



GSS Council Minutes

Thursday, December 10th 2015 | GSS Ballroom | 5:30 pm

Present: Amber Shilling, Andrew Alexander, Anujit Chakraborty, Bingyu Liu, Bradley Balaton, Chandan Sejekan, Charles Copeland, Charlie Deng, Chen Vu, Christie Waltham, Christina Wiesmann, Conny Lin, Dylan Burrows, Elizabeth Bulaeva, Emily Allan, Francisco Gómez-Lopéz, Hamza Khan, Hooman Shahrokhi, Jennifer Campbell, Jennifer DeBoer, Joann Anokwuru, John Dupuis, Kate Jaffe, Kaye Hare, Kelsi Lix, Krish Maharaj, Logan MacDonald, Mary Caple, Mary-Anne Shonoda, Mirza Sarwar, Parker Jobin, Patrick Lo, Peter Chen, Raghav Grover, Sarah Simon, Shadi Balandeh, Shona Robinson, Judy Booth (proxy for Tal Shalev), Tobias Friedel, Varun Bhai (proxy for Vasillii Triandafilidi), Yaseen Mottiar, Zoe Lam.

Regrets: Dan Kehila, Enav Zusman, Ingrid Olson, James Lawson, Jennifer Zhao, Jennifer Bok, Joon Seon Lee, Kevin Mehr, Kyla Drzazgowski, Matthew Gartner, Natalie Marshall, Nicholas Dawson, Ran Xiang, Yulia Merkulova.

Absent: Andrew Leyland, Chad Rickaby, Grant Tran, Julie Van de Valk, Maayan Kreitzman, Maichael Thejoe, Mohammad Nikoo, Olenka Forde, Veronica Knott, Xun Zhou.

Speaker: Abdulrahman Alnaar.

Guests: Sophia Haque, StudentCare;
Mark Wellington, GSS Manager.

A. Call to Order and Adoption of the Agenda

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:46 pm.

BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

MOVER: Amber Shilling SECONDER: Hooman Shahrokhi

Motion to add presentation titled "Health and Dental Plan" before Amber's presentation.

MOVER: Tobias Friedel SECONDER: Kaye Hare

It was clarified that 10 minutes is allotted for presentation and 5 minutes for Q&A.

Amendment PASSED

MOTION PASSED

B. Councillor seating

2. BIRT the following seating is approved:

Shadi Balandeh to be seated as Departmental Representative for Physics and Astronomy.

MOVER: Tobias Friedel SECONDER: Amber Shilling

MOTION PASSED by unanimous consent

C. Introductions

D. Presentations

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(10 Minutes for presentation, 5 minutes for questions)

- **Health and Dental Plan**

Presenter: Sophia Haque

- Background: plan voted on as a student initiative; over 37k students enrolled in the plan; \$7.4 million dollars in Health and Dental Claims;
- Plan allows to enroll dependents; and is managed by AMS/GSS Health and Dental Plan committee [HDPC].
- Why does it exist: threefold reason – inexpensive (individual insurance costs up to 5 times the cost of the plan), non-discriminatory (same group regardless of age and sex), accessible (all students qualify for plan regardless of pre-existing conditions).
- StudentCare: started 20 years ago; now employs over 100 individuals;
- What we do: manage health and dental plan student experience; lobby on behalf of students to insurance companies.
- Plan networks offer additional savings and discounts to students.
- Vision: new updated network;
- Dental network offers 20% off;
- Usage: students are not required to go to specific practitioners in the network; only when want to save more;
- Health Claims: the biggest portion of the plan is prescription drugs; vision care makes a second large piece, etc.
- Dental Claims: total at \$4,107,290.
- Student Feedback: conducted surveys asking input on plan services, coverage and communication, later used to manage Plan structure reflecting students' priorities; also reviewing existing terms towards better coverage and more options.
- Planning for the year ahead:
 1. Evaluate coverage levels and options;
 2. Student survey: coverage focus;
 3. Review current fee structure (CPI adjustments, looking to increase fee)
 4. Administrative adjustments (leave of absence, travelling, etc.)

Questions & Answers:

It was asked and answered that claims are shown separately for health and dental parts of the plan. It was further mentioned that dental claims¹ comprise a bigger part of total claims.

