



GSS Council Meeting Agenda

July 25th, 2013

GSS Ballroom

Present:

Baseer Abdul, Jeff Abeysekera, Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle, Adriana Byrne, Barak Caracheo, Ambrose Chan, Colúm Connolly, Christopher Dickman, Tobias Friedel, Jack Hickmott, Julienne Jagdeo, Craig Kerr, Vivian Lam, Colleen Lau, Conny Lin, Yuanyuan Liu, Kristan Marchak, Andrew McEwan, Lili Meng, Cynthia Min, Omid Nourbakhsh, Sarah Parker, Radu Racovita, Jahidur Rahman, Christopher Roach, Carlos Rodriguez, Kenji Scott, Jens Vent-Schmidt, Daniel Wood, Min Xia.

Regrets:

Sneha Balani, Valeria Castellanos, Yvonne Dzal, Michael Fairchild, George Furey, Gwendolyn Huber, Jan Lüdert, Natalie Marshall, Ingrid Olson, Hafizur Rahman, Jia Xue-Rong, Kathryn Rowswell, Rachel Roy, Paul Save, Maxim Stykow, Sima Valizadeh, Tom Woodsworth, Yifei Zhuang.

A. Call to Order and Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 pm.

1. BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

MOVED: Colum Connolly SECONDED: Tobias Friedel

PASSED

B. Introductions

C. Presentations to Council

(10 minutes, 5 minutes for questions)

- **Wellness Project**, Dr. Patricia Mirwaldt, Student Health Service

The Wellness Project, as the name suggests, is a focus on wellbeing for all, campus-wide. Through preliminary research (student surveys) the two essential questions that have emerged are:

- 1) What are our health concerns?
- 2) What do we need to do to address these concerns?

In order for the wellbeing project to be successful, there needs to be a shift in campus culture. The goal is to have a campus that actively uses a wellbeing lens by the year 2023. The Wellness Project will involve the formation of an Advisory Council which will comprise of 12-14 students, faculty staff, staff, and external partners. Some of the main focuses of the project will be transport, building resilience, providing mental health resources, and the prevention of mental illness. Initiatives will be topic-based and available to all, rather than program-based. It will be recommended that there are graduate-specific seats on the Advisory Council.

Research has demonstrated the importance of connectedness and therefore positive proactive actions will be taken in addition to addressing and treating cases of mental illness. One specific



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project to improve wellness will be online coaching; whereby extensively trained students will support their peers in a confidential setting.

There continues to be issues surrounding the stigma and acceptance of mental health illnesses. An existing policy at the University is the 'Stop the Clock' policy where students are able to take a break from study and where no penalties apply if they are affected by mental illness.

A primary concern of the Wellness Project will be to address and reduce the stigma. Other projects being considered are the Early Alert Program and Mental Health First Aid courses.

The Project will submit its findings and recommendations on October 15.

- **Summer Orientation Update**, Carlos Rodriguez, Orientation Coordinator & Yuanyuan Liu, VP Services

Graduate Orientation will run from August 28 – September 6. There is expected to be 1,000 new graduate students. The GSS will be running a range of events including the GSS Open House, the Boat Cruise, hiking, and the Disorientation Party. Volunteers are needed for the event to assist on the day with campus tours, the GSS Open House and other activities. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact the Orientation Coordinator. The GSS will also be recruiting a number of Information Officers and Volunteers with special skills.

2. BIRT the Policy Manual be amended by adding the following:

“2.3.3 GSS staff may attend Council meetings.”

BIFRT Council directs Code and Policy Committee to review the Policy Manual regarding council attendance by March 2014.

MOVED: Tobias Friedel SECONDED: Julienne Jagdeo

PASSED

- It was asked if this would address the problem and thus wouldn't it be pointless to do the BIFRT
- It was answered that it does not address all issues

3. BIRT the GSS Council approves the results of the February 2013 GSS Election, as presented at the February 2013 SGM.

- It was stated that at the SGM there was no vote to approve the results of the February 2013 GSS Election

MOVED: Christopher Roach SECONDED: Jeff Abeysekera

PASSED

D. Executive Remarks

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(3 minutes)

President – Christopher Roach

- Have been away for the last week at a conference so not much to report.
- The Faculty of Graduate Studies has changed its name, effective July 1st, to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral studies. Now being called “G+PS”.
- Have a meeting with Susan Porter (G+PS Dean *pro-temp*) about the GSS’s and G+PS’s plans for the year. Was a good meeting and looks like a lot of our goals overlap. Excited to work with them in the upcoming year.
- The Office Renovation and Boardroom Improvement projects are underway and we are making good progress; there will be an update presented to Council when the projects are done.
- Have been working on a few graduate student development initiatives with Julienne.
- The Graduate Program Admin luncheon was earlier today. It was a big success! Thanks to Kristie for her great work on the event.

