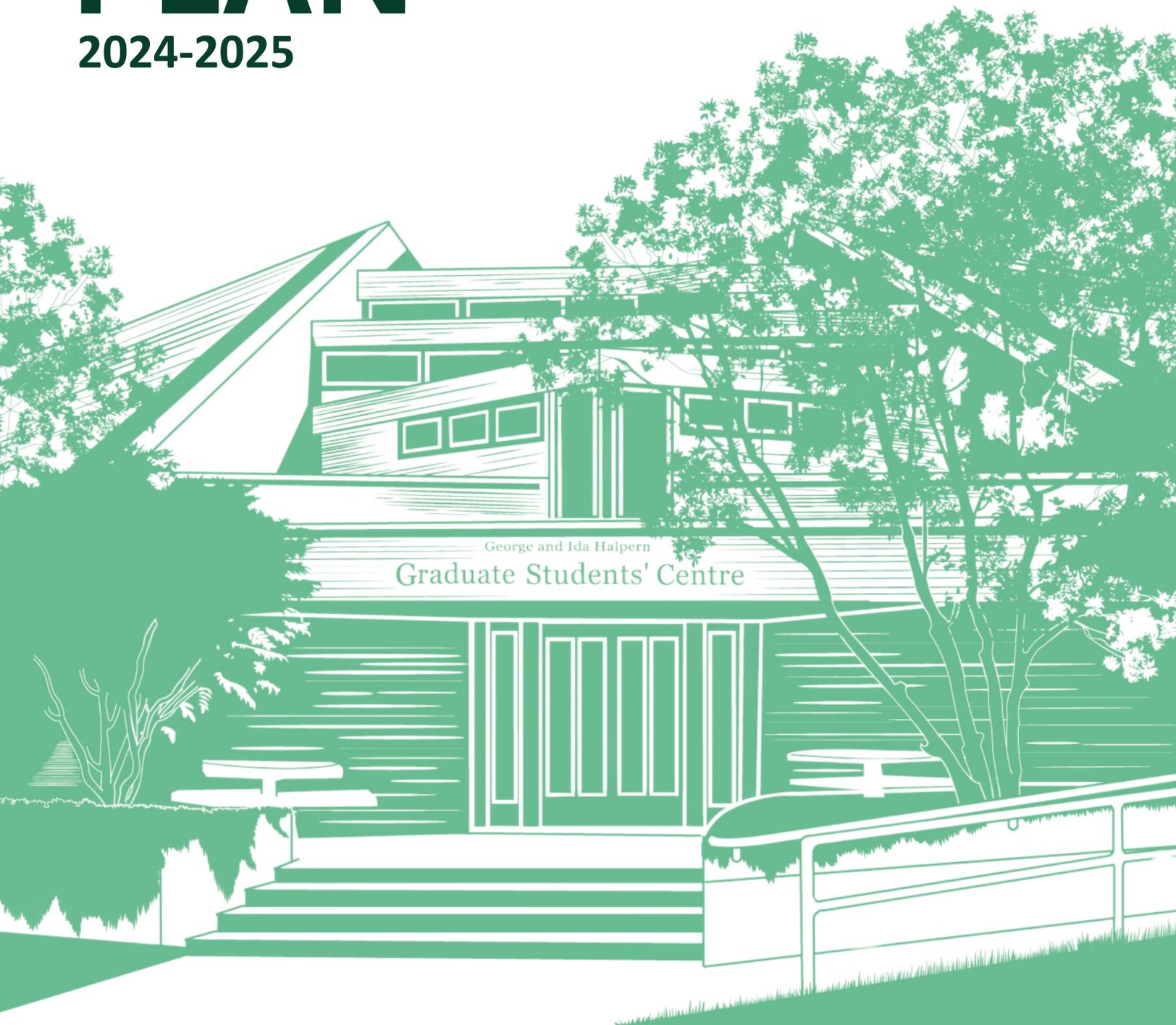




University of Victoria
Graduate Students' Society

ANNUAL PLAN

2024-2025



George and Ida Halpern
Graduate Students' Centre

LETTER TO THE MEMBERSHIP

We are so grateful to have you as a part of this vibrant community. The Graduate Students' Society (GSS) is a supportive community, striving to enhance your graduate school experience through interconnection and engagement. As your democratically elected Executive Board for 2024-2025, we are committed to representing and serving your interests by using this annual plan to guide our resources and advocacy.

The Board is made up of graduate students who are dedicated to ensuring your time at UVic is enjoyable, memorable, and valuable. Our first priority is to elevate your voice on issues that impact you through advocacy to university administration and all levels of government. With our new director roles of Internal and External Relations, as well as the creation of an Advocacy and Campaigns Committee, we have increased our capacity and yours to raise grad student issues. Through on- and off-campus partnerships, we will continue to provide resources and opportunities for you. This year we will focus on initiating meaningful partnerships with new organizations and engaging those established relationships that have enriched grad student experiences over the years.

The Halpern Centre for Graduate Students is your place to connect with the Board, our friendly staff, and your community. We work to provide a supportive space that will connect you with other grad students because we know a support network is important to navigating the ups and downs of grad school. Let the GSS be your cultural, social, and entertainment hub by engaging in our many weekly events. Tune into our social media and sign up for our bulletin to stay up to date with the latest events, workshops, advocacy campaigns, and graduate student concerns.

The GSS Executive Board has created this Annual Plan to guide our work over the 2024-2025 academic year. By upholding the values and priorities described in this document, we will remain accountable and transparent to the grad student community.

We look forward to supporting your success!

