



GSS Council Meeting Minutes

August 15, 2013

GSS Ballroom

Present:

Jeff Abeysekera, Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle, Adriana Byrne, Barak Caracheo, Valeria Castellanos, Ambrose Chan, Colúm Connolly, Christopher Dickman, Yvonne Dzal, Michael Fairchild, Tobias Friedel, George Furey, Jack Hickmott, Gwendolyn Huber, Vivian Lam, Colleen Lau, Yuanyuan Liu, Amir Maleki, Kristan Marchak, Natalie Marshall, Lili Meng, Cynthia Min, Adriana Osa-Gomez, Hafizur Rahman, Christopher Roach, Matt Sacheli, Kenji Scott, Rob Teagle, Sima Valizadeh, Tom Woodsworth, Min Xia.

Regrets:

Baseer Abdul, Julianne Jagdeo, Craig Kerr, Jan Lüdert, Ingrid Olson, Jahidur Rahman, Paul Save, Jens Vent-Schmidt, Daniel Wood.

A. Call to Order and Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 5:38pm.

1. BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

MOVED: Tobias Friedel SECONDED: Christopher Dickman

PASSED

B. Introductions

C. Presentations to Council

(10 minutes, 5 minutes for questions)

- **Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Network (IGSN)**, Kevin Mehr

The IGSN, a student-run organization for graduate students studying programs offered by the College of Interdisciplinary Studies, aims to offer graduate students the opportunity to network through initiatives such as sponsoring sports teams, social events, and a student online journal. The IGSN is a voluntary network. In order to become a member, students are encouraged to join the email group. The IGSN also has a limited travel fund available to students to assist with supplementing travel expenses. There are opportunities to work on the online student journal and publishing. The IGSN intends to coordinate with the GSS to advertise graduate student initiatives. Currently, the core member base is from the College for Interdisciplinary Studies but the Network is hoping to expand to include members from other programs.

It was asked what the Network's Operating Fund is, to which the response was \$10,000 provided by the VP Academic office, and \$10,000 for the online student journal (\$20,000 in total).

The IGSN will be hiring graduate students for the Journal, as well as a Marketing Coordinator.

It was asked by a former College for Interdisciplinary Studies student whether the main focus of the Journal was interdisciplinary science only. The response was, each journal has a 'theme' and if there are enough articles relating to that theme then they will be published.

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It was asked what kind of articles / papers have been published thus far to which the response was largely science based articles, and some planning papers.

It was asked whether the IGSN was open to students from programs outside of Interdisciplinary programs and whether there is a strategy in place to expand beyond this. The response was that the IGSN will be using Orientation to create awareness. The network will also target individual graduate programs.

It was asked how students can sign up to the IGSN to which the reply was via email or at the Clubs Day / Coffee Social during Orientation. The IGSN will also hold a social in mid-September to encourage new members.

It was asked whether the IGSN was represented in Orientation handbook. They were invited to be featured, pending the submission of relevant text and logo.

- **FIRE Talks**, Barak Caracheo

Facilitated Interdisciplinary Research Exchange

FIRE Talks aim to research and address different topics from different perspectives, and encourages collaboration amongst graduate students.

They are in the process of developing upcoming topics based on the areas of study and interests of current graduate students. Councillors were asked to detail their area(s) of research on the handout provided, which will be used to formulate topics.

It was asked whether the survey was available online, to which the response was they will be planning until the end of August and therefore nothing is available online as yet.

It was asked if the program was available to graduate students of all levels, to which the response was yes.

- **Academic and External Affairs Committee Survey**, Yvonne Dzal

The Academic and External Affairs Committee have developed a short survey for the purpose of collecting information about Graduate Secretary /Graduate Program Administration staff. Currently, the GSS does not necessarily have a contact for each Graduate Program. This survey, to be taken by Councillors to their own program office, will assist in creating a database of contacts. This will be beneficial in the recruitment of more councillors and in reaching out to departments who do not currently have a councillor.

Councillors have been asked to have the survey completed by the Graduate Secretary in their program office, and return it at the next Council Meeting.

This survey was not sent via email for the purpose of developing face-to-face rapport.

The aim is to strengthen relationships with Graduate Administration staff.

15 surveys have been completed thus far.

D. Executive Remarks

(3 minutes)

President – Christopher Roach

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- Met with the President and Vice President to discuss GSS plans, particularly graduate student development and funding.
- UBC Mentoring Program; in the process of preparing a funding application for submission.
- Pilot Research Project; engages undergraduate Science students to assist with research / laboratory work.
- CUPE 2278; working on re building a relationship with the President.
- Student Union Development Summit; made new CASA connections, discussed graduate student issues at different institutions
- GSO Caucus; planning a caucus for all graduate student organizations aimed at expanding GSS communication, networking, sharing information.

Vice-President Academic & External Affairs – Colúm Connolly

- Attended SUDS; discussed issues affecting graduate students across different Universities
- Alliance of British Columbia Students; recruitment of new members
- National Director of CASA to attend Council in January/February
- AMS; more resources
- Emergency fund requests, monitor increases in need/applications

Vice-President Administration – Tobias Friedel

- Office upgrades continuing; recently obtained a quote for glass tops to protect the new desks
- Hiring; Government Relations Officer
- Code and Policy; resolutions have not yet been passed, need to be amended to meet the required standards

Vice-President Finance – Lili Meng

- Have been working closely with the GSS Accountant
- Bad debts are under control
- Finalizing actuals
- Preparation for the budget; meet and discuss with each department head
- Emergency funds request from the Department of Astronomy
- Visa receipts and statements; improving the process

Vice-President Services – Yuanyuan Liu

- Orientation volunteers have been recruited; 7 super volunteers and 49 volunteers,
- USB's have arrived and need to be uploaded
- Family Day at Acadia has been finalized. This is the first time such an event has been run
- Orientation Olympics
- Director of Intercultural Understanding will be running workshops to promote intercultural understanding; making friends, business manner, promoting your academics
- Marine Drive, which houses 200 graduate student will be hosting / promoting activities.

