



University of Victoria
Graduate Students' Society

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2024

Build Lasting Community



2023-24 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wyatt Maddox
Chair

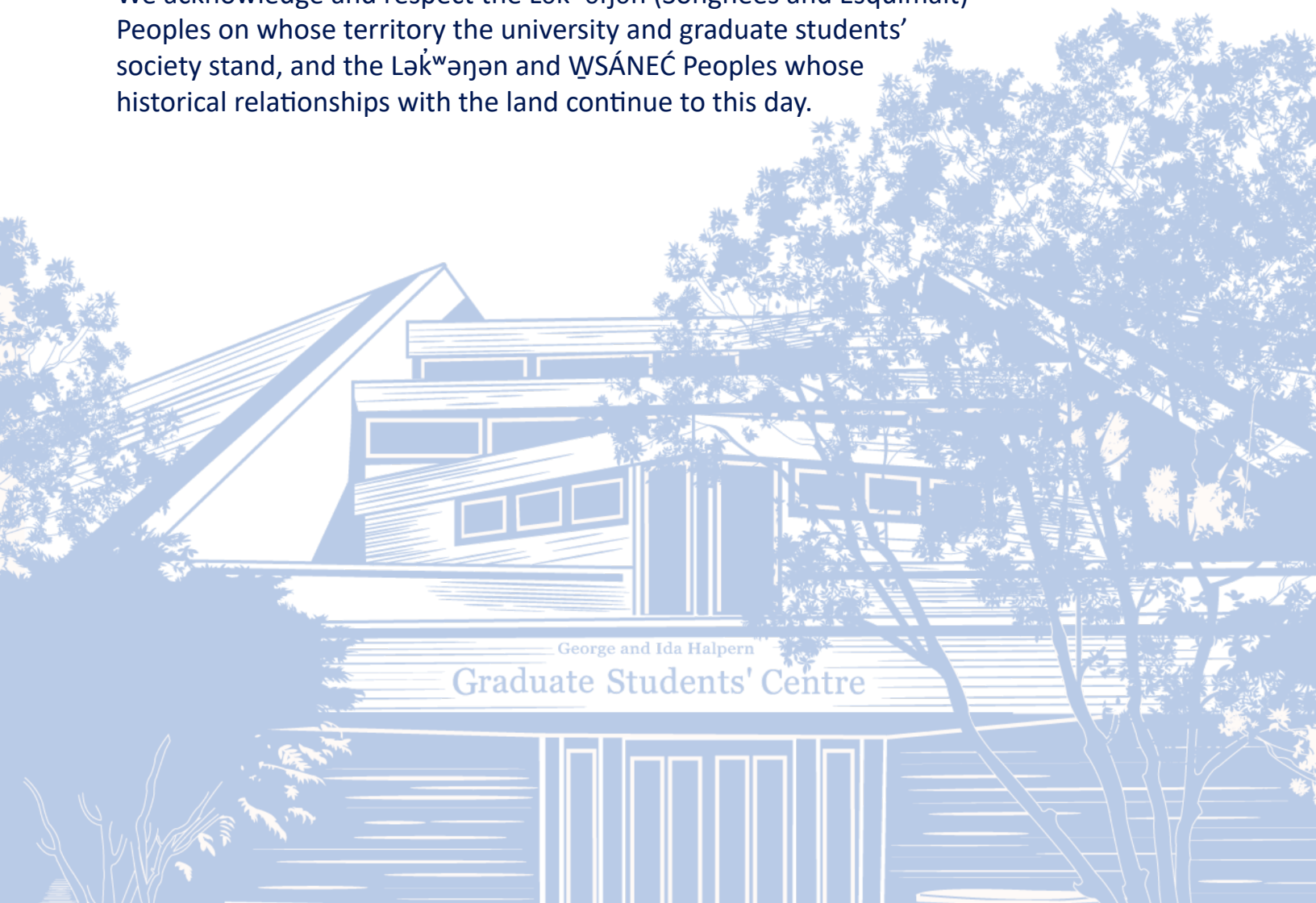
Sam Fielder
Director of Finance

Greg Gaube
Director of Communications

Mitch Nascimento
Director of Services

Lindsay Beal
Director of Student Affairs

We acknowledge and respect the Lək'wəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university and graduate students' society stand, and the Lək'wəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.



1 ENGAGEMENT & CONNECTIVITY

Building a More Connected Student Base

What it Means

The GSS is a democratic body of representation that advocates for graduate student interests and provides a system to make those needs heard. Accordingly, maintaining a platform for student voices is vital to ensuring that fair representation of the graduate student population is heard by the University and at all levels of government. Building a connected base of graduate students through which communication will easily flow is a top priority of the GSS.

