

Minutes of the Graduate Student Association Board of Directors Meeting
 Wednesday, February 4, 2026

Attendance:

Officers & Staff:

President:	S. MacDougall	Programming:	B. Rice
Vice President:	S.A. Mirkoochi	Dir. of Operations:	S. George/ D. Staly
Treasurer:	I. Kolding	Editorial Assistance:	
		MDRF:	

Board Members:

Departmental:

Africana & Americana:	E. McDaniel	ISE:	inactive
Anthropology:	H. Murphy	Indigenous Studies:	inactive
Architecture:	U. Ramos	Information Science:	I. Blyth
Art:	absent	LAI:	M. Ma
Audiology:	H. Kerins	Linguistics:	J. Pokorski
Biochemistry:	E. Murray	Materials Design & Info:	A. Neelur
Biological Sciences:	S. Gubbi	Mathematics:	inactive
Biomedical Engineering:	R. Bing	MAE:	absent
Biostatistics:	S. Chen	Media Study:	H. Treadway
Cancer Sciences- RPCCC:	J. DiStasio (absent 1/2)	Microbiology:	J. Furfaro
Chem. & Bio. Eng:	absent	Music:	absent
Chemistry:	A. Abanikanda/ R. Hacker	Neuroscience:	absent
CSEE:	S. Marmarchinia/ J. Ahmed Saju	Nursing:	inactive
Classics:	M. Barcarolo	Occupational Therapy:	J. Novella
Communication:	I. Andreeva	Oral Biology:	M. Hasanuzzaman
Comm. Health & H.B.	D. Teng	Pharmaceutical Science:	K. Lu (absent 1/2)
Comparative Lit:	inactive	Pharm. & Tox:	inactive
CSE:	absent	Philosophy:	inactive
CSEP:	absent	Physical Therapy:	M. Hogan/ G. VanLangevelde
Earth Science:	E. Haggerty	Physics:	absent
ELP:	J. Holmes	Physiology & Biophysics:	J. Tondreau
Electrical Engineering:	S. Basu/ O. Savkina	Political Science:	S. Krzemien
English:	B. Rice	Psychology:	M. Samimifar
Environment & Sus:	L. Bargnesi	RLL:	D. Fleetwood
EEH:	M. Xu	Social Work:	B. Furer
ENS:	A. Gabel	Sociology:	M. Ngwu
Geography:	absent	Speech:	H. Getsler/ R. Santos
Global Gender Studies:	M.L. Nutting	Theatre & Dance:	V. Fish
History:	K. Kostin	Urban Planning:	C. Powell

International Clubs:

Bangladeshi:	M. Hossain	Iranian:	absent
Ghanian:	absent	Latin American:	E. Munoz
Indian:	absent	Nigerian:	C. Lawrence

Special Interest Clubs:

CSP&C Reading Group:	K. Persaud	GSPHA:	E. Morton
Graduate Poetics Group:	A.R. Wagner		

Guests:

J. Lippes	Legal
S. Caliste	Psychology
D. Kulesza	Communication

1. President Sarah MacDougall calls the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

2. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2025 Board Meeting.
 - Motion: Biomedical Engineering
 - Second: Anthropology
 - In Favor: 35; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 1
 - Motion passes

3. Announcements

- Programming
 - More Discount AMC Movie Tickets Now on Sale
 - \$5 each. 1 per UB ID. Reserve online and pick up at the UB Ticket Office in 221 Student Union.
 - February 6th, North Campus Java Junction, 11:00am to 1:00pm in 145 C&D Student Union
 - Free Tim Horton's coffee, tea and donuts for graduate students
 - February 9th, Mindfulness Monday ~ Ballet
 - Free tickets available now at the UB Ticket Office
 - February 10th, Distinguished Speaker Series presents Kevin Olusola
 - Free tickets are available now for graduate students. 1 per UB ID. Limited quantity available.
 - February 13th, South Campus Java Junction, 11:00am to 1:00pm in 105 Harriman Hall
 - Free Tim Horton's coffee, tea and donuts for graduate students.
- MDRF Spring Grant Application deadline is Friday, March 27th by 4:00pm
 - For research to be conducted between May 1, 2026 and April 30, 2027

