# GSA Council Standing Orders

**A Guide for GSA Council Meeting Operations and Procedures**

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**Approved by:** Daniel Carleton, GSA Speaker

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# GSA COUNCIL MEETING STANDING ORDERS

## Introduction

> ***C.POL.4.2 -*** *GSA Council meetings will operate in accordance with GSA Council Standing Orders as well as GSA Bylaw and Policy. If a Standing Order contradicts GSA Policy, the Speaker will consult with the ED (or delegate) to determine which takes precedence.*

The GSA Council Standing Orders serve as the operational guide for all affairs pertaining to the GSA Council. GSA Council members are expected to be familiar with and uphold the procedures outlined in this document.

The Standing Orders described in this document are an extension of existing GSA Bylaw and Policy. Where any contradictions between the Standing Orders and the GSA Policy (namely Section C) are present, the Speaker and ED (or delegate) will determine whether a specific policy or order takes precedence on a case-by-case basis.

When citing a standing order, the notation should begin with “Standing Order” followed by the section number, then bullet number and any sub-bullets. For example: Standing Order 5.K.3.a, which refers to Section 5 (GSA Council Meeting Procedures), subsection K (Question Period), bullet 3, sub-bullet a.

## Important Emails

- Speaker - speaker@gsa-ualberta.ca
- Deputy Speaker - depspeak@gsa-ualberta.ca
- Managing Director (Advocacy, Governance and Services) - ad@gsa-ualberta.ca
- ACB Chair - acb@gsa-ualberta.ca
- President - president@gsa-ualberta.ca
- Executive Coordinator - gsaca@gsa-ualberta.ca
- Executive Director - ed@gsa-ualberta.ca

## Section 1 - Overview of Standing Orders

### A. Authority of Standing Orders

1. GSA Council Meetings will operate in accordance with GSA Council Standing Orders.
2. GSA Council Meetings will observe Robert's Rules of Order where possible.
    a. For the purposes of Robert's Rules of Order, a session will be defined as a single GSA Council meeting.
    b. For the purposes of Robert's Rules of Order, members of the assembly refers to GSA Council members while members of the society refers to GSA general members as defined in GSA Bylaw and Policy.
3. If the Standing Orders contradict GSA Policy, the Speaker, in consultation with the ED (or delegate), will determine which takes precedence.
4. If the Standing Orders contradict Robert's Rules of Order, Standing Orders take precedence.
5. If the GSA Bylaw and Policy, Standing Orders and Roberts' Rules of Order fail to provide direction on a particular matter, the Speaker will decide and make a ruling based on precedence and best practices, in consultation with the Deputy Speaker and/or ED (or delegate) as needed.

### B. Modifications to Standing Orders

1. Any GSA Council member can propose modifications to the Standing Orders directly to the GSA Council. Standing Orders may be modified (but not wholly abolished) by a simple majority vote (50% + 1) at any given GSA Council Meeting, and approved changes will take effect immediately.
    a. Modifications may include (but not limited to) wording adjustments to create clarity, removal of a specific order, addition of a new order, completely reorganizing the document structure etc.
2. Standing Orders may be wholly abolished only by unanimous agreement between all GSA Council members currently attending at a given GSA Council Meeting.
3. Grammatical, typographical or simple/mundane structural changes can be made by the Speaker or Deputy Speaker without a formal proposal or vote by GSA Council.
4. Updated versions of the Standing Orders document will be emailed to GSA Council members and posted to the GSA website within one (1) business day of any amendments following approval/certification by the Speaker.

## Section 2 - Mandate and Accountability

### A. Mandate of GSA Council

1. The mandate of GSA Council is to fulfill all responsibilities listed in Section 95 of the Post-Secondary Learning Act (C.BYL.1.1). These responsibilities include (but might not be limited to):

    a. Approval of changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy

    b. Approval of the annual GSA operating and labour budget

    c. Approval of major financial initiatives proposed by the GSA Board and relevant stakeholders within or outside the University of Alberta

    d. Approval of referenda proposals ahead of the annual GSA General Elections

    e. Ratification of the annual GSA General Elections results

    f. Creation or dissolution of standing committees to carry out specific mandates

    g. Discussion of strategic work plans, financial audits, information presentations etc. as it pertains to the business and affairs of the GSA

    h. Holding regular meetings to stay up-to-date on the current/ongoing affairs of the GSA

### B. Accountability and Conduct

1. All GSA Council members are expected to observe the highest standards of professionalism and respect to all individuals.

2. All GSA Council members are expected to uphold and observe conduct policies outlined by the University of Alberta and the GSA.

3. All members of council must hold each other accountable.

4. Identified breaches in conduct (as described in *Section H* in GSA Bylaw and Policy) should be reported to the Speaker, the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (ACB) or Council Coordinator where applicable.