What Success Looks Like

- Increase student awareness of the GSS, through strong communications and engaging materials.
- Establishing a network of volunteers to help bridge the gap between the Graduate Student Representatives and the broader graduate student community on campus.
- Student groups are attracting a diverse set of individuals, with each member's contributions being discussed without prejudice or limitations.

Strategies

- Ensure that the GSS brand is being maintained across all aspects of the services and resources they provide.
- Increase student engagement by offering relevant volunteering opportunities through events, advocacy and student representation.
- Offer consistent programming and services that look to engage our graduate student population.

Graduate Students' Centre

2 GRADUATE HUB SPACE

What it Means

The GSS provides its students with the fun and social side of student life by incorporating events, staffing and operating The Grad House, and providing the space for students to connect with each other. We aim to make all opportunities and events approachable, equitable, and accessible to as many students as possible.

What Success Looks Like

- The Halpern Center is the hub for graduate students on campus.
- Students are utilizing the Halpern Center in any events that they would like to run that requires a space to do so.
- Students have the opportunity for interdisciplinary networking and gain access to academic and non-academic activities with other graduate students.

Strategies

- Continue the ongoing success of Wednesday Morning Coffee, establishing a clear time and day when graduate students can meet a representative from the GSS Executive Board.
- Implement a series of standing events to help develop like-minded hobbies, facilitate teamwork, and to generate structure in busy and variable schedules.
- Develop the framework to enable larger restaurant-adjacent events that cater to getting groups of graduate students together.
- Prioritize the use of space by graduate student groups.

George and Ida Halpern
Graduate Students' Centre

3 THE GRAD HOUSE RESTAURANT

What it Means

One of the most celebrated services, which takes up the majority of the physical GSS space, is the Grad House Restaurant. Since the re-opening in Fall 2022, students have come to enjoy many meals, events, and parties hosted at the Grad House, making it a central focus of improvement as we continue to re-establish the restaurant as a “go-to” place for graduate students.

What Success Looks Like

- A continual increase in space utilization from Graduate Students.
- A lively, entertaining environment that students can feel at home in.
- Proper budget management, and upkeep of physical space.

Strategies

- Advertise campus-wide that the space that is available for graduate students.
- Ensure that the quality of the service, whether food and beverage or event related is the highest quality achievable while maintaining menu prices that are affordable to graduate students.
- Encourage the Grad House to continue to be the flagship enterprise for the GSS. This will require collaboration between the Grad House employees and the other parts of the GSS.

George and Ida Halpern
Graduate Students' Centre

4 STUDENT ADVOCACY

Using the Collective Voice for Good

What it Means

At its core, the GSS is a Students' Association, enabling the collective voice of students to be heard by the University, at all levels. Graduate students are not immune to the many local, national and international issues. Collaborative advocacy on behalf of collective graduate student interests, present and future, will allow us to improve student livelihood.

What Success Looks Like

- Key issues and concerns of students are identified, and critical information is gathered.
- Strong advocacy for the student voice on campus and in the academic community.
- Established relationships with community and organizational supporters for advocacy campaigns.
- Graduate student community is a trusted source of information, support, and active participation in university governance.

Strategies

- Increase communication avenues between graduate students and graduate representative council members.
- Recruit volunteers for advocacy campaigns.
- Invite supporters from the community and the University to participate in events, meetings and socials to build and strengthen relationships.

George and Ida Halpern
Graduate Students' Centre

5 STUDENT SUPPORT & SERVICES

Providing Responsive Help

What it Means

The GSS is often the first place students will look to when dealing with a variety of issues revolving around graduate student life. The GSS is an inclusive organization, supporting all students equitably. As new challenges arise, the GSS will evolve alongside its members, and ensure that the services offered best reflect those new challenges.

What Success Looks Like

- The GSS is responsive to the feedback that is provided about its own services and service partners.
- The GSS is working collaboratively with other service partners to benefit students.
- Services rendered meet the needs and demands of members.
- Transparency of processes are prioritized to ensure members understand their rights, opportunities, and obligations.

Strategies

- Employ Student Study positions to deal with the increase in student-related cases.
- Negotiate optimal services from providers for the benefit of members.
- Receive and give due consideration to feedback on changes to services.
- Communicate any changes or lack of changes to membership.
- Ensure consistent communications on services available and provide thorough information to members through the GSS website, social media, staff interactions, and published materials.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Graduate Students' Society

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Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 10am - 4pm

Friday: 11am - 2pm

