

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS®



Bhavya Kanyadara for GSC President

“Advocate. Connect. Empower – Together, We Lead!”



GSC | GRADUATE
STUDENT
COUNCIL
"THE OFFICIAL GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT"



VOTE

Bhavya Kanyadara

PRESIDENT

GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

Bhavya Kanyadara for GSC President
“Advocate. Connect. Empower – Together, We Lead!”

Fellow Graduate Students,

I am **Bhavya Kanyadara**, and I am excited to run for **President of the Graduate Student Council (GSC)**. As a current GSC Director, I have worked closely with graduate students from diverse backgrounds, learning the unique challenges we face. If elected, I will build on my experience to make GSC more accessible, responsive, and focused on advocating for all graduate students.

As GSC President, I will ensure that graduate student concerns are represented at every level of the university. I will actively advocate for our needs at the President’s Cabinet, Graduate Council, Faculty Senate, and all relevant university committees. Every graduate student deserves to be heard, and I will prioritize addressing issues such as academic policies, student services, and campus resources. I will also establish ad-hoc committees or standing GSC committees if needed, to tackle specific challenges and ensure that no issue is left unaddressed.

My focus will also be on making GSC an inclusive body that listens to and represents the diverse graduate student community at UNT. Each group has its own set of needs, and I am committed to making sure those concerns are heard and addressed, whether through improving campus resources, advocating for better student services, or creating more opportunities for professional development.

I will preside over all GSC Senate meetings, ensuring smooth coordination of our activities and facilitating open, productive discussions. I will appoint passionate and dedicated directors who will represent our graduate community on external committees and advocate for our interests. Furthermore, I will ensure the annual budget request for the Student Service Fee reflects the priorities of graduate students, allocating resources in the most effective way possible.

With a commitment to **Advocacy, Connection, and Empowerment**, I will lead GSC with purpose and transparency, always focused on serving the best interests of the UNT graduate student body. I humbly ask for your support to help continue this important work.

Bhavya Kanyadara

Candidate for President, The Graduate Student Council
University of North Texas.

My Understanding of the Graduate Student Council

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) at the University of North Texas is the official governing body representing graduate students, advocating for their needs, interests, and concerns. Established in 1968 as a communication channel between graduate students, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the Graduate Council, GSC officially became the graduate student government in 2015 through a student referendum. Its mission is to enhance the graduate student experience by focusing on advocacy, connection, and empowerment.

GSC operates through three branches: the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches. The Executive Branch, consisting of 13 members, is responsible for the daily administration and execution of legislation passed by the Senate. The President of GSC plays a key role in overseeing activities, representing graduate students to the university, appointing directors, and managing the budget.

The Legislative Branch, or the Senate, includes 55 Senators representing graduate students respective to Colleges, serving as the primary platform for discussing and addressing graduate student issues.

The Judicial Branch comprises a Supreme Court of seven Justices appointed by the GSC President and confirmed by the Senate, ensuring judicial oversight. Additionally, an Advocate General, appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, serves a one-year term to assist in legal and procedural matters.

Beyond governance, GSC is committed to supporting graduate students through various initiatives. It collaborates with university offices, administrators, and faculty to advocate for policy changes and better student services. GSC funds graduate student organizations to facilitate social and academic engagement and contributes \$20,000 annually to the Graduate Student Travel Grant, managed by the Toulouse Graduate School. At the national level, GSC participates in advocacy through its Legacy membership in the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS), ensuring that UNT graduate students have a voice in broader policy discussions.

In essence, GSC plays a vital role in fostering leadership, professional development, and interdisciplinary collaboration among graduate students. Through structured governance and active advocacy, it serves as the primary representative body ensuring that graduate students' voices are heard at UNT and beyond.

Graduate Student Council (GSC) Budget and Financial Process

The budget for the Graduate Student Council (GSC) is allocated annually by the Student Services Fee Committee after a formal hearing. The GSC has one voting representative in this committee, appointed by the GSC President. The chair of the Student Services Fee Committee is the Student Government Association (SGA) President. Once the budget allocation is received, the Executive Committee provides approval for the budget. Finally, need the GSC Senate approval.

The budget is then utilized for various purposes, including expenditures categorized by the inter-departmental order (IDO), utilizing the Chart of Accounts number. For certain purchases, the GSC uses the PCard, which is provided by The TGS. The PCard is used for approved operational and event-related expenses, adhering to university financial guidelines.

This structured financial process ensures that the GSC budget is allocated efficiently and transparently, contributing to the support and advocacy of graduate students at UNT.

