



GRADUATE STUDENT SOCIETY

UBC VANCOUVER

University of British Columbia - Graduate Student Society

Position Statement

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity

Definitions

University of British Columbia – UBC; Graduate Student Society - GSS

GSS Mission Statement

The Graduate Student Society of UBC Vancouver represents and advocates on behalf of all UBC Graduate Students to the University, the Government, and the public. We provide academic, professional, social, and recreational services to our members, and act as stewards of the Thea Koerner House Graduate Student Centre¹.

Our constitution outlines the fundamental objectives of the Society to support graduate students, from removing financial and physical access barriers to graduate education at UBC, to ensuring adequate housing and childcare, being the voice of graduate students on campus, and coordinating interdepartmental graduate student activities².

The GSS's Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity

The GSS is a representative body for all graduate students. We represent and advocate for UBC graduate students to decision-making bodies, we provide academic and non-academic support, and we provide space at the Koerner House.

The GSS seeks to represent and champion minority and marginalized groups by ensuring their access to resources and serving them in the ways they need. Within our advocacy and services, we must address historical and unconscious biases that prevent us from meeting the unique needs of UBC's entire graduate community.

Our future actions must be performed in an equitable, just, and accountable framework so we can fully serve all in their UBC graduate experience.

GSS Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity Mission Statement

UBC's GSS celebrates equity, diversity, and inclusiveness, and we subscribe to the philosophy and goals of the 2018-2028 UBC Strategic Plan³.

GSS Value Statements

The GSS believes that:

- Diversity is central to what makes UBC a leader in academic and professional excellence. This encompasses the unique perspectives, research ideas, and collaborations that come from a diverse graduate student community.
- The opportunity to engage in higher education is limited by opportunities, which disproportionately exclude individuals of marginalized groups.
- Inclusivity must be embedded in all aspects of campus life from curriculum planning to building design. This must be championed even if it requires challenging long-established conventions.
- A commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusivity is a living promise and we must actively combat engrained biases in ourselves and our organization to provide those opportunities to excel to all.

GSS Action Statements

Our values are realized through or by:

- Working within the university system to protect and promote the interests and needs of graduate students, while acknowledging and fighting the historical inaccessibility and discriminatory nature of those systems.
- Emphasizing in our advocacy the unique and intersectional issues that graduate students experience, with special respect to those from marginalized groups.
- Alleviating the academic and non-academic burdens on graduate students by actively assessing and responding to discriminatory actions that affect their personal, professional, and academic lives.
- Engaging with student representatives from across campus to encourage and promote equity, diversity, and inclusivity in the ways these groups need.
- Dedication to building community for marginalized groups via academic, professional, social, and recreational services.
- Creating safe spaces for diversity and self or group expression at Thea Koerner House and the GSS Loft.

- Providing opportunities for feedback on our practices so our commitments to equity, diversity, and inclusivity reflect the living and ever-changing needs of our members.
- Commitment from GSS Executives and staff to follow best practice in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity and to promote these values in their work.

¹ UBC GSS. 2019. Constitution, Policies & Strategy. <http://gss.ubc.ca/policy-strategy/>

² UBC GSS. 2019. GSS Constitution. <http://gss.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/GSSConstitution2018-Rev.pdf>

³ UBC 2018. *2018-2028 UBC Strategic Plan*. https://strategicplan.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/2018_UBC_Strategic_Plan_Full-20180425.pdf