## Section 3 - Meeting Scheduling

### A. Meeting Scheduling

1. The Speaker and Council Coordinator sets the GSA Council schedule annually based on the following guiding principles where possible:
    a. GSA Council meetings typically occur once per month on the third or fourth Monday of each month subject to the availability of the University Chambers.
        i. There shall not be a gap of greater than five (5) weeks between two consecutive GSA Council meetings except in the case of a meeting cancellation.
        ii. In the event a Monday meeting would coincide with a University-recognized holiday or a municipal, provincial or federal election, the Speaker and Council Coordinator will schedule the meeting for another day.
2. GSA Council Meetings are held in a hybrid format.
3. The date and/or time of a GSA Council meeting may be moved by the Speaker in consultation with the GSA President and Council Coordinator to another time within the same month.
    a. Notice of such a change must be communicated to GSA Council members by email at least 5 working days prior to the new date or prior to the original GSA Council meeting if the meeting is to be delayed.
    b. GSA Council meetings may be moved if at least 10 council members send a request to the Speaker.
4. Up to 2 GSA Council meetings may be cancelled per year by joint approval of the Speaker and GSA President in consultation with the Council Coordinator provided there is no urgent or outstanding business.
    a. Sequential GSA Council meetings may not be cancelled.
    b. Notice of a meeting cancellation must be given at least 5 working days prior to the meeting.

### B. Special Meetings

1. Special meetings of GSA Council will have specific and limited agendas and may be called when important matters arise for decision either between regular meetings or at a time when pressure of business would not allow them to be adequately disposed of at a

scheduled meeting. Procedures governing scheduled meetings will apply to special meetings (C.POL.4.4.a)

2. With reasonable notice (when possible, 5 working days), special meetings will be called by the Speaker following receipt of any of the following (C.POL.4.4.b):
    a. A motion of GSA Council at any GSA Council meeting
    b. A motion of the GSA Board
    c. A request to the Speaker by at least ten (10) members of GSA Council
3. A Special Meeting will occur within 2 weeks of a motion or receipt of the 10th GSA Council member's request.
4. Special Meetings may be scheduled outside of traditional GSA Council Meeting times.
5. Special Meetings are subject to the same Standing Orders as scheduled GSA Council meetings.

**C. Council Mailings**

1. All GSA Council meeting materials are uploaded to the GSA website in a timely fashion.
2. The First Mailing contains a tentative agenda and meeting package for the upcoming Council meeting.
    a. The First Mailing of a GSA Council meeting is typically uploaded to the website and sent via email to Council members at least 5 days prior to the meeting.
3. The Second Mailing contains the final agenda and meeting package for the upcoming Council meeting.
    a. The Second Mailing of a GSA Council meeting is typically uploaded to the website and sent via email to Council members at least 1 day prior to the meeting.

## Section 4 - Meeting Composition and Attendance

### A. Composition and Staff Support

1. GSA Council composition is defined in C.POL.3.1.
2. GSA Council meetings are chaired by the Speaker.
    a. If the Speaker is absent, the Deputy Speaker will assume the role of Speaker.
    b. If both the Speaker and Deputy Speaker are unavailable, the line of succession will be followed as described in GSA Bylaw and Policy.
3. The Council Coordinator will prepare the materials for each GSA Council meeting, including agenda preparation, meeting summaries, compiling reports and presentations in consultation with the Speaker (and/or the GSA President and/or GSA Staff, as needed).
4. The GSA Executive Coordinator will serve as the “recording secretary” at GSA Council meetings and will prepare the meeting minutes.
5. GSA Management and Staff will provide additional support as needed.

### B. Attendance

1. All GSA Council members are expected and are required to attend all GSA Council meetings, including Special Meetings. See *C.POL.6 - Attendance* and *C.POL.3.2.a.ii.*
2. Attendance will be logged at each GSA Council meeting.
3. GSA Council members must inform the Speaker as soon as possible of an anticipated absence, or at the next best possible time in the event of an emergency. Failure to do so may result in an unexcused absence.
4. If a departmental councillor misses 2 meetings in a row or misses a total of 3 meetings, their seat will be declared vacant. The Speaker will reach out to the department to request the election of a new departmental councillor.
5. If a Councillor-at-Large misses 2 meetings in a row or misses a total of 3 meetings, their seat will be declared vacant. The Nominating Committee will work to fill the seat.
6. Departmental councillors are encouraged to send an alternate in their place if they anticipate being absent at a GSA Council meeting. Both parties will be required to submit a proxy form via the Google Form which shall be made available on the GSA website..
    a. The proxy form is valid for only one alternate and lasts for the duration of the primary councillor’s term. A new form must be completed for a different alternate.

7. DEO absences will be reported to the GSA Board and ED (or delegate). Repeat absences will be reported to the ACB. DEOs do not have alternates.

**C. Other Attendees and Guests**

1. Alternate councillors may attend alongside their departmental councillor as non-voting members. Alternate councillors attending in place of their departmental councillor will be considered voting members so long as the proxy form is submitted correctly.

