

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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# ANNUAL PLAN





# 2023-2024 ANNUAL PLAN

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## PREAMBLE

The following strategic priorities for 2023-2024 draw from the [WLUGSA Strategic Plan 2023-2026](#). These priorities represent the culmination of the Operations Team strategic planning process, which is built on the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) core values and designed to celebrate the diverse graduate student community at Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU).

### Guiding Principles:

#### 1. Work with Intention

- We strive to intentionally put every decision we make, event we plan, and initiative we endorse through an Indigeneity, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) lens to ensure that we are breaking down systemic barriers students face at WLU and move toward creating a more supportive, inclusive, and safe environment for all students.

#### 2. Address Root Causes

- We define the impact that we want to create, and then think through the individual and systemic barriers so that our actions target root causes. This is how we offer tangible value, solutions, outcomes, and community care for graduate students.

#### 3. Strive for Humility & Transparency

- We learn by being open-minded, open to new ideas from anywhere or anyone, and open about where we can do better.

#### 4. Courageously Commit

- We explore, learn, and develop new pathways for improvement. All change begins with ourselves.

#### 5. Collaborate with Community Partners

- We create sustainable and meaningful change that requires a movement of socially-minded individuals.
- We believe in bringing collaborators together and amplifying partner experiences at WLU and in the broader community to create change.

#### 6. Dream Big & Work Hard

- We commit to creating impact through harnessing hard work, innovation, passion, and willingness to embrace the unknown.

ADDRESS BURDENS		
1. Support graduate students in overcoming financial and emotional burdens	In Process	Completed
Foster food security for all Laurier students by continuing to evolve The Mini Market, developing food security education initiatives for students, foster community partnerships in the Kitchener-Waterloo area to address the services not provided by The Mini Market or WLU and create sustainable and equitable food sourcing practices		
Work with Laurier Development to change eligibility requirements on GSA endowment scholarships from volunteer and academic based to needs based		
Work with Studentcare to explore the equity of the current Health and Dental plan (e.g., advocate for a pay-direct model, add gender affirmation care to existing plan)		
Find creative ways to use GSA resources to support students in housing crises		
Develop strategies to foster sustainable GSA, Veritas Café, and The Mini Market practices that ensure positive staff experience and decrease potential for staff burnout or turnover		
Provide additional creative and equitable support for our marginalized students to foster student success and wellbeing		
2. Advocate for graduate students in overcoming financial and emotional burdens	In Process	Completed
Advocate to ensure that all major development projects at WLU are considering and meeting needs of graduate students		
Communicate key student priorities (e.g., affordable housing, properly funded microcredentials, scholarship funding indexed to inflation) to all levels of government through local representatives and through government ministries		
Work with our Laurier and community partners to find funding and address inequity of experiences for graduate students		
Advocate to all partners to engage in graduate-student-targeted accessible communications		
Advocate that all practicums/placements undertaken by graduate students be paid		

FOSTER CONNECTIONS		
<b>1. Enhance social programming for graduate students</b>	<b>In Process</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Develop and execute community building action plans for all in-person graduate student communities		
Identify the scope and bandwidth of Veritas Café in relation to event planning and hosting to inform the community building action plan		
Continue to work towards accessible communications and marketing for all graduate students		
Build and grow the online graduate student community through Heartbeat		
<b>2. Build positive relationships with new and existing partners through our advocacy</b>	<b>In Process</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Grow new relationships with potential WLU and community partners (e.g., Vice President Academic (VPA), Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (FGPS), Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Centre for Student Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (CSEDI), Laurier Faculties and Graduate Coordinators, Academic Line Deans and Associate Deans, Region of Waterloo)		
Maintain and grow relationships with existing WLU and community partners (e.g., Vice President Finance, Vice President Student Affairs, Athletics, City of Waterloo, other members of senior administration for Waterloo and Brantford) through advocacy efforts		

<b>BOLSTER INTERNATIONALIZATION</b>		
<b>1. Improve international student experience</b>	<b>In Process</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Collaborate with International Student Support (ISS), FGPS, and Orientation & Transitions to create an orientation for international graduate students that sets them up with a sense of community and resources that will foster success		
Design and implement regular international graduate student events post-orientation that facilitate lasting connections		
Advocate for the development of 16-month programs for international graduate students that include a May intake, 4 months in residence housing with meal plans, and academic curriculum to facilitate successful transition into graduate school in Canada		
Collaborate with community and campus partners to provide international graduate students with the equitable support they need to succeed throughout their time at WLU and beyond		
<b>2. Advocate for more international learning experiences for students</b>	<b>In Process</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Build relationship with Laurier International to see what international learning opportunities exist for graduate students		
Work with FGPS and Graduate Faculty Council to gain insight into the current need and/or desire for international learning opportunities for graduate students		
Advocate to relevant partners for the creation of more opportunities for students to travel during their graduate degree		
Facilitate co-curricular international travel experiences for our students		



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