Vice-President Academic & External Affairs – Colúm Connolly

- Working on the ABCs – had the first ‘trek to the ledge’ where Colum and Tom went over to the Victoria legislature and lobbied for a variety of student needs.
- Met with numerous cabinet ministers, critics, and other MLAs.
- Meeting with David Eby next week, which should prove to be productive.
- Will be working on the SUD Symposium with the AMS.
- Involved in the policy development committee for policy on ‘learning materials’.

Vice-President Administration – Tobias Friedel

- Boardroom upgrade and office improvements are continuing.
- Continuing to work on Code and Policy material to establish what needs to be amended.
- Getting settled into the position.
- The pub has started renovations; demolitions are almost complete and new equipment is being moved in. Pending some liquor licence issues, it should be open in early September.

Vice-President Finance – Lili Meng

- Has met with two student groups regarding SEF applications.
- Reviewing budget actuals for the past 3 months and preparing a presentation.
- Finalized the credit card contracts.
- General GSS financial maintenance including the cheque requisition process.

Vice-President Services – Yuanyuan Liu

- The main focus has been the upcoming Graduate Orientation, as per the presentation. Focus on both revenue and subsidizing events. There will be both free and ticketed ideas. Please contact the VP Services if you have any poster and/or tickets ideas.

E. Committee, Taskforce, and Operations Reports

(3 minutes)



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Academic & External Committee – Adriana Byrne

- Restructuring of the Committee, in order to reaching quorum. Reduce the number of ex-officio members and increase the number of voting members.
- The Committee has received an emergency funding request, in which partial funding was awarded and the student has been advised to re-apply. Emergency funding requests have a limit of \$6,000.
- Involved in preparations for the SUD Symposium – will be inviting CASA.
- Focus on 'The Voice' campaign and which departments need further attention. Reach out to neglected departments.
- Working on a process that makes it easier to elect councillors.

Code and Policy Committee – Julienne Jagdeo

- Submitted past version of bylaws. Forms and the newest document have been submitted and we are awaiting approval.
- Continual focus on the AcEx quorum issue.
- Ongoing Policy project; assessing content.

Executive Oversight Committee – Jeff Abeysekera

- Revamping the performance review.
- Formulating goals and deadlines. Will draft and circulate revision.
- Drafting new policy changes.
- Clarifying procedures for complaints.

Health and Dental Plan Committee – Christopher Roach

- There have been changes to the premiums. The pharmaceutical cap has been increased from \$1,500 to \$3,000.
- Vision care has increased to \$100, from \$75.

House Finance Committee – Lili Meng

- House rules are being revised. There is a plan to update.
- Currently in the process of implementing a Key Card lock plan for the GSS building.
- This will enable committee chairs and others to access the building after hours.
- House-Finance is reviewing the GSS financial status over the past 12 years. Recommendations will be made based on this report. Continual focus on graduate student and commercial bookings.

Human Resources Committee – Colleen Lau

- Adriana Byrne has been appointed as the Communications Coordinator.
- Carlos Rodriguez has been appointed as the Orientation Coordinator.
- Currently in the process of hiring Government Relations Officers (2 roles, 1 short and 1 long term).

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- To assist with Orientation, 4 Information Officers will be recruited.
- Currently working on expanding the complaint and feedback form.
- Short-term goals include improving evaluation forms.

Internal Review Task Force – Tobias Friedel

- The Survey form for Departmental Review has been completed.
- There will be a test run next week, whereby Victor will be assisting with the process.
- Evaluate process afterwards and adjust if necessary.

Services Committee – Min Xia

- Orientation week continues to be the main focus.
- Summer events such as language courses have concluded.
- Due to high demand, the Zumba class will continue through August.
- Softball and soccer teams have made it to the playoffs.
- There will be an end of season party.
- If you have any party ideas; e.g. costume or competitions, please contact the Chair.
- Both Information Officers and Volunteers are needed for Orientation.

F. Representative Reports

(3 minutes)

AMS Council – Christopher Roach

- The previous AMS Council Meetings have involved presentations about the building works, academic surveys, and Whistler Lodge.
- Focus on intercultural understanding.
- Plans for Committee restructuring.
- Lobby days.
- Translink.