Your 2024-2025 GSS Chair & Executive Board,

George and Ida Halpern
Wyatt, Maggie, Jitendra, Rosemary, Sam
Graduate Students' Centre

2024-25 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wyatt Maddox
Chair

Maggie Lawton
Director of Student Life

Jitendra Palaparty
Director of External Relations

Sam Fielder
Director of Finance

Rosemary Webb
Director of Internal / University
Relations

The GSS respectfully acknowledges and thanks the many generations of stewards of the unceded land on which we are situated, the water that gives us life, and the air we breathe from the Songhees, Esquimalt, and WSÁNEĆ nations. We commit ourselves to truth, reconciliation and decolonization.

GSS Website



GSS Bulletin



George and Ida Halpern
Graduate Students' Centre

1 FOSTERING STUDENT-CENTRIC PARTNERSHIPS

The GSS is committed to communicating, collaborating, and sharing with both on- and off-campus organizations. We seek to enrich and supplement graduate student experience with new and established partners in our community.

The GSS will do this...

...with:

- UVic and campus-based organizations:
 - e.g. UVSS, International Centre for Students & Global Community, Student Wellness Centre, Multifaith Centre, Faculty of Graduate Studies, Libraries
- Other external organizations:
 - e.g. BC Transit, Gordon Head Community Association, Volunteer Victoria, Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills, Municipal Councils

...by:

- Sharing resources
- Cross-promoting events
- Collaborating on advocacy campaigns
- Facilitating new relationships

...for:

- Improved inter-organizational relations
- Increased member access to and awareness of resources, information, and advocacy
- Graduate student connections with local and broader communities

Building and maintaining partnerships requires care and consistency. The GSS will best cultivate our connections by being intentional and focusing on key areas. This includes check-ins with graduate students about what resources and information are most needed, initiating conversations with potential partners, and meeting with our longstanding partners. We expect to see these priorities result in a balanced share of responsibilities between volunteers and organizations for promotion and execution of orientation events, Graduate Student Appreciation Week, and emergent concerns.

2 ADVOCATING FOR GRADUATE STUDENT SUPPORT & WELL-BEING

The GSS is committed to ensuring that ongoing and emerging graduate student concerns are heard and addressed. We aim to enact change through elevating graduate student voices and coordinating advocacy efforts with our partners.

The GSS will do this...

...with:

- Our volunteer advocacy teams
- Advocacy and Campaigns Committee, Graduate Representative Council
- Internal and external partners
- Student Wellness Centre, UVSS
- Our existing and future campaigns
- Harm reduction support, improved gender affirming care coverage and access

...by:

- Conducting background research on issues and their impact on graduate students
- Consistent and transparent communication with graduate students about ongoing advocacy efforts
- Utilizing social and traditional media to raise awareness and maintain public relations
- Negotiating on behalf of graduate students
- Planning and executing advocacy campaigns while encouraging graduate student participation and leadership

...for:

- Promotion of equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and anti-colonial practices and policies
- Enhancement of graduate student quality of life and academic experience
- Magnification and empowerment of graduate student voices

Effective advocacy goes beyond addressing immediate concerns; it is about empowering students to be active participants in their community and future. The GSS will optimize advocacy efforts by being proactive and focusing on key areas, maintaining consistent communication with graduate students, conducting thorough research, and engaging in strategic partnerships and advocacy campaigns. We strive to achieve tangible outcomes that enhance the lives of graduate students.

3 FACILITATING PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The GSS strives to create and strengthen opportunities for members to get involved in their community in an impactful way, be it to learn a new skill or speak for a cause. **The GSS will do this...**

...with:

- Our partners, volunteers, and committees
 - e.g. Advocacy & Campaigns Committee, Faculty of Graduate Studies, Events volunteers
- Our in-house spaces, skills, and funding
 - e.g. The Halpern Centre, Naloxone training, department grants

...by:

- Researching and developing training modules
- Advertising engagement opportunities
- Educating and training members
- Hosting or collaborating on events

...for:

- Strengthened organizational capacity through volunteer empowerment
- An active, engaged, and well-rounded community
- The development and growth of our members

The value of graduate school is not just in the piece of paper — it is in the opportunities you get to grow and learn along the way. Be it the chance to connect with like-minded folks, learn to knit, or get involved in a campaign for student rights, opportunity is everywhere. Learning and engagement come not just from fun events or skill-building workshops, but also the chance to be a part of the society and the work we do as volunteers, advocates, and representatives. We, as the GSS, hope to provide a diverse set of opportunities for our members, helping them flourish and make the most of their time as graduate students.

4 PROVIDING ACCESS TO ON & OFF-CAMPUS RESOURCES

The GSS ensures that graduate students have access to, and are given the necessary information on, both internal and external resources.

The GSS will do this...

...with:

- Partnerships on and off campus
- Our staff and volunteer base
- Our communication channels
- Existing services and spaces

...by:

- Encouraging the use of resources
- Running enticing events for the membership
- Providing guidance
- Giving appropriate referrals to resources
- Facilitating access to in-house resources

...for:

- Improved graduate student wellness
- Better use of underutilized resources
- A positive grad school experience

We want to ensure that graduate students are aware of what resources the GSS and our wider community have to offer, and in turn we strive to understand what you need to have a successful and engaging student experience. The Halpern Centre is the heart of our organization, where graduate students can make use of the spaces and resources, as well as participate in events. We improve our in-house resources based on feedback provided by graduate students, as well as continue to maintain our strong relationships with community partners such as the Faculty of Graduate Studies, the Student Wellness Centre, and the International Centre for Students, to ensure that the needs of graduate students are met.

Graduate Students' Centre

CONTACT INFORMATION

Graduate Students' Society

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Website: www.gss.uvic.ca

Building: George and Ida Halpern Graduate Students' Centre

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 10am - 4pm

Friday: 11am - 2pm