E. Committee, Taskforce, and Operations Reports

(3 minutes)

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Academic & External Committee – Adriana Byrne

- Attended the SUDS
- Discussion about whether to become members of the ABC
- Reached quorum in AcEx
- CASA Director to visit and liaise with the GSS in the coming months
- Second emergency funding application received from the same student; may be eligible for Canadian loans and therefore the application was not approved.

Code and Policy Committee – Tobias Friedel (on behalf of Julienne Jagdeo)

- Still working on having the Bylaws updated
- Policy Manual revision; section by section approach by the whole committee
- Committee / membership reform
- Identify problems and solutions; encourage Councillors to read over the Policy and provide feedback.

Executive Oversight Committee – Jeff Abeysekera

- Reports from Executives have been received including roles for the year and deadlines. These are being evaluated.
- Finalising the performance review document; removing essay questions and replacing them with shorter answer questions.
- A Flow Chart is being designed for processing informal disputes.

Health and Dental Plan Committee – Christopher Roach (on behalf of Sancho McCann)

- Christopher Roach was appointed Chair of the Health and Dental Plan Committee
- The next Council meeting will involve an in-depth discussion of the current Plan

House Finance Committee – Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle

- The Committee has received two special event fund requests. Both were denied as they did not fulfil all of the requirements.
- Focus on opening the pub and costs surrounding this venture
- Commercial bookings continue to be a strong contributor to GSS revenue

Human Resources Committee – Colleen Lau

- Currently in the process of creating a Hiring Handbook; a in some cases hiring can be delegated to other committees so the handbook would be a useful guide
- In the process of hiring a Government Relations Officer
- The Committee will also be rehiring a Communications Coordinator
- The Committee will be hiring an Information Officer
- The Orientation Coordinator contract has been extended due to the demand of the role
- There will be a Standardization of all contracts
- Continuing to work on Exit forms and Fact Sheets

Internal Review Task Force – Tobias Friedel

- Due to conflicting schedules, the Committee has not met since the last Council meeting

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- The survey for the Administration Department was sent today
- Replies are due a week from Monday. Thereafter, there will be an evaluation of responses.

Services Committee – Min Xia

- The main focus continues to be on Orientation Week. Details have been released via the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website.
- All volunteers have been recruited and volunteer training will take place next week.
- There will be an End of Season Party for the soccer and softball teams.
- Ticket sales will start next week for Orientation events (Boat Party, Disorientation Party, Lynn Valley Hiking)
- Councillors are more than welcome to attend events and create awareness about the GSS.

Business Operations Supervisor - Rob Teagle

- During the upgrade of the stairs, asbestos was found. We have been instructed that this area is out of bounds for a period of time.
- There has been a water leak, of which UBC will pay half.
- FUN Camps will continue in the Penthouse until August. They have opted to renew for another year.
- Seedlings will re commence in September.
- Ceremonies have accepted an increase of 3 per cent.
- Continuing to obtain quotes for projectors / screens, etc., for Thea's Lounge / Leon's
- John Koerner will be turning 100 years old and having his birthday in the Penthouse.
- A Google ad campaign was run and although it received a lot of hits, any direction, instruction would be greatly appreciated to improve its effectiveness.
- New fridges have been purchased for Thea's Lounge and the Penthouse
- Continuing to obtain quotes for the proposed Card Key lock system.
- The Koerner Pub renovation going to plan and at this stage is expected to open in the second week of September.
- The Bookings Department has an open-door policy so if there are any questions, please feel free to visit the office.

F. Representative Reports

(3 minutes)

AMS Council – Natalie Marshall

- The primary focus of the past meetings has been what to do with the AMS Whistler Lodge.
- The new Student Union Building project is proceeding as usual. The previous few weeks have seen the installation of a large cement wall to support the Hall.

Graduate Council – Kristan Marchak

- Nothing to report in lieu of no meeting.

Senate – Christopher Roach (on behalf of Julienne Jagdeo)

- FoGS has changed their name to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, or G+PS. There has been no change to fund allocations or positions on committees.



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- The appointment of a new Dean is almost complete and will be announced in October. It was an internal appointment.

G. Approval of Minutes

2. BIRT the minutes of the GSS Council meeting dated 'July 25th, 2013' be approved as presented.

Amendments:

MOVED: Colúm Connolly SECONDED: Jeff Abeysekera

PASSED

BIRT the following committee minutes be approved as presented:

Executive Committee – July 9

Executive Committee – July 23

House-Finance Committee – July 17

Services Committee – July 15

Services Committee – July 24

MOVED: Jack Hickmott SECONDED: Tobias Friedel

PASSED

H. Seatings, Unseatings, and Appointments

3. Notice of unseatings (*no vote necessary*)

- None

4. Seatings and Appointments

BIRT the following seatings are approved:

Colúm Connolly be appointed to the UPass Advisory Committee as the Graduate Student Society Vancouver representative.

MOVED: George Furey SECONDED: Jack Hickmott

PASSED

I. Council Motions

J. Other Business and Notice of Motions

ABC Bylaw and Charter; in the next meeting the Council will vote on whether the GSS will become members. In the interim, please read and research prior to next meeting.

K. Discussion Period



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The GSS Retreat will now be held in October (27th – 29th) which will allow Councillors appointed in October to attend.

L. Submissions

M. Next Meeting

- September 19th, 2013

N. Adjournment

11. BIRT there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 6:35pm.

MOVED: Tobias Friedel SECONDED: Jack Hickmott

PASSED