



## GSS Council Meeting Agenda

Thursday January 16, 2014

GSS Ballroom

### Present:

Baseer Abdul, Bethany Schmidt, Brett Kolesnik, Cara Dong, Christopher Dickman, Christopher Jenkins, Christopher Quick, Christopher Roach, Colúm Connolly, Conny Lin, Craig Kerr, Daniel Wood, Ehsan Espid, Eric Becklin, Gabriela Badica, George Furey, Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle, Hafizur Rahman, Hamid Omid, Inti Dewey, Jack Hickmott, Jeff Abeysekera, Jens Vent-Schmidt, Jon Newell, Julie Zhang, Julienne Jagdeo, Kreso Sola, Kristan Marchak, Laura Bohachyk, Lili Meng, Mahsa Mojahednia, Martina Volfova, Matt Sacheli, Michael Firmin, Michael Ries, Michelle Kwon, Min Xia, Mitchell Meler, Nayantara Duttachoudhury, Omid Nourbakhsh, Pooya Hosseini, Sarah Simon, Shona Robinson, Sima Valizadeh, Sneha Balani, Sofiya Lazarova, Tobias Friedel, Vincent Chan, Vivian Lam, Yuanyuan Liu, Yvonne Dzal.

### Regrets:

Alexis Black, Angela Zhao, Cynthia Min, Ingrid Olson, Natalie Marshall, Paul Save, Yifei Zhuang.

#### A. Call to Order and Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 5:43 pm.

1. BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

**MOVER:** Michael Firmin, **SECONDER:** George Furey  
PASSES

#### B. Introductions

#### C. Presentations to Council

*(10 minutes, 5 minutes for questions)*

- **Proposed Fee Increases** – Anne DeWolfe, Enrolment Services
  - On May 1, the proposed changes will be sent to President Toope for sign off.
  - Deferred and supplemental exams, written off campus in Hong Kong will be charged at \$30.00 to cover courier costs.
  - Cross campus exams will incur a charge of \$90.00 to cover administering and courier charges.
  - 54 students per year will be affected by these increases in administration fees.
  - Dishonor Payments will increase from \$25 to \$35.00.
  - Distance education exams will increase from \$41.00 to \$50.00.
  - Transcripts will increase from \$7 to \$ 10 to ensure a full cost recovery.
  - There will be a 2 percent cost of living increase.
- It was asked whether the 2 per cent cost of living increase will be charged every year to which the response was, 'This will not be annual and will be reviewed in future years.'
- It was asked why the increase to the Distance Education Exam fee was so high to which the response was these exams require a room booking and staffing so the cost is significantly higher.
- It was asked why transcripts were outsourced to Xerox instead of hiring a staff member for this purpose, which was answered, 'Overtime and staffing requires restricted area employees to process transcripts and it is more efficient to have Xerox process transcript requests'.

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- **AMS Elections Candidate Presentations**

BIRT that council break for 5 minutes to get a copy of Robert's Rules of Order.

**MOVER:** Inti Dewey, **SECONDER:** Colúm Connolly

PASSES

BIRT the AMS VP Finance Joaquin Acevedo presented on the AMS's Referendum campaign and encouraged students to vote yes in the three important questions sponsored by the AMS.

**MOVER:** Christopher Quick, **SECONDER:** Christopher Dickman

PASSES (28,3,3)

### **Health and Dental Plan** – Christopher Roach

- Refer to handout for a detailed comparison.
- Pharmaceutical coverage has increased from \$1,000 to \$2,000, with the potential to cover additional costs using the reserve.
- The GSS Council needs to approve the current plan. If the motion is passed, the agreement will be signed.
- If the motion fails, the AMS/GSS will attempt to re-negotiate the agreement.
- If the new agreement is not approved, it is likely that we will re-sign the previous agreement.

### **Discussion:**

- It was asked whether the cap on pharmaceutical is unlimited to which the response was, 'No. Unlimited pharmaceutical coverage was only in place / possible because the reserve fund was being used.'
- The Health and Dental Plan covers 80 per cent of the cost of medications on the coverage list, unlimited times.
- For medication that is not on the coverage list, the plan covers 80 per cent of the cost, up to \$2,000.

Motion to extend time by 5 minutes.

**MOVER:** Inti Dewey, **SECONDER:** Tobias Friedel

PASSES

- **GSS Business Plan** – Tobias Friedel

### Discussion:

The proposed Business plan will reduce the costs incurred by current graduate students when making a room booking. The plan also includes renovations and upgrades to increase use of the building.

There will be a trial period of three months, with a possible three month extension.

It was asked 'What would be the cost of renovations? Where would the funding for this come from?'

It was suggested that renovations may result in increased revenue from commercial bookings, which in turn will cover these deductions in costs to graduate students.

There will be motion at next month's Council meeting to approve the plan – after Councillors have had an opportunity to read the detailed proposal.



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Motion to recess for 15 minutes

**MOVER:** Jeff Abeysekera, **SECONDER:** Jens Vent-Schmidt

PASSES

Meeting reconvened at 8:00pm

- **Report on Executive Performance** – Jeff Abeysekera, Executive Oversight Committee  
Postponed until February Meeting.

