Affairs
vpacademic@gss.ubc.ca
I'm the link between the GSS Council and UBC administration as well as campus organizations, and faculty and teaching staff. I also manage the GSS Advocacy Office. If you are on campus and have an issue that affects graduate students, please reach out.
PhD Candidate
Rehabilitation, Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy, 2016–2020

Phillip Karangu | Financial & Executive Oversight Officer
oversight@gss.ubc.ca
I focus on running and maintaining the financial stability of the Society. My office also oversees granting money for qualifying partner organizations & groups and student initiatives. If you are graduate student organization on campus and you have a cool project idea, please reach out.
PhD Candidate
Curriculum Studies, 2017–2021

Connect with us online, in-person, & read more grad student stories at:
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Thea Koerner House