It was further said that on many campuses graduate and undergraduate students have separate plans. Differently, UBC undergrads and grads make one membership group. There are both pros and cons to this structure. While larger pool keeps the cost down, less flexibility and options are available.

It was further mentioned that the cost of plan varies across Canada and depends on the size of a group. Comparable grad student plans go as high as \$400.

It was further emphasized on the limits of a total cap. Committee will be looking into possible fee increase and adding more services.

¹ Presentation "Health and Dental Plan": Dental Claims - \$4,107,290; Health Claims - \$3,300,845.

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Motion to extend time for 5 minutes.

MOVER: Tobias Friedel

SECONDER: Andrew Alexander

MOTION PASSED

It was further asked about the mental health programs, to which the answer was that Plan includes psychology coverage. It was also noted that there is an increased interest in better access to counselling services. Looking to expand, however, overall cap remains an issue at hand.

It was further asked about customization of a plan – allocate particular amounts to specific areas of medical service, to which the answer was that the decision is with the membership as to what structure Plan shall have. It was further stated that customized plans have been piloted at SFU, and generally, possible to introduce at UBC.

It was lastly asked and answered that individual inquiries can be made in person at the Health and Dental office in the AMS Nest, 3rd floor.

- **Presidential Search Committee Update**

Presenter: Amber Shilling, GSS Representative on Presidential Search Committee

- Strictly bound by confidentiality agreement; general update on the work of the Presidential Search Committee (PSC);
- First meeting: started looking into the process, signed extensive confidentiality agreement, early discussions on potential search firms;
- Second meeting: met with search firm Perret Laver one-on-one on Dec. 1st; large group meeting on Dec. 2nd reviewed previous process; and began to develop draft timeline: looking to make a decision in June 2016 with a seated President for September 2016.
- Perret Laver was chosen to conduct presidential search; has office in Vancouver. Firm has excellent experience in finding top level executives for higher educational establishments, i.e. University of Washington:
http://www.washington.edu/presidentialsearch/files/2015/07/15_PrezProfile-0731.pdf
- Committee has reviewed candidate profile to hire Gupta and found that no leadership priorities were set back then; looking to include these in the current profile.
- PSC: seeking input on qualities and characteristics that a new president shall have; submit feedback on bog.ubc.ca;
- Townhall: January 13th; reminders will be sent out early January.

Questions&Answers

It was asked and answered that Perret Laver is a well-established firm that conducts search of top Executives world-wide, does a lot of work in higher education. Perret Laver did search for MIT, Oxford, University of Saskatchewan, etc.

It was also asked and answered that committee members were not given budget numbers what is going to be spent.

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It was further asked and answered that open call for search firms was made to institutions in Canada. PSC has discussed and reviewed top three candidates; Vancouver-based Perret Laver has been chosen to conduct presidential search.

It was further mentioned that it is difficult to guarantee anything at this point, however, students are welcome to submit their concerns or questions on the BOGs website. It was further noted that due to ambitious timeline the cost may be higher; will be negotiating this balance. It was further noted that Dr. Martha C. Piper will resign in June.

It was finally stated that students will have an opportunity to meet search committee members in person. There are two/three townhalls organized on Jan. 13th; opportunity for graduate students to provide valuable input.

Motion to extend for 5 minutes.

MOVER: Charlie Deng

SECONDER: Mary Caple

MOTION PASSED

It was asked about the future communications between Board of Governors and President, to which the answer was that PSC will be communicating requirements as to effective and respectful communications with the Board.

E. Seatings, Unseating and Appointments

3. Unseatings (no vote necessary)

Chad Rickaby has been unseated as Code and Policy Representative.

Katerina Othonos has been unseated as Code and Policy Representative.

Shadi Balandeh has been unseated as ordinary member of Human Resources Committee.

4. BIRT the following seatings are approved:

Shadi Balandeh (*Councillor*) be seated to the Human Resources Committee.

Chen Vu be seated to the Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee.

