GRADUATE STUDENT SOCIETY
UBC VANCOUVER

GSS Executive Policy

Last revision: February 2026

1 General

1.1 The Objective of the Executive Policy is to house all policies and procedures related to the GSS Executives, previously found in the Graduate Student Society (GSS) Policy Manual. This manual will be available online at all times and can be accessed by anyone.

1.2 The Scope of the Executive Policy covers all policies and procedures related to the GSS Executives.

1.3 All Policies and Procedures in this manual are an extension of the GSS Policies as defined by Bylaw 13. All changes must be made in accordance with the GSS Policies. Recommended changes shall be brought to the Executive Committee to ensure proper implementation and then to the Code and Policy Committee to ensure correct wording and that no conflicts in policy will be created. Policy changes will be brought to GSS Council in the usual manner of Policy changes as per GSS Policies. The Executive Committee is responsible for an annual review of the Executive to ensure current practices align with policy.

2 Abbreviations and Definitions

Centre	Graduate Student Centre of The University of British Columbia - Vancouver
EOC	Executive Oversight Committee
FO	Financial Officer
GM	General Manager
Society	Graduate Student Society of The University of British Columbia – Vancouver
VP Students	Vice-President, Students
VP UAA	Vice-President, University and Academic Affairs VP
External	Vice-President, External Relations

3 Powers and Duties of Members

3.1 The President shall, in addition to duties outlined in the Bylaws:

(a) ensure all reasonable efforts are made to send copies of the minutes of the previous Council meeting, the agenda of the upcoming Council meeting, and any other relevant material to each Councillor in advance of each regular council meeting,

(b) review incomplete affidavit of election forms for departmental representative seatings submitted to the Society and approve at their discretion,

(c) maintain liaisons with any non-voting Council representatives not defined in Bylaw 5.6.1,

(d) ensure a record of proxies for Council meetings are maintained,

(e) ensure a record of committee meeting minutes are maintained,

(f) ensure the bylaws and policy manuals are up to date,

(g) serve as proxy for the VP Students to administer the GSS Event Fund,
(h) set the date for the election,
(i) ensure the Parking policies are followed, and
(j) ensure the Society is following the Personal Information and Protection Act.

3.2 The Vice-President, Students (VP Students) shall, in addition to the duties outlined in the Bylaws:

(a) administer the GSS Event Fund.

3.3 The Vice-President, University and Academic Affairs (VP UAA) shall, in addition to the duties outlined in the Bylaws:

(a) administer the Graduate Student Emergency Fund, and
(b) serve as *ex officio* member of Graduate Council Caucus.

3.4 The Vice-President, External Relations (VP External) shall, in addition to the duties outlined in the Bylaws:

(a) ensure the Society's policies on Expiration of Position Statement are followed.

3.5 The Financial Officer (FO) shall, in addition to the duties outlined in the Bylaws:

(a) ensure the Society's policy on Signing Authority is followed, and
(b) ensure the Society's policies on Executive Officer Spending are followed.

4 Executive Vacation Policy

4.1 Executive Officers shall be entitled to a total of two (2) weeks of vacation during their term, not including the time of closure of the Centre over the winter closure as defined by the UBC Academic Calendar.

4.2 Executive Officers elected for terms shorter than twelve (12) months shall be entitled to the same percentage of vacation time proportional to the length of their term.

4.3 Executive Officers must provide the Chair of the Executive Oversight Committee (EOC) notice of vacation time or a leave of absence, including their date of departure and date of return to the Society, prior to their departure.

4.4 During their vacation, the Executive Officers shall continue to receive their honoraria.

4.5 During their vacation, the Executive Officer shall make all reasonable efforts to stay connected to the Society by email or phone.

4.6 In case of special circumstances, including but not limited to research-related travel or field work, family emergencies, and medical reasons, an Executive Officer may take additional time off, but this time shall be considered a leave of absence.

4.7 Council may appoint a temporary Executive Officer should the elected Executive Officer take a leave of absence or be absent from their position for longer than four (4) consecutive weeks.

4.8 Executive Officers shall not receive an honorarium while on a leave of absence or when they exceed their allotted vacation time.

5 Executive Transition

5.1 EOC, in consultation with the incoming member of the Executive who is being trained and the General Manager, shall decide the extent to which the outgoing member has fulfilled the requirements of Executive Transition and dictate how much of the transition honoraria they will receive. This will be based on Appendix **I** (Executive Transition).

5.2 Each Executive member shall be partly responsible for the orientation of their replacement, including but not limited to:

(a) completion of a comprehensive transitional report no later than the date that the incoming Executive member takes office;
(b) training of the incoming Executive member;
(c) consultation on Executive matters at the request of the incoming Executive member for a period of not less than one (1) month after the incoming executive member takes office;
(d) organization of the Executive member's office and files; and
(e) assisting in position reviews for appointees reporting to the Executive's office.

