

Vice-President Academic

The Vice-President Academic (VP-A) is considered a part-time role and serves as the University of Lethbridge Graduate Students' Association's (GSA) lead advocate for graduate education, student engagement, and academic programming. Working closely with the President and Executive, the VP-A develops initiatives that enrich the graduate student experience, supports academic success and professional development, and represents graduate student interests on matters related to teaching, research, and university policy.

This position requires strong organizational skills, creativity, and a collaborative approach to leadership. The VP-A works extensively with Council members, university departments, faculty, and student organizations to create opportunities that strengthen the graduate community.

Upon successful election to the position, it is recommended that the incumbent begin shadowing the current Executive. Outgoing Executives will also be paid a further two weeks after the April 30th transition to allow for training and onboarding of new Executives. It is expected that outgoing Executives treat this as part of their role to ensure continuity and sustainability of the Association. After these two weeks, Executives are to refer to the Office Administrator for additional support as continued support from past Executives is not guaranteed. Furthermore, executives must be able to learn on the job as they progress into their role.

Primary Responsibilities

Academic Advocacy

- Advocate for graduate student interests on matters relating to academics, research, supervision, and student success.
- Represent the GSA on academic and university committees as assigned or requested by the President.
- Monitor emerging issues affecting graduate education and bring recommendations to Council and the Executive.
- Work collaboratively with the School of Graduate Studies and university administration to improve the graduate student experience.

Student Engagement & Programming

- Lead the planning and delivery of academic, professional development, and community-building programming throughout the year, developing a proposed schedule of events by the end of July.
- Submit a proposed budget for the schedule of events and submit Quality Initiative Programming (QIP) requests for all events.
- Oversee workshops, seminars, networking opportunities, and other initiatives that support graduate student success.
- Work with the Events Committee and Council at large to organize social and academic events throughout the year.
- Promote opportunities that encourage interdisciplinary collaboration among graduate students.
- Create and distribute promotional materials for events through Canva and social media accounts in collaboration with the Office Administrator.

Graduate Student Conference

- Plan, organize, and provide leadership and oversight for the GSA's annual graduate student conference.

- Coordinate planning timelines, committee responsibilities, budgets, sponsorship opportunities, and event logistics.
- Oversee and support Council members and volunteers involved in conference planning and delivery.
- Evaluate conference outcomes and recommend improvements for future years.

Executive Leadership

- Collaborate with the President and Vice-President Finance & Services to advance Executive priorities.
- Support Council members in the development and implementation of student-focused initiatives.
- Assist with strategic planning and organizational development.
- Provide regular reports to Council regarding ongoing projects, committee work, and emerging issues.

Communication & Collaboration

- Foster strong relationships with graduate students, faculty, university departments, and external partners.
- Encourage graduate student participation in GSA events, governance, and programming.
- Work collaboratively with student groups and campus partners to expand opportunities for graduate students.
- Promote an inclusive and welcoming graduate community.
- Respond promptly to student concerns or requests for student representation.

Qualities of an Effective Vice-President Academic

Successful Vice-Presidents Academic typically demonstrate:

- Strong organizational and project management skills.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication abilities.
- Experience coordinating events, programs and/or conferences.
- Initiative and creativity in developing new opportunities and events for students.
- The ability to work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders.
- Strong problem-solving and leadership skills.
- A passion for improving graduate education and student life.
- A commitment to inclusion, service, and student advocacy.

Time Commitment

The Vice-President Academic should expect a significant weekly commitment throughout the year. As a part-time role, incumbents should expect to spend approximately 15-20 hours per week, inclusive of meetings, prep work and VP-A projects and event planning. Furthermore, there is no academic respite while in Executive roles and therefore incumbents must be prepared to manage their time and their academic program accordingly. Responsibilities include attending Executive and Council meetings, participating in university committees, coordinating programming and events, supporting the annual graduate student conference, meeting with campus partners, and responding to student concerns. Furthermore, one important aspect of this role is sitting on any student appeals committees and this commitment varies. Workload will fluctuate throughout the year, with increased time commitments leading up to major events and the annual conference.

Authority

The VP-A's formal responsibilities, authorities, and obligations are established in **Bylaw 10** of the Graduate Students' Association Bylaws. This document provides additional guidance regarding the practical expectations of the role and does not supersede the governing Bylaws or Operating Policies.