4. Report of the President

- GSA President, Sarah MacDougall, reports on the NSF Workshop tentatively scheduled for April 9th in 330 Student Union.
 - More details are forthcoming, but the lecturer will give tips on how to help secure NSF funding amidst the recent changes to policies.
- Call for Planning Committee Members for the Career Pathways Conference
 - Looking for graduate students to help with the planning and organizing of this event that is co-sponsored by GSA. If you are interested in volunteering, please email Gina Bellavia in the Career Design Center (gmb1@buffalo.edu).
- Immigration Rights
 - We are still trying to plan a Know Your Rights workshop, or series of workshops. We have finally received responses from two organizations who are willing to assist us and hope to have dates planned soon.
 - In the meantime, there are red cards available in the GSA office in several different languages, and we are happy to print more.
 - The link for the SUNY Protocols for interaction with external law enforcement may be helpful as well:
<https://www.buffalo.edu/content/dam/www/news/KeyIssues/SUNY%20Protocols%20for%20Interacting%20with%20Outside%20Law%20Enforcement%202-10-2025.pdf>
- We are organizing a Stop the Bleed Training session for anyone interested
 - Offered free through ECMC. We hope to have one available in February, March and April. More details to follow.
- The university will be holding an Active Shooter Training session for anyone interested in attending on Tuesday, March 3, 2026 from 5:00 – 6:00pm in the Student Union Theatre. More information available at:
<https://www.buffalo.edu/police/training/active-shooter.html>
- Interprofessional Mixer is being hosted by the UB professional schools and is scheduled for Saturday, March 14th from 8:00 – 11:00pm, at The Admiral Room. Tickets are expected to be \$35 each for anyone interested in attending.
- First Aid and Trauma Kits
 - As mentioned last month, in response to concerns from students about access to basic medical supplies on campus, GSA is planning to obtain First Aid and Trauma Kits to be made available for students.
 - As a new initiative, we need the Board of Directors' approval to move some budget money around to fund the purchase of these items.
 - Proposing pulling \$3,000 of the remaining unrequested money from the Scholarly Publication funding line and \$500 of the unused funding from the Accounting Fees line to cover these initial purchases. All this funding would go unused otherwise.
 - Motion to approve the reallocation of funds for the First Aid and Trauma Kits
 - Motion: Africana & Americana Studies
 - Second: Learning & Instruction
 - In Favor: 41; Oppose: 1; Abstain: 1
 - Motion passes
- GSA Referendum Vote

- Every two years SUNY requires that we put the mandatory student activity fee up for a referendum vote on whether the fee should remain mandatory or become voluntary
 - A mandatory vote ensures funding for GSA clubs, programs and services.
 - There is no mechanism available to collect voluntary fees, so if the referendum fails, GSA will cease to exist
 - We will not be able to ask for a re-vote until Spring, 2027, so there would be no club budgets, no conference funding, no research grants, no programming, etc. offered for at least a year.
- We will be asking all club representatives to help us get the word out about the importance of the GSA Referendum vote that will be taking place along with the officer elections April 6th – 9th online.

5. Report of the Vice President

- Nothing to report.

6. Report of the Treasurer

- GSA Treasurer, Isaac Kolding, reports the GSA funding account balances
 - There are no funding requests up for approval this month, so balances are as follows:
 - Special Activity: \$10,000 to start; \$0 recommended this month; \$6,490 remaining
 - Interdepartmental Activity: \$3,000 to start; \$0 recommended this month; \$3,000 remaining
 - Symposium: \$10,000 to start; \$0 recommended this month; \$8,600 remaining
 - Scholarly Publication: \$6,000 to start; \$0 recommended this month; \$3,000 remaining
 - Community Outreach: \$3,000 to start; \$0 recommended this month; \$3,000 remaining
- Conference Funding
 - 22 requests were received in January for \$9,620.00; 22 were approved for \$9,620.00
 - 19 requests were received in February for \$8,796.99; 19 were approved for \$8,796.99
 - Beginning balance: \$225,000.00; Remaining balance: \$110,555.99
- Interdepartmental Activity Funding Highlight
 - Isaac reminds everyone that this fund was created to encourage social and academic activities that foster interdisciplinary scholarship and/or relationships between students of different departments.
 - Any group of two or more Departmental GSA clubs may request funding.
 - The formula for funding is $n \times m$ where n is the number of participating departmental clubs, and m is the lowest monetary contribution of any participating club.
 - The maximum amount for an event with only two clubs participating is \$500, and the maximum increases by \$50 for each additional participating departmental club, up to an absolute maximum of \$750 (e.g., 3 clubs are eligible for \$550, 4 clubs are eligible for \$600, etc.)

7. Old Business

- No Old Business

8. New Business

- Funding Requests
 - No funding requests were received this month.
- Election Committee Update
 - Candidate Petition Packets are now available!
 - Email the Election Committee Chair: Devaleena Kalita (devaleen@buffalo.edu)
 - Deadline for Submission is Friday, February 20th by 4:30pm
 - Must have attended two Board Meetings within the past twelve months, and must attend the February, March, and April Board of Directors meetings to be eligible.
 - Must be “physically present at University at Buffalo and available to serve the full one-year term from June 1, 2026 through May 31, 2027.”

9. Roll Call and Adjournment

- Motion to Adjourn at 6:48pm
 - Motion: Political Science
 - Second: Physiology & Biophysics
 - In favor: 43; Oppose: 1; Abstain: 0
 - Motion passes