Advocacy at the University level :

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) at the University of North Texas plays a crucial role in representing graduate students across various university committees. These committees serve as platforms where GSC representatives engage in decision-making processes, advocate for student needs, and contribute to policies that impact graduate education and student life. The GSC President appoints

representatives to numerous committees that address academic policies, student services, campus sustainability, and financial allocations.

These include:

- Committee on Student Conduct
- Fine Arts Series Committee
- Grad Advisors
- Grad Council
- Graduate Student Library Ambassador
- Student Services Fee (SSF) Committee
- Transportation Advisory Committee
- Union Board of Directors
- We Mean Green Fund
- International Students Committee
- Faculty Distinguished Teaching Professor Committee
- Faculty Senate
- Student Innovation Advisory Board
- Student Leader Advisory Committee
- TGS Travel Award Committee
- Grad Block Party 2025 Planning Committee
- Campus Safety Committee
- Student Media Committee

While GSC representatives serve on these committees, the **President's Cabinet, Steering Committee, and President's Student Advisory Committee** are exclusively represented by the GSC President, providing direct access to university leadership. Through these roles, the GSC ensures that graduate student interests remain at the forefront of university discussions, advocating for academic, financial, and professional needs while fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for graduate education.

Building a Stronger Graduate Student Council

Commitment to Advocate, Connect, and Empower

Leading the Voice of 13,000 + Graduate Students at UNT

As **President of the Graduate Student Council (GSC)**, I have the immense responsibility and privilege of representing **13,000+ graduate students** across the University of North Texas. The GSC is the **official graduate student government**, and my mission is to ensure that every graduate student's voice is **heard, respected, and acted upon**.

Graduate students are a vital part of UNT's academic and research community, and their concerns deserve to be addressed at every level of decision-making. My leadership is driven by a commitment to **advocacy, transparency, and accountability**. Through effective governance, I will ensure that GSC remains a **powerful force for change**, actively working to enhance academic policies, student services, campus resources, and professional development opportunities.

My Journey in GSC

Before running for GSC President, I had the opportunity to serve as the GSC Director for Marketing (2024-2025). In this role, I focused on increasing student engagement, promoting GSC initiatives, and developing communication strategies to ensure that graduate students were well-informed and involved in our activities. I also assisted the Vice President of Communications and Marketing (VPCM) and the President with marketing key events such as the **3MT** competition and the **VPAF Special Elections**. Additionally, I played a role in planning this year's **Graduate Student Appreciation Week**, ensuring that the events were well-publicized and accessible to all graduate students. Through these experiences, I learned the importance of effective messaging, engagement strategies, and transparent leadership. These skills have been pivotal in shaping my approach to

my presidential campaign, and they will continue to guide me as I work to make the GSC a stronger and more impactful organization for all graduate students.

In addition to my work as Director for Marketing, I've also had the privilege of contributing to several university committees and focus groups, which has deepened my understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the university. I participated in the **UNT Risk Management Focus Group**, the **Galloway Research Services Graduate Student Focus Group**, and the **UNT Strategic Planning Committee**. These experiences have given me valuable insights into university policies and initiatives, and I am eager to bring this knowledge into my presidency. My goal is to create a more accessible, responsive, and inclusive GSC that listens to and advocates for the diverse needs of all graduate students at UNT.

Why I'm running for GSC President?

I am running for President of the Graduate Student Council (GSC) with a clear vision to transform GSC into a more accessible, inclusive, and responsive body that truly advocates for the diverse needs of all graduate students at UNT. Having served as the GSC Director for Marketing, I've seen how impactful a strong, unified council can be in shaping our academic, professional, and campus experiences. My goal is to amplify graduate student voices, ensure all concerns are addressed, and foster a community where every student has the resources and support they need to thrive.

I am committed to building a fully functioning GSC with active branches, including the much-needed Judicial Branch while enhancing transparency, student services, and professional development opportunities. With your trust, we can make GSC a powerful, effective force that leads with purpose, inclusivity, and a shared vision for graduate student success.

My Vision for GSC

“Advocate. Connect. Empower – Together, We Lead!”

I envision GSC as a **strong, responsive, and action-oriented** organization that serves as a bridge between graduate students and university leadership. By fostering a culture of engagement, support, and clear communication, we will strengthen the role of graduate students in shaping UNT’s future.

- ◆ **Advocacy** – Every graduate student should feel that their voice matters. I am dedicated to representing graduate student concerns whether related to academic policies, student services, financial aid, research support, or campus resources on university committees, the President’s Cabinet, and beyond.
- ◆ **Inclusivity** – UNT’s graduate student body is incredibly diverse, and every student should feel represented and supported. I will work to foster belonging and address the unique challenges faced by students from all backgrounds and disciplines.
- ◆ **Transparency** – Students deserve to know how their government operates. I will implement policies that ensure open communication, regular updates, and clear decision-making processes, allowing all graduate students to see how GSC is working for them.
- ◆ **Accountability** – As the official graduate student government, GSC must serve with integrity. I will ensure that all GSC representatives, officers, and senators are held accountable for their roles, setting clear expectations for attendance, performance, evaluation, and student engagement.