Graduate Council – Kristan Marchak

No report in lieu of no recent meeting.

Senate – Julienne Jagdeo

- No report in lieu of no recent meeting.

G. Approval of Minutes

4. BIRT the minutes of the GSS Council meeting dated 'June 20th, 2013' be approved as presented.

Amendments:

- Reference to the ABC Clothes Party to be removed (Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle)



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MOVED: Jens Vent-Schmidt SECONDED: Jack Hickmott

PASSED

BIRT the following committee minutes be approved as presented:

Executive Committee Minutes – June 11
Executive Committee Minutes – June 25
Service Committee Minutes – April 26
Service Committee Minutes – May 9
Service Committee Minutes – May 22
Service Committee Minutes – June 5
Service Committee Minutes – June 19

AcEx Minutes – March 25
AcEx Minutes – April 8
AcEx Minutes – April 22
HF Minutes – June 6
HF Minutes – June 19
HF Minutes – July 3

MOVED: Barak Caracheo SECONDED: Tobias Friedel

PASSED

H. Seatings, Unseatings, and Appointments

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

Tobias Friedel has been unseated from the Academic and External Committee.

Tobias Friedel has been unseated from the Code and Policy Committee.

Tobias Friedel has been unseated from the House Finance Committee.

Tobias Friedel has been unseated from the Human Resources Committee.

Vivian Lam has been unseated from the Human Resources Committee

Lili Meng has been unseated from the Internal Review Task Force.

Nazrul Islam has been unseated from Council as a Departmental Representative.

Henry John has been unseated from Council as a Departmental Representative.

Rabia Khan has been unseated from Council as a Departmental Representative.

Jamie Marra has been unseated from Council as a Departmental Representative.

Behzad Shooolestain has been unseated from Council as a Departmental Representative.

Alexandra Wieland has been unseated from Council as a Departmental Representative.

Chunman Zhang has been unseated from Council as a Departmental Representative.

Ting Ting Zhou has been unseated from Council as a Departmental Representative.

Vivian Lam has been unseated as a Graduate Council Representative

6. Seatings and Appointments

BIRT the following seatings are approved:

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Connie Lin be seated to the Code and Policy Committee.

Lili Meng, Baseer Abdul, Jack Hickmott be seated to the Human Resources Committee.

Daniel Wood be seated to the Internal Review Task Force.

MOVED: Jeff Abeysekera SECONDED: Jack Hickmott

PASSED

7. BIRT Barak Caracheo be unseated as a voting member and resealed as a non-voting member of the Executive Oversight Committee.

MOVED: Jeff Abeysekera SECONDED: Christopher Roach

PASSED

I. Council Motions

8. The Network

WHEREAS The Network is a graduate student club;

WHEREAS The Network has already successfully applied to the SEF and received \$350.00 for their fall retreat;

WHEREAS there is still substantial unmet need for the retreat;

BIRT the GSS sponsor the retreat with an additional \$350.00.

MOVED: Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle SECONDED: Jack Hickmott

PASSED

Discussion:

The Network assists gay Graduate students to connect with one another across departments.

The funding requested will be used for a Retreat (3-days, Bowen Island) to discuss plans to extend the Network and set goals for the future.

The Network does not receive any funding from elsewhere.

There was positive feedback from the floor about the Network's goals to expand.

Other funding avenues that have been explored include the Pride and Diversity group who does not have funding to offer, Pride UBC is still being explored, and funding has been received from the VP Students Office.

It was asked how many participants will be involved in the retreat, with the answer being 20 – 26.

The only 5 confirmed attendees are the 5 founding members. The remainder of the places will be reserved, with half for current students and half for new students. This may be reduced to a third for new students, depending on interest.



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It was asked why the Retreat wasn't open to more students, to which the reply was, in the case of low enrolments, the Network did not want to over commit in terms of expenses, as they are unsure of the size at this stage. However, there would be the opportunity to expand the numbers, should they receive the interest.

It was asked why the GSS should support this motion, to which the reply was, the Network is an important organisation for the GLBT community, to make connections across departments.

It was asked what the Network was doing to create interest / exposure about the Retreat to which the response was they are hoping to draw new students via the GSS Handbook, their existing mailing list, Facebook group, and organisations such as Pride UBC.