5.3 If an Executive member is re-elected to the same position, the said Executive member shall not be granted transitional honorarium.

5.4 If an Executive member from one year is elected to another Executive position in the following year, the said Executive member must complete all the training activities required by this Article outside the expected work hours stipulated in Bylaw 8.5.

6 Event Executive Spending

6.1 Cost for transportation when traveling locally to and from events required for Society business may be reimbursed. Modes of transportation can include but are not limited to car rental, public transportation, taxi, co-op cars, and ferries.

6.2 Executives are expected to take the cheapest form of transportation within reason when possible. When safety or practicality prohibits the use, members should use a taxi service, co-op car, rental, or their own car.

6.3 Executives are expected to opt for carpools and other eco-friendly shared commutes when possible.

6.4 Executives should record and claim reimbursement for mileage over and above the mileage from the Executive's residence to their regular workplace. Where the mileage from the Executive's residence to the destination is less than the mileage from the Executive's residence to their regular workplace no claim should be made. Executives who use their own vehicle for approved Society business will be reimbursed per kilometer travelled at the current rate. Executives who use their own vehicle for Society business will be reimbursed per kilometer travelled at the current rate.

(a) The current rate per kilometer may be obtained from the Society administration office, and shall be fixed from time to time in accordance with the mileage rate allowed by the Canada Revenue Agency for tax purposes.

6.5 When trips are made to and from the event during the day, one hundred percent (100%) of the mileage may be claimed. When trips are made on the way to the Society or on the way home from the Society, to an event that causes an Executive to go out of their way, only the mileage of the detour should be claimed. When the distance to the event for the day is the equivalent of going to the office or less, no claim should be made.

7 Out-of-Town Executive Spending

7.1 The Society shall pay for transportation and/or accommodation expenses when an Executive must travel out of town for the purpose of Society business. Transportation and/or accommodation bookings should be made through the Society administrative office staff after confirming conference dates and submitting the conference Invitation, RSVPs and/or receipts through the accounting software for approval at least 14 days in advance.

7.2 Booking will be completed by the Administrative Assistant based on the lowest accommodation cost and a maximum of 20-minute travel time by direct public transport to the venue.

7.3 Bookings should not extend beyond the conference dates. Accommodations can be booked for no more than 1 day before the start date of the conference.

7.4 Executives are expected to take the cheapest mode of transportation within reason.

7.5 Executives will only get reimbursed for the cost of an economy or coach ticket, with one checked bag if traveling for more than 24 hours.

7.6 If a rental car is the most appropriate option, Executives should use the following guidelines:

(a) Minimize cost by researching rates of available rental companies and car models.

(b) The rental must include unlimited mileage (the Society does not pay for rental car mileage).

7.7 Out-of-town transportation and/or accommodation expenses not otherwise accounted for in an Executive's annual budget must be approved by the FO prior to booking. Any transport, accommodation or other expenditures for days not covered by the conference must be borne by the Executive and not billed to GSS. Travel support is provided only for direct trips to and from the conference destination. No deviations are covered, except in cases of natural calamities or other emergencies.

7.8 An Executive may be reimbursed for transportation and/or accommodation bookings under exceptional circumstances as determined at the discretion of the FO.

7.9 Up to sixty Canadian dollars (60.00 CAD), or such other amount set by the FO when traveling outside of Canada, per day may be claimed for necessary personal expenses including but not limited to meals and personal care items.

7.10 Where necessary, the per diem will be provided in advance of departure. The FO shall determine what is considered necessary.

7.11 Expenses for transportation, accommodation and parking are above the necessary personal expense per diem referred to in Executive Policy 7.9 and will be reimbursed separately.

7.12 If meals are included in the event plans, Executives are expected to eat the meals provided; however, alternative meals may be reimbursed in exceptional circumstances (i.e. for dietary, allergy, ethical reasons, etc.).

7.13 Liquor is not an allowable expense.

7.14 When out of town for Society business, Executives can claim phone expenses related to roaming charges.

7.15 Tipping is appropriate where it is customary. Tipping expenses more than eighteen percent (18%) will not be covered by the Society, where the Executive has discretion on the amount or percentage.

8 Parking Fees

8.1 When attending meetings on behalf of the Society, or staying at hotels with pay parking, parking fees will be reimbursed by the Society up to fifteen Canadian dollars ($15.00) per day. Executives are expected to research and utilize the most economical parking available. Valet parking services will not be reimbursed.

9 Traffic Fines

9.1 The Society does not endorse speeding, illegal parking, or other traffic infractions. Any tickets, violations or fines received during the Society business are solely the responsibility of the Executive.