Empowering Graduate Students for Success

At its core, my presidency is about **empowering graduate students** to thrive in their academic, professional, and personal pursuits. Whether through **advocating for fair academic policies, expanding professional development opportunities, or fostering a stronger graduate community**, I am committed to ensuring that every student has the resources and support they need to succeed.

The **Graduate Student Council is your voice, your advocate, and your support system**. Together, we can build a GSC that truly represents and uplifts every graduate student at UNT.

Let's make GSC stronger—together.

Focus Areas and Strategic Initiatives

1. Advocacy and Representation: My primary commitment as GSC President will be to advocate for graduate students. I will:

- **Ensure graduate student voices are represented in key university decisions.**

This means advocating for academic policies that reflect the needs of graduate students, ensuring equitable access to resources, and influencing decisions regarding student services.

- **Attend and participate in key university committees.**

As GSC President, I will serve on the President's Cabinet, Graduate Council, Faculty Senate, and any other relevant bodies. This will give graduate students a seat at the table and allow me to effectively represent our concerns. I will use these opportunities as much as to advocate and support the needs of the graduate students.

- **Champion academic policies that align with graduate student needs.**

I will focus on policies related to student success, funding opportunities, and academic support services to ensure they are optimized for graduate students.

2. Inclusivity and Diversity: Ensuring an inclusive and diverse graduate community is central to my mission. I will:

- **Foster a culture of inclusivity within GSC.**

I will ensure that all voices, regardless of program, discipline, or background, are heard. This will be achieved through outreach initiatives, listening sessions, and regular engagement with different graduate student groups.

- **Create targeted initiatives for underrepresented groups.**

This could include providing additional resources or organizing events that address the specific needs of diverse graduate students, including international students, STEM, and students from different cultural backgrounds.

3. Organizational Development and Strengthening GSC Operations:

A well-functioning GSC is the backbone of any successful student body. My plan is to make the GSC a fully operational body with all branches working to their full potential. This includes:

- **Re-establishing the Judicial Branch.**

A key element of GSC that has been underutilized in the past is the Judicial Branch. I will focus on forming this branch to ensure that graduate students have a formalized platform for conflict resolution and issue mediation. I will ensure a transparent and fair selection process for judicial members.

- **Clear delegation of responsibilities.**

I will ensure that each director, senator, and committee member knows their roles, the expectations of them, and the resources they need to be successful. This will create a more streamlined and effective organization.

- **Operational excellence.**

I will implement best practices for project management, ensuring that GSC initiatives are carried out efficiently and that there are clear lines of communication between all involved.

4. Student Success: Graduate student success goes beyond academics. It encompasses everything from well-being to professional development. As President, I will:

- **Advocate for more professional development opportunities.**

This will include networking events, skill-building workshops, and career services specifically tailored to graduate students.

- **Ensure access to resources.**

Whether it's mental health services, research funding, or academic support, I will work to ensure that graduate students have access to everything they need to succeed.

- **Promote work-life balance.**

By organising workshops on stress management, career development, and networking, I will promote an environment where graduate students can thrive both academically and personally.

Goals, Implementation, and Conclusion

Goals for 2025-2026:

- **100% Graduate Student Representation:** I will aim to fill all 55 seats in the GSC Senate. This will help ensure full representation across all graduate programs and disciplines. I will aim to make all the representatives from GSC attend all the GSC-affiliated committees to advocate for the needs and interests of the graduate students.
- **High Senate Attendance:** I will implement strategies to ensure that the GSC Senate meets regularly and that every senator actively participates. This will include fostering engagement and emphasizing the importance of each senator's role.
- **Judicial Branch Formation and Functionality:** One of the key promises I make is to ensure that the Judicial Branch is not only formed but operational by the end of my first Semester.
- **Fully Operational GSC:** All GSC branches will be fully functional with dedicated leaders and clear objectives. This will lead to a more effective organization overall.

Implementation:

- **Clear Leadership Structure:** I will work closely with the GSC Executive Committee to ensure that all roles are filled and that there is clarity on what is expected from each officer and director.
- **Transparent Communications:** I will ensure that we release the GSC newsletter every month with all the documents, all the discussions, and all the things that are happening in and around the graduate student council.
- **Effective Communication Channels:** I will prioritize communication between senators, directors, and graduate students. This will involve regular updates on ongoing projects, surveys for feedback, and a more open and accessible GSC leadership.
- **Regular Events and Outreach:** I will increase engagement with graduate students by hosting regular forums, events, Townhalls and surveys to ensure we stay connected with the broader graduate student body. These efforts will foster a more inclusive and responsive GSC.

