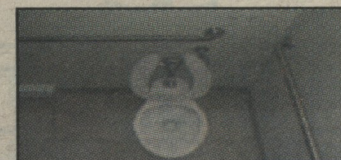


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GSA Walks Out

Graduate Student Association Takes Controversial Action by Withdrawing Representative from Council

Matt Campbell
Reporter



The Graduate Student Association has made a bold political move by withdrawing their seat in the UPEISU Student Council. This move, however, was preceded by 8 months of talks concerning worsening relations between the GSA and the Student Union.

The basic issue behind the deterioration of relations started when the Graduate students began looking to renew a 40% remittance fee which was enacted several years ago between the GSA and the Student Union. What this means, is that they would pay student union fees and 40% would then be returned to the association. This has been deemed a form of compensation due in part because these students are represented by the GSA and also because under the constitution graduate students cannot vote or run for office in Student Union elections.

Joy Elliot, Vice President Executive of GSA, claimed that a decision was made by the SU President and part of the SU executive to cancel remittance payments to the GSA. Joy Elliot and her colleagues believe that they should have a different membership than

undergraduate students at UPEI. She explained, "we recognize fully the services provided for us by the Student Union, we just don't feel it's fair to pay the same fees as undergraduate students."

According to Clare Henderson, Student Union President, she claims that they're dealing with approximately seventy-four full-time graduate students. Clare sharply added, "the remittance in 2001 was to be reviewed on an annual basis. The following year they asked for 100%."

Elliot flat-out denied the Henderson's conjecture.

"We did not ask for 100% in 2002. We asked for 40% and received it. The remittance was not to be reviewed on an annual basis at that time, there was, as stated in the motion, to be a committee formed to make the remittance a more permanent fixture. This committee was never formed. In 2003 we received, after some

negotiation, another 40% remittance. In 2004, we were told there would be no remittance..."

Joy continued, "we have no intentions of a 100% remittance while we are still Associate members within the Student Union."

However, in 2004 GSA had asked the SU to set aside 100% of the fees in case GSA separated from the Student Union before September.

"Last summer the GSA decided to take initiatives to separate from the SU in June should talks fail," claimed Elliot. The was an vote held by members present where 27 out of 31 members voted to begin an incorporation process, thus, following the road to severing ties with the UPEISU.

Elliot also pointed out that there were severe inconsistencies concerning the Executive's actions and the SU

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