2. Standing Committee Chairs and members who are not departmental councillors, CaLs, or DEOs may attend GSA council meetings as non-voting members. Their attendance to all meetings is not mandatory.

3. The GSA Finance Team (which includes the GSA Finance Manager and GSA Accountant) and/or legal counsel and/or other related parties may attend GSA Council meetings as non-voting members. Their attendance to all meetings is not mandatory.

4. Any GSA members who pay membership dues are welcome to attend GSA Council meetings as guests. Notifying the Speaker is preferred but not required. They will not have speaking privileges extended to them by default. Guests cannot vote.

    a. Please refer to *Section 7* for restrictions as it pertains to suspended DEOs or individuals removed from their position as DEO by ACB. .

5. Members of the public who do not fit any of the aforementioned criteria may attend GSA council meetings as guests after seeking approval from the Speaker. They will not have speaking privileges extended to them by default. Guests cannot vote.

6. Guests invited as presenters may speak during their presentation and/or action item. They may not speak during other action or presentation items. Guests cannot vote.

7. If a guest wishes to speak, it is best that they direct questions or concerns through a council member. However, with the Speaker's discretion, a guest may be granted speaking privileges.

## Section 5 - GSA Council Meeting Procedures

### A. Quorum

1. Quorum of any GSA Council meeting is thirty (30) voting members.
2. If quorum is lost at any point during the meeting, GSA Council members may elect to adjourn the meeting or continue the meeting informally.
    a. If the meeting proceeds informally, no formal business may be conducted and no motions pertaining to action items can be voted on.
    b. Only subsidiary motions may be voted on where relevant.

### B. Order of Business

1. The standard order of business shall be followed and shall be reflected in the agenda:
    a. Land Acknowledgement
    b. Approval of the agenda
    c. Approval of meeting minutes
    d. Welcome and/or farewell to GSA Council members
    e. Speaker's Business
    f. Announcements by GSA Council members
    g. Council Elections (chaired by the Nominating Committee)
    h. DEO, CEO and committee reports
    i. Presentation items
    j. Discussion items
    k. Action items
    l. Oral question period
2. Occasionally, there may be a Closed Session.
3. A recess may be called by the Speaker at any point during the meeting. Recesses may not last more than 10 minutes.

**C. Agenda**

1. Agendas for GSA Council meetings will normally include the Order of Business previously described, accompanied with approximate time allotments per item.
2. The agenda is circulated in the First and Second Mailing as previously described.
3. The agenda must be approved at the start of every GSA Council meeting by a simple majority vote.
    a. Any amendments to the agenda before approving the agenda require a two-thirds majority vote by the GSA Council. A vote to approve the agenda must occur right after.
        i. Amendments may include introducing new items, removing items, reordering the agenda etc.
        ii. Each amendment requires a separate vote.
4. New items can not be added to the agenda after it is approved.
    a. This does not apply to subsidiary motions as described in *Section 6 - Rules of Debate*.
    b. Motions raised during substantive discussion in a GSA Council meeting which may have significant impacts on the operations of the GSA may be voted on per the discretion of the Speaker in consultation with the Deputy Speaker and/or Council Coordinator. Otherwise, such a motion would be automatically deferred to the next GSA Council meeting.
5. The Speaker will make a ruling on whether agenda items can be reordered should a presenter be late or absent, or if the meeting is running ahead or behind schedule.
6. Items may be removed from the agenda, tabled or deferred to another meeting after the agenda is approved by a vote of GSA Council as described in *Section 6 - Rules of Debate*.

**D. Meeting Minutes**

1. A summary of the most recent GSA Council meeting is circulated to all GSA Council members within one week after a meeting.
2. The meeting minutes of the last GSA Council meeting are typically circulated in the First and/or Second Mailing.
3. After approval of the agenda, the GSA Council will vote to approve the meeting minutes via a simple majority vote.

4. Amendments to the meeting minutes can be sent via email to the Speaker and Council Coordinator.
    a. The Speaker reserves the right to verify the amendment via the meeting recording or transcript and rectify accordingly.
5. Amendments to the meeting minutes can be made prior to approval of the minutes in a GSA Council meeting.
    a. The Speaker reserves the right to verify the amendment via the meeting recording or transcript and rectify accordingly.
6. Amendments to the meeting minutes after they are approved must be approved by GSA Council by two-thirds majority vote.
    a. The Speaker reserves the right to verify the amendment via the meeting recording or transcript and rectify accordingly.