10 Conferences

10.1 Conference expenditure not otherwise accounted for in an Executive's annual budget must be approved by Council after consultation with the FO.

11 Non-Allowable Expenses

11.1 Expenses that are not eligible for reimbursement include, but are not limited to:

(a) liquor,
(b) entertainment not otherwise necessary,
(c) traffic fines,
(d) gratuities beyond eighteen percent (18%),
(e) hotel charges for additional services not otherwise included in Executive Policy 7, and
(f) valet parking.

12 Operational Spending

12.1 Whenever possible, Executives shall direct requisitions or spending requests for expected operational expenses to the Administrative Assistant, Office Manager or Events Director.

12.2 When an Executive is faced with an unexpected operational expense that cannot otherwise be dealt with in accordance with Executive Policy 12.1, an Executive may incur said operational expense on his or her own account for later reimbursement subject to approval by the FO.

13 Reimbursement Process and Exceptions

13.1 All reimbursements are subject to approval by the FO.

13.2 A claim form including receipts must be submitted to the FO no later than two (2) weeks after the end of the event (e.g. conference, meeting, etc.) that occasioned the expense. The receipts must agree with the date and time of departure and return.

13.3 Where a per diem has been provided to an Executive in advance, any portion of their per diem that cannot be satisfactorily accounted for with appropriate receipts must be refunded to the Society.

13.4 If a receipt cannot be produced, a missing receipt form must be submitted to and approved by the FO. Expenses greater than fifty Canadian dollars (50.00 CAD) cannot be claimed using a missing receipt form.

13.5 Claim forms shall be approved by the FO and funds shall be reimbursed no later than twenty (20) working days after submission.

13.6 Where the expenditure is not authorized within this policy, no reimbursement shall be provided.

13.7 If the FO denies reimbursement, the Executive may appeal their decision to Council for final determination.

14 Executive Professional Development Fund

14.1 **Description**

(a) The GSS encourages its Executive Officers to pursue additional training to enhance their skills and competencies that directly contribute to their job performance and organizational goals and has established a budget allocation to reimburse Executive Officers for approved courses. Upon successful completion of an approved course, the GSS will reimburse the Executive for up to 100% of the cost of tuition, course related texts, and examination fees. This policy applies only to elected Executive Officers and is distinct from the staff course fee subsidy outlined in the GSS HR Manual.

14.2 **Eligibility**

(a) Eligible courses:

i. Eligible courses include external workshops, short-term certificate programs, or other professional training opportunities directly related to GSS Executive roles.

ii. Reimbursement does not apply to equipment, tuition and student fees, thesis filing fees, publication costs, conference fees, courses or examinations completed as part of their degree, or graduation fees.

(b) Funding amount:

i. The total funding pool and per-officer cap will be defined by the House Finance Committee during budget preparation and approved by Council as part of the annual budget. Executive Officers may not exceed their individual limit.

(c) Timeline:

i. The course subsidy is provided in recognition of the fact that additional training will benefit both the Executive and the GSS; therefore,

(a) the training should begin during the first six (6) months of the appointment term, and

(b) the majority of the training (at least 50%) should take place within the first six (6) months of the appointment term.

14.3 **Forfeiture of Funds**

(a) If the Executive resigns or does not complete their full one-year elected term, they must reimburse the GSS for part of the course subsidy. The amount of the reimbursement will depend on when the Executive resigns, with the fraction of the course reimbursed equivalent to the fraction of the term not completed. For example, if the Executive resigns three (3) months before completing their term, they must reimburse the GSS for one fourth (3/12 = 1/4) of the cost; if the Executive resigns four (4) months before completing their term, they must reimburse the GSS for one third (4/12 = 1/3) of the cost. The General Manager, in consultation with the Financial Officer, will oversee the recovery of these funds.

14.4 **Application and Reimbursement Process**

(a) Executive Officers may apply for the Professional Development Fund by submitting an email application no longer than 200 words to the EOC, copying the General Manager. This application will include:

i. A brief description of the professional development activity,

ii. A timeline describing when the course will be undertaken and completed,

iii. The cost of the activity and subsidy requested, and

iv. A concise argument explaining how the course will develop skills that will translate to improved job performance.

(b) The EOC will review the application at the next scheduled EOC meeting and provide a decision via email to the applicant within 14 days of submission. The council will be notified of the final decision and rationale at the following Council meeting.

(c) In the absence of an Executive Oversight Committee Chair, the Council will review the application and provide a decision.