### D. **Executive Remarks**

*(3 minutes)*

#### **President** – Christopher Roach

- Have been working with the GSS Elections Committee, on the President and Chancellor Search committees, and with the AMS on the Health & Dental Plan.
- Attended a meeting with UBC Communications. There is discussion about communications providing the GSS with a list of new graduate student email addresses. This will help the Society reach more graduate students, create awareness and increase participation.
- In the process of recruiting a Student Health Report Commissioner.

#### **Vice-President Academic & External Affairs** – Colúm Connolly

- Have been working with the Teaching & Learning Committee on fund evaluations, tuition consultations of current and new programs
- Graduate student survey
- February trip to the ledge –prior to the budget
- CASA – PhD permanent residency program denied applications
- Tri-Council advocacy campaign to seat a student representative
- Student Debt Campaign

#### **Vice-President Administration** – Tobias Friedel

- Bookings department reform
- Website re development project
- Archival – electronic document management system

#### **Vice-President Finance** – Lili Meng

- Funds reform; summary of the previous SEF and DOF applications
- In the past month there have been 8 successful SEF applications and 7 successful DOF applications
- Have only spent 30 percent of the funds
- Have promoted the SEF and DOF to the recently formed Caucus
- Received surveys from previous SEF/DOF applicants with suggested improvements
- Potential amendments to the requirements of the DOF / SEF
- Financial housekeeping; credit card statements, cheques, etc.

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### **Vice-President Services** – Yuanyuan Liu

- January Orientation; MOA tour, GSS Open House, Coffee Social, Trivia Night, Whistler ski trip
- Fitness classes resumed; including a new belly dancing class
- New Term Party; Friday January 24

### **E. Committee, Taskforce, and Operations Reports**

*(3 minutes)*

- **Academic & External Affairs Committee** – George Furey
  - Reviewing Policy documents
  - Developing a Brochure
  - Re-assessing the policy surrounding emergency fund requests
  - Survey; will need councillors to assist in distributing this to graduate students
- **Code and Policy Committee** – Julienne Jagdeo
  - Reviewing and approving Code and Policy revisions to Sections 1 and 2
  - Standard policy revision form; to be posted on the website and at the office
  - Website; policy revisions are available online and feedback is encouraged.
- **Elections Committee** – Gabby Badica
  - Administrative tasks such as setting up the online voting system
  - The set-up of Facebook and Twitter GSS Elections pages
  - The development of a Candidate handbook
  - The development of an Chief Electoral Officer handbook
  - Candidate videos; posted on the GSS website
  - The creation of Posters; to be distributed by Councillors in your department lounge to promote voting
  - Postering volunteers needed
  - All Candidates debate January 23<sup>rd</sup>;
- **Executive Oversight Committee** – Jeff Abeysekera
- **Health and Dental Plan Committee** – Christopher Roach
  - Reviewed documentation from TRG (Accounting)
  - Obtained estimates for parts of the plan
  - Reviewed the Administrative agreement
  - Increased GSS Involvement in the process
- **House-Finance Committee** – Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle
  - Special Events Fund application for the Chinese Student and Scholars Association Gala
  - GSS Business Plan
- **Human Resources Committee** – Tobias Friedel

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- Ongoing hiring – streamline processes
- Student Health Report Commissioner
- Special Events Coordinator
- Bookings Reform will result in further hiring
- **Internal Review Task Force** – Christopher Roach
- **Services Committee** – Min Xia
  - January Orientation; the first time this was held. A smaller scale series of events but important for incoming graduate students.
  - New Term Party – all graduate student welcome.
  - Ice-skating class; online registration (professional instructor).

### F. Representative Reports

*(3 minutes)*

- **AMS Council** – Christopher Roach
  - Elections and Referendum
  - Encouraged to vote and research candidates
  - Referendum; to approve the financial restructuring
- **Graduate Council** – George Furey
  - Academic Policy Committee; there was a proposal to reduce the number of student representations from 14 to 3. We have worked to increase this from 3 to 6 student representatives
- **Senate** – Julienne Jagdeo
  - The Senate passed a position statement on the Open Access policy. In summary, it is in support of it, but it is not mandatory.
  - Graduate student Course evaluations
- **University Sustainability Initiative** – Paul Save

### G. Approval of Minutes

2. BIRT the minutes of the GSS Council meeting dated “December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013” be approved as presented.

**MOVER:** Chris Dickman, **SECONDER:** Mahsa Mojahednia  
PASSES

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



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*Services Committee – November 27*  
*Executive Committee – November 12*  
*Executive Committee – December 10*  
*Code and Policy Committee – December 16*

*Services Committee – December 11*  
*Executive Committee – November 26*  
*Code and Policy Committee – November 18*

**MOVER:** Sima Valizadeh, **SECONDER:** Michael Firmin  
PASSES

### H. Seatings, Unseatings, and Appointments

#### 4. Notice of unseatings (*no vote necessary*)

Daniel Wood has been unseated from the Internal Review Taskforce.  
Sancho McCann has been unseated from the Code and Policy Committee.  
Sarah Simon has been unseated from the Code and Policy Committee.