**E. Starting the Meeting**

1. The meeting will proceed once the Speaker verifies quorum has been reached by counting the number of voting members present.
2. The Speaker will call the meeting to order and read the Land Acknowledgement.
3. The Speaker may make any announcements relating to any pressing business or GSA Council affairs (also known as Speaker's Business).
4. The Speaker will call for the approval of the agenda.
5. The Speaker will call for the approval of the meeting minutes.
6. The Speaker will ask if there are any new or departing GSA Council members.
    a. New members may give a few remarks to introduce themselves. The Speaker will extend a warm welcome to the GSA Council.
    b. Departing members may give a few remarks as a farewell. The Speaker will thank them for their service on GSA Council.
7. The Speaker will ask if there are any announcements from GSA Council members.
    a. GSA Council members are welcome to briefly announce any upcoming events or initiatives such as GSA-led social events, campus-wide events, GSA General Elections etc. The Speaker reserves the right to limit announcements.

**F. Council Elections**

1. The GSA Council will hold elections at the meeting to fill vacant councillor-at-large seats, councillor-elected officer positions, and vacant ACB member seats.
    a. Elections to fill Standing Committee seats (not ACB) will be conducted by e-vote.
2. The Speaker will exit the chair and the GSA Nominating Committee Chair (or Vice-Chair or delegate) will assume the role of Acting Speaker.
3. The procedures for Council Elections are determined by the GSA Nominating Committee and GSA Bylaw and Policy.
4. All voting members of GSA Council are eligible to vote in Council Elections unless otherwise specified.

**G. Reports**

1. Where possible, a minimum of 30 minutes up to a maximum of 40 minutes, will be dedicated to reports from DEOs, CEOs, Standing Committee Chairs and GSA Management (referred to as a reporting member in this section).
2. Reporting members must submit their report to the Speaker and Council Coordinator by 4PM on the Wednesday prior to release of the Second Mailing.
3. Reports typically include a list of meetings attended and important project updates or discussions since the last GSA Council meeting. Discussion of interpersonal conflicts or issues should be avoided.
4. During the GSA Council meeting, the reporting member should provide a summary of their report and highlight some key points. Each reporting member should be respectful of other reporting members' time and be concise, ideally taking no more than 3 to 4 minutes for their report.
5. GSA Council members are expected to read the reports prior to the GSA Council meeting.
6. GSA Council members are welcome to ask each reporting member questions pertaining to their reports.
7. If an inaccuracy in a report is identified or raised, the reporting member will be given an opportunity to correct it or clarify the inaccuracy. Refusal or failure to correct or clarify may result in a complaint filed with the GSA ACB (or GSA Board if the reporting member is the ED, or ED if it is a staff member).

**H. Presentation Items**

1. GSA members, campus community members and stakeholders are welcome to deliver a presentation to GSA Council.

2. Presenters may be invited by a Council member with approval of the Speaker, or may directly send a request to the Speaker to give a presentation. Guidelines are outlined in *O - Submitting Items*.

3. In some cases, presentations may be scheduled at a specific time (ex. 5:45 PM). If there is a pending item when the presentation is scheduled to start, the pending item will be temporarily put on hold. If a Council Election is in progress, the current election will be completed in a reasonable amount of time before proceeding with the presentation..

4. Presentations are traditionally accompanied by a 5-10 minute question period. GSA Council members are welcome to ask questions to the presenters on matters related to the presentation.

    a. If there are outstanding questions after the allotted time elapses, GSA Council members may be asked to either hold their questions until the open question period or to directly contact the presenter.

**I. Action Items and Motions**

1. Action items encompass important or urgent business requiring the approval of GSA Council, such as bylaw and policy changes, the annual budget, ratification of the annual GSA General Election results etc. Action items are typically accompanied with a suggested motion.

2. Action items may be submitted by any Council member. Guidelines are outlined in *O - Submitting Items.*

3. Action items are presented to the GSA Council in the order by which they were received.

    a. Action items deferred from previous meetings take precedence over newer action items.

    b. Second readings of Bylaw changes take precedence over all action items.

4. Action items will be allotted an amount of time determined by the Speaker in consultation with any relevant parties (ex. the person who submitted the item, GSA President, a Standing Committee Chair, GSA Management etc.).

5. The Speaker will introduce the motion and presenter, and will call for a mover and seconder. The presenter of the motion usually will be a mover. The presenter of a motion will be given time to present the motion and explain any important or relevant details.

6. After the presenter finishes, the GSA Council will be allowed to discuss, ask questions and debate, following the Rules of Debate outlined in *Section 6 - Rules of Debate*.

7. Rarely, an action item may require a Closed Session debate. The rules outlined in *L. Closed Sessions* will also apply in such cases.

8. After the debate has concluded or if the allotted time runs out, the Speaker will call for a vote on the motion, typically via an online form.

    a. GSA Council members will be given up to 2 minutes to vote.

    b. The presenter of a motion may request to have the vote conducted by raising hands. Such a request will be honored if there are no objections from any GSA Council member.

    c. All action items must be voted on during open sessions. No items can be voted on in a Closed Session.

    d. The Speaker reserves the right to call for a vote if they determine that the discussion or debate is no longer productive or is looping on itself.