MOVER: Logan MacDonald

SECONDER: Tobias Friedel

MOTION PASSED by unanimous consent

F. Approval of Minutes

5. BIRT the minutes of the GSS Council meeting dated "November 26th, 2015" be approved as presented.

MOVER: Logan MacDonald

SECONDER: Hooman Shahrokhi

Motion to add "reporting at the end of April" to the discussion item "Commissioners" deemed friendly.

Motion to fix page numbering deemed friendly.

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Motion to reflect a member of Council disappointment about CIF acronym deemed friendly.

Motion to remove Justin Trudeau from attendance deemed friendly.

Motion to include last name of the seconder in the first motion deemed friendly.

Motion to reflect BOGS student members' attendance deemed friendly.

MOTION PASSED

6. BIRT the following committee minutes be approved as presented:

Code and Policy September 2, 2015

Code and Policy October 14, 2015

Code and Policy September 28, 2015

Code and Policy November 2, 2015

MOVER: Logan MacDonald

SECONDER: John Dupuis

MOTION PASSED

G. Executive Remarks (3 minutes)

• President – Tobias Friedel

- Interview schedule for commissioner positions has been delayed;
- Interviews will start in January.

• Vice-President University and Academic Affairs – Enav Zusman

- Nothing to report

• Vice-President External Relations – Gloria Liu

- Grad Scholarships: Nov. 30th held meeting with UVIC and SFU about lobbying strategies; meeting went well; reached consensus; UBC will take lead to finalize lobby document.
- ABCS: meeting with the Minister of Education.

• Vice-President Students– Kevin Mehr

• Financial and Executive Oversight Officer – Charlie Deng

- Looking into Event Fund process;
- Analysis over the cost reduction;
- Discussed transfer of purview to oversee events [sponsored through Event Fund] evaluation from House Finance to Services.

H. Committee and Ad Hoc Committees Reports (3 minutes)

• Academic & External Affairs Committee – Tal Shalev²

AcEx Annual Plan:

- Discussing protocol for tuition consultations and instating a policy for tuition consultation into code and policy;
- Emergency fund requests and topics brought up by advocacy officers;
- Addressing other topics as they arise throughout the year.

² Written report

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- **Code and Policy Committee – Julianne Jagdeo³**

Update from CPC and Annual Plan:

Since our November Council meeting, CPC has had only one meeting where we completed the revision of Section 12 "Election Procedures", which is up for your approval this evening. We also discussed the priorities for our annual plan. Within the following year, CPC would like to complete the following in order of priority:

1. Finish the revisions on Section 8 Committee Terms of Reference
2. Finish the updates in Section 4 Executive Officers duties with respect to the new Executive Officer positions (with the help of the current Executive Officers ☺)
3. Finish the revisions of the remaining policy sections: Section 13 Rainy Day Fund, Section 17 Parking Policy and Section 18 Personal Information Protection Policy
4. Once the policy manual revision is completed, do a review of the bylaws to make sure there are no discrepancies between the two
5. Discuss the creation of policies for transition reports or a more structured training for committee chairs
6. Update the revision form
7. Discuss the creation of policies to hold a general referendum
8. Create a style guide for writing policies and bylaws for future CPC committees to follow

Anything else you delegate us to do.

- **Executive Oversight Committee – Charlie Deng**

- Since last Council meeting discussed Executive accountability and the following:
 1. Reports from every executive after the meetings;
 2. Evaluate staff engagement guidelines to find right balance;
 3. Purview of the Services and VP Students;
 4. Encourage regular Executive meetings;
 5. Transition plan, budgeting process;

- **House-Finance Committee – Shona Robinson**

- Met once since last meeting; spent time reading Event Fund policies;
- Duties that does not fall within portfolio will be transferred respectively;
- In the transitioning period as to what committee is tasked with;
- Reviewing renovations in Thea's Lounge approved last meeting;
- Discussed lease renewal;
- Looking into the budget.

- **Human Resources Committee – Amber Shilling**

- Has not met; will be meeting in a couple of weeks;
- HR policy: looking to update the language; include sections on harassment and discrimination; setting HR vision for GSS.
- Strategic Plan: make sure that GSS HR goals are met.