- **Budget:** Budget usage involves maintaining strong budget discipline to effectively plan all events and necessary operational expenses. I will ensure that the budget planning will happen for the whole year making all the necessary things are being covered and funded.

Funding support for graduate students through scholarships and travel grants is allocated annually with \$20,000, which is given to the Toulouse Graduate School.

- **3MT Competition:** Increasing marketing efforts and ensuring that all colleges are involved by engaging the Deans of respective colleges for more student participation. Encouraging student participation by educating them on how the competition will benefit their academic and career paths.
- **Tabling:** Tabling plays a key role in interacting with graduate students to understand their needs, perspectives, and interests. It helps raise awareness about the Graduate Student Council and its events while providing an opportunity to gather direct student feedback.
- **Event Management & Planning:** Proper event management is crucial, especially for Graduate Student Appreciation Week. This is a national initiative by NAGPS and an important opportunity to recognize graduate students' efforts across UNT. We can enhance this event by introducing GSC awards for graduate students who have excelled in different fields, highlighting UNT's brand at both national and international levels.
- Every year, we collaborate with the Center for Belonging and Engagement for Appreciation Week, also reaching out to more departments and organisations. Strengthening these collaborations will enhance the impact of this event. Additionally, working with UPC and various UNT departments will further elevate Graduate Student Appreciation Week 2025.
- **Workshops:** Monthly workshops in collaboration with the Career Center, Toulouse Graduate School and different departments, totalling approximately 15 per year. These workshops will focus on professional and leadership development, career readiness, and employer-related skills to help graduate students secure top positions after graduation in their career path.
- **Collaborations:** Establishing strong collaborations with all university departments and organizations to enhance GSC's connections and

networking across the university. Strengthening these partnerships will ensure better support for graduate students.

- **Graduate Student Organizations:** Supporting graduate student organizations is an essential task for the Graduate Student Council. Although we may not have sufficient funding to directly support them, we can collaborate with these organizations and find ways to assist them in making their events successful through GSC partnerships.
- **New Improvements:** After being elected as GSC President, I plan to introduce new improvements to make the Graduate Student Council more accessible and closer to graduate students.
- **Meet the President Initiative:** The executive team will be present in the GSC office for 20 hours per week. In addition, I propose dedicating a biweekly event, “Meet the President,” where students can directly connect with the GSC President. This will allow students to voice concerns, discuss problems, and suggest improvements for the university. The GSC President will use these discussions to advocate for students in organizational meetings, focus groups, committee meetings, and administrative-level discussions.
- **Ad Hoc Committee (Graduate Student Advisory Committee):** Forming an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of graduate students from all different fields, groups, and departments. This committee will include representatives such as teaching assistants, instructional assistants, PhD scholars, research assistants, dining employees, student employees, graduate employees, student organization leaders, and students excelling in leadership or sports. This 12-15-member committee will be tasked with advising the GSC President on graduate student concerns, problems, and needs. Unlike the Senate, which consists of departmental or college representatives, this committee will be formed based on the diverse groups students belong to. The committee will provide detailed reports on specific issues faced by different graduate student groups. If the GSC President needs insights on graduate student employment, teaching assistants, or other student concerns, this committee can provide immediate feedback. These reports will help the GSC President and executive team advocate effectively at university-level meetings. The committee will meet monthly or bimonthly and may be presided over by the GSC President or an elected chair.

This committee will discuss graduate student concerns related to their respective fields, such as research, employment, teaching assistantships, and student organizations. It will play a crucial role in ensuring that all graduate student voices are heard and addressed effectively at UNT.

Closing statement :

In this election, your voice holds the power to shape the future of the Graduate Student Council (GSC). Over the past year, we have worked tirelessly to build a GSC that listens, advocates, and delivers real change for graduate students. But our work is far from over. With your support, I am committed to strengthening GSC's presence, ensuring every student's concerns are addressed, and making our organization more transparent, inclusive, and responsive. Together, we can expand resources, improve academic policies, and create more opportunities for professional and personal growth.

The GSC is a powerful tool for creating change, but it requires strong, focused leadership to be truly effective. With my experience, passion, and vision for our graduate student community, I am confident that I can lead the GSC to new heights. I ask for your trust, your support, and most importantly, your vote. Let's continue the momentum and make our voices heard.

Vote Bhavya Kanyadara for GSC President!