Lena Patsa has been unseated as an AMS representative.

#### Seatings and Appointments

#### 5. BIRT the following seatings are approved:

Colúm Connolly be seated to the Code and Policy Committee.  
Christopher Quick be seated to the Internal Review Task Force.

Daniel Wood be seated as an AMS Representative.  
Tobias Friedel be seated as an AMS Representative.

Jack Hickmott be seated as a temporary or proxy member of the Academic and External Affairs Committee.  
Inti Dewey be seated as a temporary or proxy member of the Academic and External Affairs Committee.

**MOVER:** Chris Roach, **SECONDER:** Colúm Connolly  
PASSES

### I. Council Motions

#### 6. Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA) Chinese Spring Festival Gala

WHEREAS the CSSA has already successfully applied for SEF and received \$350.00 for their Spring Festival Gala;

WHEREAS there is still unmet need for the event;

BIRT the GSS sponsor the event with an additional \$450.00.



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**MOVER:** George Furey, **SECONDER:** Nayantara Duttachoudhury  
PASSES

Discussion:

It was asked 'What actions have been taken to make this event accessible to non-Chinese students?' to which the response was; There are a variety of performances to appeal to a diverse audience, there is also a uniform price for members, non-members, graduate and undergraduate students.

It was asked how graduate students will be encouraged to attend the event and / or become involved to which the reply was that there will be graduate performers, organizers and audience members.

It was stated that the SEF is underutilized as demonstrated earlier in the meeting and we should encourage the use of it for events such as this one.

This is a large and multicultural event and meets the SEF criteria.

It was asked how many members of CSSA are graduates?, to which the response was 35 per cent.

It was asked and answered that the expected attendance will be 300 volunteers and audience members

It was asked how CSSA will track who attends, i.e. how many graduates, which was answered that this could be done at the point of sale.

Motion to amend the agenda

**MOVER:** Colúm Connolly, **SECONDER:** Christopher Dickman  
PASSES

### 7. Endorsement of Graduate Candidates

BIRT the GSS endorse Philip Edgcumbe, Christopher Roach and Eric Zhao for the upcoming Senate Election.

BIFRT the GSS endorse Christopher Roach for the upcoming Board of Governors Election.

27/1/4

PASSES

Discussion:

It was asked whether it is common / acceptable practice for the GSS to endorse candidates? To which the response was, it is a show of support for fellow graduate students.

It was stated that it can be a risk to endorse candidates, should a candidate embarrass the society at a later point.

It was stated that the GSS can make recommendations.

It was brought to Council's attention that s Position Statement, resolved by special resolution, needs to be posted at least 7 days prior (13.2.1).

13.2.3 May waive the requirement of notice by reaching a special resolution vote.

It was stated that graduate students are under-represented; therefore we should be in support of greater student representation.

The GSS should be in support of all graduate students running in this election.



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It was asked 'Are there enough seats for all three candidates? Are we endorsing more people than there are positions for?' to which the reply was, 'There are 2 seats on the Board of Governors'.

There is a need to have graduate students at decision making bodies like the Board of Governors so that they can advocate for graduate students. There is also a need to have a graduate student specific seat.

### 8. Policy Amendments

BIRT Council approves the proposed amendments to sections 1 and 2 of the policy manual as presented.

BIFRT these changes do not take effect until September 1st 2014.

**MOVER:** Julienne Jagdeo **SECONDER:** Pooya Hosseini  
PASSES

#### Discussion:

It was asked whether the current committee members are committed to the timeline in terms of how long it will take to review the entire code? To which the response 'This time frame can be changed at any point'.

The rationale behind this approach is that changes are presented in sections rather than overwhelming Councillors with all the changes at once. Policy is continuously changing. In the past, the Policy Manual was not updated as changes were made and this process is to ensure that all updates are reflected in the new version. If we vote upon this, it will not be voted on again.

### 9. Health and Dental Plan

BIRT the GSS Council approves the Pacific Blue Cross Health and Dental Plan as presented;

**MOVER:** Colúm Connolly, **SECONDER:** Matt Sacheli  
PASSES

BIFRT the GSS Council strongly advocates for AMS/GSS Health and Dental Plan Committee to use available Health and Dental Plan funds towards covering health issues which would affect student's ability to perform academically.

**MOVER:** Colúm Connolly, **SECONDER:** Matt Sacheli  
PASSES  
21/8/2

#### Discussion:

There have been some small changes for smaller items.

Pharmaceutical coverage is better in this plan than in the previous plan.

It was asked, 'Why is the focus on academic performance specifically, as opposed to student wellbeing?' To which the reply was that this can be amended.

### J. Other Business and Notice of Motions





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### **K. Discussion Period**

### **L. Submissions**

### **M. Next Meeting**

Thursday February 20, 2014

### **N. Adjournment**

BIRT there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 9:30 pm.