- **Services Committee – Sima Valizadeh⁴**

³ Written report

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Annual plan:

- Draft a tentative calendar of events for the upcoming year;
 - Define the success metrics for each event prior to the event
 - Evaluate the collect feedback from the attendees in order to improve events; and finally,
 - Oversee the annual GSS orientation.
- **Strategic Planning ad hoc committee – Sneha Balani**
 - Became Chair two weeks ago, still getting to know all members;
 - Will start developing Strategic plan from the beginning; planning to have specific goals outlined in January, first draft by April.
 - **Harassment and Discrimination ad hoc committee – Katerina Othonos⁵**

Annual Plan 2016

- Design/adapt climate surveys for the following general topics: Harassment and Discrimination issues, Sexual Assault and Safety, Power Dynamics (with regards to Faculty advisors and Faculty in general), Mental Health etc.

Timeline:

- Dec 1st 2015 to Jan 15th 2016: Surveys to be completed, reviewed by other committees and adapted.
 - Jan 15th-25th 2016: Survey distribution.
 - Jan 25th to Feb 22nd 2016: Data collection
 - Feb 22nd to March 11th: Data analysis
 - March 11th-31st: Report write-up
- Adapt consent forms for interviews, surveys, and mygradstory.ca website.
- Collect stories via emails, interviews and mygradstory.ca website to analyze and categorize issues faced by UBC graduate students. Provide a final report with the data collected, as well as quotes and stories (consent provided to be used).

Timeline:

- Dec 1st 2015 to -/2016: Collect stories
 - Jan – April 2016: Ongoing analysis of data collected
 - May-June 2016: Report write-up
- Research existing solutions, policies and processes implemented at other institutions across Canada, USA and worldwide.

Timeline:

- Jan – April 2016: Research the existing policies alongside to data collection, to identify solutions/policies that would be useful at UBC.
- May-June 2016: Report/Policy/Recommendation write-up

⁴ Written report

⁵ Written report

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I. Representative Reports (3 minutes)

- AMS Council – Conny Lin
 - AMS Caucus: will be discussing general strategy goals to improve GSS influence.
 - Mary C.: Dec 2nd, AMS Council approved external policy on harassment and sexual assault; document is worth reading – took proactive measures to prevent, provide support to victims and ensure dialogue with the university offices as to implementing effective procedures;
 - Document is available online: ams.ubc.ca

• Graduate Council – Natalie Marshall⁶

Graduate Council Student Caucus Annual Goals, 2015/2016

Represent UBC graduate students in the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS) Council.

Goal #1: Ensure adequate and ongoing student representation in discussions surrounding graduate

Background: Supervision is a foremost concern for many graduate students. The GSS has been working to assess this concern (e.g., a 2014 survey from the GSS on graduate student-supervisor experiences), to assist graduate students with these matters (e.g., the GSS Advocacy Office), and to improve circumstances by working with the University (e.g., a proposal brought to the Senate Teaching and Learning Committee in 2014). Progress on these largest goals could be made by working with the Faculty (G+PS), which has reported on the development of a new framework for supervision, including a request for insight on appropriate metrics to assess graduate supervision. These conversations will be ongoing and student participation and consultation would greatly contribute to this project as well as possibly improving the framework to the mutual benefit of supervisors and students for the future.

What we aim to do: Improve student representation in these discussions to be sure the student voice is heard and considered in the development of a new supervisory pedagogical and assessment framework.

Steps we will take to meet this goal:

- Request any available documentation from these discussions;
- Inquire about student representation in these ongoing discussions;
- Request increased student representation, beginning with Graduate Council student representatives;
- Contact the GSS VP Academic, GSS Student Senators, and the GSS Academic & External Affairs Committee for ongoing information and feedback
- Consider conducting an additional survey – or include relevant questions in a GSS survey – to reach more graduate students for input

Goal #2: Improve communication and accessibility to UBC graduate students and GSS Councilors on ongoing work in Graduate Council.

Steps we will take to meet this goal:

⁶ Written report

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- Continue to provide reports of Graduate Council meetings topics of discussion and changes that affect graduate students
- Advertise the Student Caucus' contact information with Graduate Council reports (graduatecouncil@gss.ubc.ca)

- **Senate – Sarah Simon and Nick Dawson⁷**

Hi everyone,

I apologize that I am unable to join you tonight as my presence is required in the lab. There are no updates from Senate at this time as Senate and the committees I am part of have not met since the last GSS meeting. I also understand that tonight is the night that we are to give an update on the strategic goals for the year. I cannot speak to the strategic goals of Senate as a whole, I can speak to things that I have been advocating and lobbying for.