9. After a motion is voted on, the Speaker will announce the tallied results and whether the motion passes or fails. Results are based on the total votes cast, not the number of members present.

**J. Discussion Items**

1. Discussion items are platforms for members to openly discuss current affairs, upcoming projects or proposals, or to seek guidance from GSA Council.

2. Discussion items are not associated with action items or motions.

    a. However, at times an immediate action item or motion may arise from a discussion item.

    b. Motions raised during substantive discussion which may have significant impacts on the operations of the GSA may be voted on per the discretion of the Speaker in consultation with the Deputy Speaker and/or Council Coordinator. Otherwise, such a motion would be automatically deferred to the next GSA Council meeting.

3. Discussion items are subject to the Rules of Debate as described in *Section 6.*

**K. Question Period**

1. GSA Council members are welcome to ask questions that may not have been addressed during the meeting.
2. GSA Council members are welcome to ask questions about affairs related to the GSA and its operations or the broader campus community that may not have come up during the meeting.
3. GSA Council members may submit written questions to the Speaker.
    a. Questions must be received by the Speaker and Council Coordinator before the release of the Second Mailing.

**L. Closed Sessions**

1. Closed Sessions are platforms for confidential discussion pertaining to GSA affairs.
2. The Speaker must be notified if a Closed Session is to be added to the agenda before the release of the Second Mailing. The Speaker should be made aware of the expected contents of the Closed Session.
3. A motion to begin Closed Session requires a mover and a seconder followed by a simple majority vote.
4. All GSA Council members are able to participate in Closed Sessions and must abide by the Confidentiality Agreement signed at the start of their term. Guests (including GSA general members and members of the public) may not be present in Closed Sessions.
5. Information shared in Closed Sessions is strictly confidential and must not be discussed in any official or unofficial capacity outside the Closed Session.
    a. Content from Closed Sessions may be discussed in later Closed Sessions.
    b. Identified breaches in confidentiality will be dealt with in accordance with GSA Bylaw and Policy and established legal frameworks in Edmonton, Alberta and Canada.
6. Closed Sessions will be minuted and recorded, but these materials will be kept sealed and password-protected by the Speaker, Executive Coordinator and GSA Management.
7. Other than a motion to exit a Closed Session or related procedural motions, no action items or motions can be voted upon in a Closed Session.
8. All discussions in a Closed Session will continue to observe the rules outlined in *Section 6 - Rules of Debate.*

9. If an offense occurs in a Closed Session, the procedures outlined in *Section 7 - Disciplinary Action* in Council Meetings will be followed.

    a. In this scenario, ACB may be informed of Closed Session information that is only relevant to the offense in order to provide context if an ACB complaint is deemed necessary.

    b. The complainant should consult with the Speaker and GSA Management to determine what information can or cannot be disclosed.

**M. Meeting Adjournment**

1. All GSA Council Meetings are typically fixed to adjourn 3 hours after the start time (usually shorter for Special Meetings). The fixed time to adjourn will be confirmed in the agenda. A meeting can be adjourned without a vote upon reaching this time, or within 10 minutes.

2. A motion to adjourn a GSA Council Meeting more than 10 minutes ahead of the fixed time requires a simple majority vote.

    a. If all agenda items are disposed of, a vote is not necessary.

3. A motion to extend a GSA Council Meeting requires a simple majority vote.

**N. GSA Council Meeting Records**

1. All GSA Council meeting packages will be made available on the GSA website.

2. All GSA Council meetings will be audio recorded and minuted.

3. Transcripts and audio recordings of open sessions will be stored by the Speaker, Executive Coordinator and GSA Management.

    a. GSA members may request access to recordings or transcripts by contacting the aforementioned individuals.

4. GSA Council members and guests may choose to record audio or video of the meeting. It is strongly advised to inform the Speaker, and the Speaker shall inform attendees.

    a. GSA Council members can not record Closed Sessions (other than the Executive Coordinator for record-keeping purposes).

5. Transcripts and audio recordings of closed sessions will be kept sealed and password-protected by the Speaker, Executive Coordinator and GSA Management.

a. GSA Council members may request to view these materials. Requests will be assessed by the Speaker in consultation with GSA Management.

b. Distribution of these materials is strictly prohibited and identified breaches may be dealt with in accordance with GSA Bylaw and Policy and established legal frameworks in Edmonton, Alberta and Canada.