9. Academic and External Affairs Committee Membership

WHEREAS Policy 6.2.2 allowed for a large number *ex-officio* members on the Academic and External Affairs Committee that made quorum difficult to achieve,

WHEREAS the Academic and External Affairs Committee has requested a revision of Policy 6.2.2 to make quorum less difficult to achieve,

BIRT policy 6.2.2 be replaced by:

"6.2.2 The members of the Academic & External Affairs Committee shall be:

(a) five members, of which at least three must be appointed Councillors

(b) as *ex-officio* members, one graduate student member of the Board of Governors or Senate, and

(c) as *ex-officio* members, the Vice-President, Academic and External Affairs, and the lead representative for the

Society to the:

(i) AMS,

(ii) Faculty of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies Council

6.2.3 The Chair of the Academic and External Affairs Committee shall:

(a) be the Vice-President, Academic and External Affairs, unless Council appoints another member as Chair

(b) have the following particular duties, in addition to the general duties of a Chair including
- identify and maintain a list of the *ex officio* members under Policy 6.2.2(c) that indicates the basis for their membership, i.e. the body on which they represent the Society``.

MOVED: Colúm Connolly SECONDED: Julienne Jagdeo

PASSED

Discussion:

The purpose of this motion is to resolve the issue of achieving quorum.

It was asked whether it was intentional to have 5 Councillors as appointed members, rather than some general members. It was answered that the Committee should have at least five councilors but could have additional members.

It was commented that the vision should be to allow for more interaction from non-Councillors.

It was further commented that there is a need for committed, voting members, which are often Councillors.



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There was a motion to amend 6.2.2 (c) to strike out iii) 'The Chair of the Academic and External Affairs Committee' as it is redundant.

MOVED: Craig Kerr SECONDED: Jeff Abeysekera

It was commented that currently, the Chair of the Committee is not a Councillor. It was asked whether the Chair needs to be a voting member, to which the reply was, 'Yes' because in cases where the voting is tied, the Chair will have the deciding vote.

It was commented that 6.2.2 (a) cannot be amended as according to bylaw, the Vice-President, Academic and External Affairs is responsible for the Committee, but not necessarily a member.

This comment was disagreed with as the motion is not a change to the bylaw. Policy states that the Vice President, Academic and External Affairs is an ex-officio member.

Motion to amend 6.2.2 (a) to include ordinary members, which would allow the Chair to be a non-Councillor.

MOVED: Barak Caracheo SECONDED: Daniel Wood

It was asked whether 6.2.2 (a) should be amended to a 3-2, 4-1, or 5-2 split so that the majority of committee members are Councillors.

It was asked, 'What is the rationale behind Councillors being the majority of a Committee?' to which the response was, 'Councillors should be strongly involved in Committees'.

Motion to change 6.2.2 (a) to 'five members, of which at least three must be appointed Councillors'.

MOVED: Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle SECONDED: Jack Hickmott

Motion to further suspend this motion until the next Council Meeting.

MOVED: Christopher Roach SECONDED: Vivian Lam

It was commented that the issue continues to be passed back and forth to Code and Policy and it takes time to review and amend such policy.

It was further commented that as part of the Code and Policy review process, all Membership sections will be reassessed.

10. Academic and External Affairs Committee Membership Code

WHEREAS there has been considerable discussion about changing the Academic and External Affairs Committee's membership code;

WHEREAS previous chairs failed to record who was a voting and non-voting member;

WHEREAS members of the committee were given notice of this motion;



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BIRT all non *ex officio* members of the committee be deseated for the purpose of properly repopulating the committee.

MOVED: Colúm Connolly SECONDED: Tobias Friedel

PASSED

BIRT Adriana Byrne (ordinary member), Yvonne Dzal, Cynthia Min, Jens Vent-Schmidt and Daniel Wood are seated on the Academic and External Review Committee.

BIFRT Adriana Byrne be appointed Chair of the Academic and External Review Committee.

BIFRT Colleen Lau be appointed Chair of the Human Resources Committee,

BIFRT Conny Lin be appointed to the House-Finance Committee.

MOVED: Christopher Roach SECONDED: Colúm Connolly

PASSED

J. Other Business and Notice of Motions

At this stage, the GSS Retreat will be held September 20 -22. Initially, we were scheduled to stay at the AMS Whistler Lodge however this may not be the case if the lodge should close. Further details to follow.

K. Discussion Period

L. Submissions

Writing Week Info

Writing Week Report to Council

M. Next Meeting

Thursday August 15, 2013

N. Adjournment

11. BIRT there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 8:13pm.

MOVED: Christopher Roach SECONDED: Jens Vent-Schmidt

PASSED