



Graduate Student SOCIETY

Together we achieve more

Graduate Student Society Budget Proposal 2024-2025

Our Vision



*Together
we
achieve
more*

The Graduate Student Society (GSS) enhances the experience of graduate and post-graduate students by providing opportunities for social engagement, academic support and career development. The GSS Executive is the advisory committee and a representative voice for graduate students in the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS).

Main Objectives

1. Increase graduate and post-graduate students' involvement within SGPS by forming the Graduate Student Society (GSS) and focusing heavily on those students enrolled in graduate and post-graduate programs at Ontario Tech University
2. Provide a space on-campus for the GSS to host events, network, and take needed mental breaks from academics and work life
3. Organize on-campus conferences to present the current work being done by researchers and/ or invited speakers
4. Survey members of the GSS to gauge the interests, concerns, and needs of graduate and post-graduate students; by communicating with SGPS faculty, can help improve graduate student experience
5. Maintain effective communication channels with current graduate students and alumni by posting current events on social media platforms and opening direct communication lines on-campus through the GSS Executive

Audience

Our target audience is primarily the graduate students, post-graduate students and faculty members within SGPS. This includes the faculties of Business and Information Technology, Education, Engineering and Applied Science, Health Science, Science, and Social Science and

Humanities. We will also secondarily target undergraduate students interested in pursuing graduate studies. This will allow us to provide prospective students with insight into the graduate student experience, and encourage students to continue studying at Ontario Tech University.

Budget Proposal

1. GSS Events

1.1. Events requiring funding:

1.1.1. **Welcome events:** An open space (atrium) is reserved on-campus to set up information booths. The aim of these events are to provide a place for in-person interactions with graduate students, especially newly enrolled students and associated faculties. This is an opportunity to learn about the services the university provides, become a GSS member and to ask questions to the GSS executive, SGPS and other participants. Coffee and snacks can be provided.

1.1.2. **Engagement (social) events:** A room or space is reserved on-campus to host themed social events. Hosted by the executive, these events are social gatherings for GSS members. The themes are variable, depending on student request and high activity. Some examples of engagement events can be game nights, trivia, pizza, barbecues, food and drink mixers, sports, outdoor activities. Engagement events also include conferences, invited speaker talks and research presentations held at the university.

1.1.3. **Ticketed Events/ Field Trips:** An event that is hosted off-campus. The executive will reserve a space and define ticket price dependent on interest by RSVP. Participation of the event will require purchase of a ticket and signing a consent or liability form. Transport may be by bus, cab or carpool. A lunch/ dinner may be included in the ticket if a catering discount can be provided by the event services or funded by SGPS.

1.2. Events requiring low to no funding

1.2.1. **Collaboration Events:** Executive helps promotion of all events and workshops hosted by SGPS. The GSS may participate in the organization and hosting of collaborative events with SGPS, PSAC, OTSU clubs and societies.

1.2.2. **Social Media and/ or Virtual Engagement Events:** Build a large online presence to promote participation of virtual or part-time graduate students or South Campus students.

Table 1. Outline of Funded Events by Semester

Semester	Date	Event Type
Fall	September 5th - September 30th	Welcome event
	October 1st - December 23rd	Engagement event

Winter	January 1st - January 30th	Welcome event
	February 1st - May 30th	Engagement event or field trip
	April 1st - April 30th	Engagement event or ticketed event
Summer	May 1st - August 30th	1-2 engagement events

2. Potential Event Ideas

- **Graduate End of Year Party:** An end of the academic year celebration for graduate and postdoctoral students hosted at an approved off campus location. Students will be provided with discounted food options and/or a selection of free appetizers. This will be accomplished in collaboration with the on campus restaurant 2200.
- **Social Gatherings:** Plan social events like game nights, movie nights, or themed parties to help students relax and connect.
- **Cultural and Diversity Celebrations:** Host events that celebrate the diversity of our graduate student body, such as cultural festivals, food tastings, or international film screenings.
- **Guest Speaker Series:** Invite notable speakers, alumni, or experts in various fields to give talks and engage in discussions with graduate students.
- **Book Clubs and Discussion Groups:** Start book clubs or discussion groups focused on literature, current events, or academic topics.
- **TEDx-style Talks:** Host TEDx-style talks featuring graduate students or faculty members sharing their research and ideas.
- **Graduate Student Awards Ceremony:** Recognize outstanding achievements and contributions of graduate students within the university community.
- **Field Trips:** Off-campus trips that may be social or educational. Social trips may be to locations such as Neb's Fun World in Oshawa for an evening of bowling and arcade games. Educational trips would be to research facilities or industry partners related to students' fields of study.
- **Thesis/Dissertation Writing Retreats:** Offer writing retreats or workshops where students can focus on their research and writing in a distraction-free environment.
- **On-boarding workshops:** Events which give new graduate students key information to aid in their success, meet other students, and gain insight from upper-year graduate students.

Table 2. Sample Plan of Events and Estimated Costs

Event	Location	Target Timeline	Expense details	Projected Total Costs
Fall 2024				

GSS x SGPS Graduate Orientation	ERC Atrium	Sept 5th	- free	
Welcome Graduate Students!	Reserve fireside room	mid September	- Promotion/ branding - Coffee & snacks	\$200
Pizza Party	On campus, reserved space or classroom	Mid semester	- Pizza & drinks - Rentals for games or space	\$400
Total Semester Cost of Events:				\$500
Winter 2025				
Graduate "Icebreaker" Spring Social	On campus, reserved space or classroom	Mid-late March	- Pizza and drinks	\$400
Graduate <i>End of Year Party</i>	Reserved space and transition to 2200 North	Mid-late April	- Complimentary dinner - Non-alcoholic drink ticket - Games & prizes	\$800
Total Semester Cost of Events:				\$1200
Summer 2025				
Outdoors Field Day	Polonsky Commons	May 1st-August 30th	- Food (burgers or pizza) & drink - Sports equipment rentals from campus and recreation center	\$300
Friday Themed Night: Board games, video games, trivia	On-campus, reserved space or classroom	May 1st-August 30th	- Food & drinks	\$200

Total Semester Cost of Events:				\$500
Throughout Academic Year				
Games Night	Reserved Fireside Reading Room	Monthly	- Light snacks	\$200 over the year
Total Cost of Events:				\$200

3. Summary of proposal

The aim for an academic year is to have a total of 5-6 events for the GSS, hosted by the executive: 2-3 events for each of the fall and winter semesters, and 1-2 events for the summer semester. Based on estimated costs, the GSS would need \$2500 to be able to provide graduate students with the previously outlined events. In addition to events, we request an additional \$300 per year for the purchase of branded event equipment, which would include items such as banners, table cloths, and signage. This would bring the **total yearly budget to \$2800.**

Graduate students currently pay the OTSU \$43.48 per student, per semester (fees for OTSU building operation and societies, insurance paid separately). However, the OTSU does not provide the types of events and services outlined in this document to graduate students specifically. We would recommend that a portion of the requested funding comes from these fees that graduate students already pay. The GSS will also look for further funding through collaborative events with SGPS and PSAC, to help maximize student opportunities.

These funds would allow the GSS to improve both the social and academic lives of graduate students at Ontario Tech University. This allocation will support the organization of social events, networking sessions, and various activities aimed at enriching the graduate student experience. We believe that this contribution from SGPS will directly enhance the quality of life for our members and foster a sense of belonging within the university community.