**O. Submitting Items**

1. All GSA Council members may submit items for the agenda to the Speaker subject to the guidelines outlined below.
2. Generally, any additions to the agenda must be received and approved by the Speaker by 12PM two Fridays prior to a scheduled GSA Council meeting.
    a. The Speaker, in consultation with the Council Coordinator, will review submissions to ensure no breaches of GSA Bylaw and Policy or relevant legislation.
    b. Items are generally approved but the Speaker reserves the right to reject proposed agenda items. The reason for rejection must be communicated to the person submitting the item.
        i. The submitter may amend the item based on the feedback from the Speaker and resubmit it.
        ii. Modifications to an item are permitted up until 12PM on the day of the release of the Second Mailing.
    c. Agenda items may be rejected if the upcoming GSA Council meeting agenda is deemed to be at capacity.
    d. Additions to the agenda after the First Mailing but before the Second Mailing will be reviewed and approved by the Speaker on a case-by-case basis.
    e. Additions to the agenda after the Second Mailing can only be added to the agenda by a two-thirds majority vote of GSA Council before the agenda is approved at the start of the meeting.
3. A request to deliver a presentation must be submitted to the Speaker at least two (2) weeks in advance of a GSA Council meeting.
    a. The Speaker, in consultation with the Council Coordinator, reserves the right to reject a presentation request if there are urgent action items that demand priority or if there are already other outstanding presentations.

b. A single presentation may not be longer than thirty (30) minutes long, including a question period.

c. A maximum of one 30 minute presentation OR two 15-20 minute presentations will be accepted per GSA Council meeting.

d. Longer presentations may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Speaker in consultation with the Council Coordinator depending on the urgency of the presentation, any pre-existing agenda items, and other factors.

4. Any GSA Council member may submit an action item to the GSA Council.

    a. Submissions must contain the following information:

        i. A clear suggested motion

            1. Typical wording for this may include “BE IT RESOLVED THAT…” or “THAT THE GSA COUNCIL APPROVE…”

        ii. Appropriate background or context

        iii. A clear rationale as to why the motion should be adopted.

        Should an action item be submitted with insufficient information, the Speaker in consultation with the Council Coordinator will provide aid in obtaining the necessary information. Should the submitter refuse to provide the necessary information, the Speaker may rule the submission out of order.

    b. The Speaker, in consultation with the Council Coordinator, reserves the right to reject proposed action items if there are potential breaches of GSA Bylaw and Policy or relevant legislation, if the item is best resolved by a Standing Committee as per the governance structure, or if the Speaker deems the item to be out of order. A clear reason for rejection must be communicated to the person submitting the item.

        i. This decision can be appealed. If appealed, the Deputy Speaker in consultation with the Council Coordinator will determine a final outcome.

## Section 6 - Rules of Debate

### A. Speaking Order

1. The Speaker and Deputy Speaker will track the speaking order (also known as the Speaker's List) and duration on a spreadsheet.
2. Each Council member may speak for a total of up to 5 minutes per item.
    a. This limit is waived for the presenter of the motion to allow them to address questions or concerns effectively. However, the Speaker reserves the right to limit their participation to allow other participants to speak.
    b. A Council member may not pass on unused time to other members.
    c. If a Council member has exhausted their time to speak but wishes to speak further, the Speaker may allow an additional 1 minute depending on the current state of the debate and the length of the Speaker's List.
3. Priority in speaking order will be given to members who have not spoken at that GSA Council meeting yet.
4. With respect to a debate on a motion or action item, the speaking order will alternate between for and against viewpoints as best as possible.
5. GSA Council members may call an Incidental Motions at any point by raising their hand, announcing that they'd like to raise one, then wait for the Speaker to call on them. See Section 6C - Incidental Motions.
6. Only members in attendance can participate in debate or discussion. Absent members may not participate or cast votes.

### B. Basic Steps in Debate and Discussion

1. When there is someone speaking, all others must be respectful, give their attention and listen.
2. GSA Council members who wish to speak must raise their hand or placard and wait patiently.
    a. The Speaker upon recognizing a raised hand will try to non-verbally communicate that the member is added to the Speaker's List if someone else is currently speaking.
3. The Speaker will call upon the member to speak. The member shall introduce their name and position/department before speaking.

4. Council members must address only the Speaker while participating in debate or discussion.

    a. If a Council member is directing a question to the presenter of an item or presentation, the presenter may be permitted to respond directly after even if they are not in the speaking order at the discretion of the Speaker.

5. GSA Council members must not speak to the character, motivations or intent of any other individual and must keep their arguments to the merits of the item being discussed.

6. *Ad hominem* attacks against any individual will not be tolerated.

7. GSA Council members must not shout at other members or make inappropriate gestures.

**C. Incidental Motions**

1. GSA Council members may call a Point of Order, Information, Parliamentary Inquiry, Privilege or Personal Privilege (also known as incidental motions) at any point.

2. When a Council member raises an incidental motion, the current speaking member (if there is one) will be allowed to finish their sentence and will then be required to stop speaking.

3. The Speaker will call on the member raising the incidental motion immediately. The Council member will state the reason for calling the incidental motion. The Speaker will determine a corrective course of action to address the incidental motion raised immediately.

4. Incidental motions do not require a mover or a seconder and are typically not subject to debate.

5. Incidental motions must not be used as a means to participate in the debate.

6. Point of Order is made when a Council member believes a Standing Order, GSA Bylaw and Policy, or legislation is violated, or if a member is acting out of order.

    a. Where a Council member rises on a Point of Order, citing the violation of a federal, provincial or municipal law, the member must provide a copy of that law to the Speaker at the time the Point of Order is raised.