Firstly, I was recently appointed Vice-Chair of the Senate Academic Policy committee - this gives me a unique position to advocate for graduate student interests at this very important committee. Lately, one important theme of our discussions has been incorporating mental health considerations into academic policies. With help from the AMS, Access & Diversity, and the Faculties of Science & Arts, we've begun discussion on how things like the structure of the academic year and course syllabi, for examples, affect the mental health of students. One of my goals is to push graduate supervision to the forefront of these discussions so we can start to talk about what meaningful policy would look like.

My second major focus has been in the budget committee. As you know, Senate does not concern itself matters of finances, however, administration is required to consult and keep the Senate Budget Committee up to date on financial matters. Recently, this committee has been ineffective because administration has only been giving the committee information after decisions have been made. We are working to become more of a consultation body, where they seek our advice during decision making processes, rather than just telling us what is going to happen. I am also working with our student BoG reps and the AMS to start discussions within the budget committee on how to open a dialogue with BoG to voice our concerns about issues related to academic matters.

If you'd like to discuss any of these initiatives with me, please shoot me an email!
Nick Dawson at senator@gss.ubc.ca

- AMS/GSS Health and Dental Committee – Conny Lin
 - Have not met

J. Question Period

K. Council Motions

7. Policy Manual Section 12 Election Procedure⁸ *Introduced by: Code and Policy Committee*

BIRT Council approves the proposed amendments to Section 12 Election Procedure as presented,

⁷ Written report

⁸ Special Resolution



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BIFRT Council approves the proposed amendments to Appendix II Nomination Form as presented,

BIFRT Council approves the proposed amendments to Appendix III Ballot Layout as presented, and

BIRFT Council approves the proposed amendments to Appendix IV Preliminary Results as presented.

MOVER: Logan MacDonald

SECONDER: Christina Wiesmann

Motivation: amendments were presented at the last Council meeting. All recommendations had been submitted to the Code and Policy Committee for further review; saw some additional changes, i.e. after the conversation over pressure and coercion, decided to use the following definitions “force” or “purposefully deceive”; included policies in case of a tie, worked on the wording, etc.

Motion to amend typo in Appendix II deemed friendly.

Motion to amend Policy Manual 12.4.6 to replace with “for the purpose of their campaign” deemed friendly.

Motion to amend Policy Manual 12.4.4 to replace with “UBC Building BOGS 1.20”

MOVER: Yaseen Mottiar

SECONDER: Sarah Simon

Amendment to amendment to strike “Building” and policy number.

MOVER: Sarah Simon

SECONDER: -

Amendment to amendment FAILED

Amendment to amendment to read “UBC Building Policy (BOGS 1.20)” deemed friendly.

Amendment PASSED

It was asked about the nomination period time frames and answered that the proposed schedule had been discussed in the committee; reached to the conclusion that “no later than 1 week” is a reasonable notice in advance of a nomination period. It was further said that this could be extended to 2 weeks.

It was further asked and answered that the ways to penalize candidates are as such: to exclude them from certain benefits; if Council decides - possible to remove from elections, etc.

MOTION PASSED

8. Affiliate Organization Recognition

Introduced by: Executive Committee



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WHEREAS the following organizations have submitted a petition for recognition as an Affiliate Organizations.

BIRT the following organizations be recognized as Affiliate Organizations for one year, ending at the meeting of Council in December 2016:

- a. Cellular and Physiological Sciences (CPS) GSA.

MOVER: Charles Copeland
MOTION PASSED

SECONDER: Patrick Lo

N. Other Business and Notice of Motions

O. Discussion Period

P. Notice

- 2016 Sustainability Research Symposium

R. Submissions

- Policy Manual Section 12 “Election Procedure”

S. Next Meeting

Note: Thursday, January 21st 2016

T. Adjournment

BIRT there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 7:26 pm.