(d) After course approval, applicants can enroll in their approved course paying the fee upfront

(e) After course completion, applicants should submit to the EOC the following within one (1) month of course completion for reimbursement:
    i. course fee receipts,
    ii. a final diploma or proof of completion, and
    iii. a short (200-word) follow-up report explaining how the course has contributed to skill development for improved job performance.
(f) If approved, the Executive Oversight Committee will forward these documents to the Financial Officer for reimbursement. No reimbursement will be made without the receipts and evidence of course completion.

15 Executive Honoraria

15.1 The Executive and Special Officers shall receive the following honoraria in twenty-four semimonthly installments, provided that all duties pertaining to the position are performed to Council's satisfaction (effective 2022):

(a) for the President, twenty-one thousand seven hundred and sixty-nine (21,769) dollars and fifty-two (52) cents per annum;
(b) for the Financial Officer, seventeen thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven (17,777) dollars and seventy-seven (77) cents per annum;
(c) for the Vice President, University and Academic Affairs, seventeen thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven (17,777) dollars and seventy-seven (77) cents per annum;
(d) for the Vice President, Students, seventeen thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven (17,777) dollars and seventy-seven (77) cents per annum;
(e) for the Vice President, External Relations, seventeen thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven (17,777) dollars and seventy-seven (77) cents per annum.

15.2 The incoming Executive and Special Officers may receive transition honouraria two weeks before resuming office. In addition, the outgoing Executive and Special Officers may receive transition honouraria for one month after vacating office. These payments are dependent on meeting conditions outlined in Policy 4.3. The transition honouraria remuneration shall be set as (effective 2022):

(a) for the President, up to two thousand seven hundred and twenty-one (2,721) dollars and nineteen (19) cents per annum;
(b) for the Financial Officer, up to two thousand two hundred and twenty-two (2,222) dollars and twenty-two (22) cents per annum;
(c) for the Vice-President, Students, up to two thousand two hundred and twenty-two (2,222) dollars and twenty-two (22) cents per annum; and
(d) for the Vice-President, External Relations, up to two thousand two hundred and twenty-two (2,222) dollars and twenty-two (22) cents per annum.

15.3 The honoraria of the Executive Officers shall be prorated according to the actual term of office, if less than one year.

15.4 The honoraria of the Executive Officers shall be adjusted annually according to Consumer Price Index (CPI).

16 Appendices and Forms

Appendix I: Executive Transition

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Executive Transition

Appendix I: Executive Transition

The following policy describes the tasks involved in "executive transition" as well as provides EOC with a basis to determine the extent of how much transition honouraria should be offered to each executive based on completion of the tasks.

The **comprehensive transitional report** shall be worth (40%) of the amount of the transitional honorarium and shall include but not be limited to:

(a) a comprehensive description of each committee the Executive member sits on, including discussions of the committee's work in the previous year and of the current items on the committee's agenda, along with suggestions for the direction of the committee in the coming year;

(b) information about the student staff positions directly associated with the Executive member (e.g. Assistants), including information on the current roles of each staff position and suggestions for the positions in the coming year;

(c) a review of important issues that came up in the media during the previous year, including enough information to make the incoming Executive member familiar with the issues;

(d) a review of the successes and failures of projects and new initiatives of the outgoing Executive member, including suggestions for improvements; and

(e) a timeline indicating when events are to take place and by what dates tasks need to be completed.

The transitional report shall be a new document focusing on the events, achievements, and challenges of the previous year and on the outlook for the upcoming year and must not be simply a copy of a previous year's transitional report.

The **training of the incoming Executive member** shall be worth (15%) of the amount of the transitional honorarium and shall include but not be limited to:

(a) introduction to the staff, especially the staff members with whom the Executive member works particularly closely;

(b) familiarization of the incoming member with day-to-day tasks;

(c) attendance of both the incoming and outgoing member at no less than three (3) meetings of Standing Committees the member sits on; and

(d) for those Executive members who are also signing officers, arrangement of instruction by the Financial Controller on appropriate procedures for reviewing cheques and the related supporting documentation.

Consultation on Executive matters after the incoming Executive has taken office shall be worth (15%) of the amount of the transitional honorarium and shall include, but not be limited to, informing the incoming Executive member of any outstanding issues to be resolved and work to be completed.

Organization of the office and physical or computer files shall be worth (15%) of the amount of the transitional honorarium and shall include but not be limited to:

(a) organizing the outgoing member's paper and computer files, including e-mail files, by the time the incoming Executive member takes office;

(b) removing all personal belongings of the outgoing Executive by the time the incoming Executive member takes office;

(c) ensuring the availability of all required access, and returning GSS equipment by the time the incoming Executive member takes office; and (d) organize and clean the physical office space as directed by EOC.

Assisting in position reviews shall be worth (15%) of the amount of the transitional honorarium and shall include, but not be limited to, taking part in reviews for any relevant position that the incoming Executive member thinks need to be reviewed