7. Point of Information is made when a Council member has an urgent question about the current action or discussion item.

8. Point of Parliamentary Inquiry is made when a Council member has an urgent question about the rules of the meeting or procedural matters.

9. Point of Privilege is made when a Council member would like to address a problem or concern about the meeting environment, such as inability of members to hear or see, room temperature, external noise disturbances etc.

10. Point of Personal Privilege is made when a Council member would like to address a problem regarding their participation in the meeting, such as incorrect attendance record, missed opportunity to speak etc.

**D. Subsidiary Motions**

1. During the debate or discussion of a motion, subsidiary motions may arise.

2. All subsidiary motions require a mover and seconder. Votes are conducted by hands raised.

3. Subsidiary motions can only be made until at least one person (including the presenter) has spoken.

    a. There may be exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

4. Subsidiary motions are subject to debate of up to 5 minutes. This debate cannot be extended.

5. Motion to Amend is made when a Council member wishes to change some of the wording in a motion under discussion. It requires a simple majority vote.

6. Motion to Defer is made when a Council member wishes to defer an item to a later GSA Council meeting. It requires a simple majority vote.

    a. If there are outstanding items at the end of a GSA Council meeting, they are automatically deferred to the next meeting and do not require a vote.

7. Motion to Table is made when a Council member believes a motion should be set aside for a time. It requires a simple majority vote.

    a. At least one item of business must be addressed before a tabled motion can be addressed again.

8. Motion to Kill a Motion is made when a Council member believes a motion should be dropped and not addressed again. It requires a two-thirds majority vote.

9. Motion to Refer is made when a Council member believes a standing committee should deliberate further on a motion. It requires a simple majority vote.

    a. The specific standing committee must be stated when the motion is made.

10. Motion to Divide the Question is made when a Council member believes a motion should be split up into multiple motions. It requires a simple majority vote.

11. Motion to Limit the Debate is made when a Council member believes a discussion or debate should be limited to a certain amount of time or a certain number of speakers. It requires a simple majority vote.

12. Motion to Call the Question is made when a Council member believes a discussion or debate has exhausted itself and that the vote should be called. It requires a two-thirds majority vote.

13. Motion to Extend the Debate is made when a Council member believes further discussion is warranted on a particular action item. It requires a simple majority vote.

    a. A specific time increment must be provided.

14. Motion to Rescind is made when a Council member believes a previously adopted motion should be rescinded. It requires a two-thirds majority vote.

15. Motion to Reconsider is made when a Council member believes that a motion that has been voted on should be re-evaluated and voted on again.

16. Motion to Recess is made when a Council member believes a recess/break should occur. It requires a simple majority vote.

    a. The duration of the recess must be specified.

17. Motion to Adjourn is made when a Council member believes the current meeting should end. It requires a simple majority vote.

18. Motion to Extend the Time is made when a Council member believes the current meeting should be extended beyond the fixed time to adjourn. It requires a two-thirds majority vote.

    a. A proposed end time must be given.

**E. Speaker's Rulings and Prerogatives**

1. When a potential breach of the Standing Orders, GSA Bylaw and Policy or university conduct policies is identified during a GSA Council meeting, the Speaker will make a ruling on how to resolve such a matter.

2. When making a ruling on a matter, the Speaker may take up to 5 minutes to deliberate and research. The Speaker may consult with the Deputy Speaker and Council Coordinator for guidance or assistance as needed.

3. Where the GSA Standing Orders, GSA Bylaw and Policy, and Robert's Rules of Order fail to provide direction on a matter, the Speaker will make a ruling using their best judgement based on best practices or precedent.

4. Whenever the Speaker makes a ruling, they must provide an explanation. An explanation of the ruling may also be included as part of the Speaker's report in the GSA Council meeting summary.

5. Any Council member may challenge the Speaker's ruling.

    a. When a ruling is challenged, the Speaker will explain their ruling and cite any supporting evidence.

    b. The Speaker will then call a vote on whether the GSA Council wishes to overturn or uphold the ruling. Overturning the ruling requires a two-thirds majority vote.

    c. When calling the question, the Speaker will first ask for all in favour of the Speaker's ruling, then ask for all against the Speaker's ruling, then any abstentions.

6. The Speaker may ask the presenter questions during a presentation item's question period.

7. The Speaker should not participate in debate or discussion other than to provide context within GSA Bylaw or Policy, information pertaining to the GSA governance structure, procedural matters or urgent information that does not disrupt the neutral and impartial nature of the role. The Speaker should use their best judgement when addressing these matters and remain neutral and impartial at all times.

8. If the Speaker believes that an urgent matter has been overlooked on a particular motion or discussion, the Speaker may choose to participate in the debate but must first vacate the chair.

    a. If the Speaker relinquishes the chair this way, the Deputy Speaker (or delegate) will assume the chair and the Speaker will be considered a non-voting GSA Council member.

    b. The Speaker can not reassume the chair until the pending item has been disposed of.

9. If the Speaker wishes to present a motion, it must be approved by the Deputy Speaker and Council Coordinator. The Speaker must vacate the chair during the debate and discussion of their motion by the GSA Council.

10. The Speaker does not have the right to vote on motions or during Council Elections. However, if there is a tie vote on a motion/action item, the Speaker may cast a vote to break the tie.

a. Where a two-thirds majority vote is required, the Speaker may cast a vote only if it alters the outcome.

b. The Speaker may not vote to force a tie in a simple majority vote.

c. The Speaker may not vote on challenges to their rulings.

11. If a Council member believes that the Speaker is abusing the aforementioned privileges or in breach of the Standing Orders, they may move to order the Speaker to vacate the chair until the end of the current GSA Council meeting. Such a motion requires a two-thirds majority vote.

    a. GSA Council members are strongly advised to file a complaint with the ACB depending on the severity of the breach.

## Section 7 - Disciplinary Action in Council Meetings

1. When a Council member identifies disorderly conduct by another attendee, they may raise a Point of Order to address the matter.

2. If a guest is acting out of order or is being disruptive, the Speaker may order their removal from the meeting. This does not require a vote by council. A guest may not appeal this ruling.

    a. In the case of virtual attendance, the meeting host may remove the individual from the meeting room per the Speaker's order.

    b. In the case of in-person attendance, if the individual does not leave on their own, University of Alberta Protective Services may be engaged to remove them.

3. If a Council Member is deemed to be acting out of order or is being disruptive (ex. aggressive behaviour, shouting, inappropriate name-calling, attacks against individuals, use of swear words etc.) the Speaker may order the member to retract their statement and be silent for the remainder of the meeting.

4. If a Council Member continues to be disorderly despite the order, the Speaker may call a vote to expel the individual from the remainder of the meeting. This requires a simple majority vote.

    a. In the case of virtual attendance, the meeting host may remove the individual from the meeting room per the Speaker's order.

    b. In the case of in-person attendance, if the individual does not leave on their own accord, University of Alberta Protective Services may be engaged to remove them.

    c. Conditions for their return may be set (such as an apology or retraction of a problematic statement).

5. If a guest or Council Member is actively hostile or dangerous or acting in a way that compromises the safety of other attendees (including but not limited to the use of discriminatory language, use of sexual language, sexual harassment, threats of violence, use of violent gestures or other examples of misconduct outlined in the University of Alberta's Student Conduct Policy and other university-related agreements or legislation etc.), the Speaker should immediately call a recess and order the removal of the offending member immediately without a vote.

    a. In the case of virtual attendance, the meeting host may remove the individual from the meeting room per the Speaker's order.

    b. In the case of in-person attendance, if the individual does not leave on their own accord, University of Alberta Protective Services may be engaged to remove them.

c. Depending on the nature of the situation, University of Alberta Protective Services may order an evacuation from the inperson meeting venue. Should this occur, the meeting will be immediately adjourned until further notice.

d. Depending on the severity of a Council Member's offense and irrespective of a virtual or inperson environment, a report may be filed with appropriate law enforcement bodies, the Student Success and Experience office, and/or with the GSA ACB (if the member is a GSA Officer as defined in GSA Bylaw and Policy).

e. In accordance with the Canadian Human Rights Act, "the prohibited grounds of discrimination are race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability and conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted".

6. If a member of the GSA Council considers their own order to be silent or their own removal to be out of order, they may appeal and challenge it as if it were a Speaker's Ruling.

7. In the event a Departmental Councillor is found to have breached standing orders and/or faced disciplinary action, their seat may be declared vacant. The Speaker and Council Coordinator will reach out to the respective department to request the election of a new departmental councillor as soon as possible.

8. In the event a Councillor-at-Large is found to have breached standing orders and/or faced disciplinary action, their seat may be declared vacant. The Speaker and Council Coordinator will inform the Nominating Committee to initiate proceedings to fill the vacancy.

9. A GSA Officer suspended with pay by ACB under H.POL.14 must seek the Speaker's approval to attend GSA Council Meetings. Where required, the Speaker may consult with the Council Coordinator or the ACB before approving or denying such a request. If approved, the attendee will be considered a guest with no speaking privileges. GSA Council can not overturn ACB rulings.

10. A GSA Officer permanently removed from their position resulting from a formal ACB decision or a departmental councillor removed under SO.7.7 must seek the Speaker's approval to attend GSA Council Meetings. Where required, the Speaker may consult with the Council Coordinator or the ACB before approving or denying such a request. If approved, the attendee will be considered a guest with no speaking privileges. GSA Council can not overturn ACB rulings.