



Council Minutes

Thursday, July 16th 2015 | GSS Ballroom | 5:30 pm.

Present: Andrea Jones, Antoine Ponsard, Bingyu Liu, Charlie Deng, Christie Waltham, David Gill, Dylan Burrows, Sneha Balani (proxy for Elizabeth Bulaeva), Grant Tran, Ingrid Olson, Marcelo Bravo (proxy for Jackie Davis), Jennifer Campbell, Julienne Jagdeo, Kreso Sola, Krish Maharaj, Maayan Kreitzman, Emily Briggs (proxy for Mary-Anne Shonoda), Nayantara Duttachoudhury, Nicholas Dawson, Parker Jobin, Patrick Lo, Shona Robinson, Tobias Friedel, Jun Sian Lee (proxy for Vasillii Triandafilidi), Xun Zhou, Katerina Othonos (proxy for Vivian Lam), Yaseen Mottiar, Yulia Merkulova.

Regrets: Anujit Chakraborty, Behzad Shoolestani, Chen Vu, Coco Tang, Dustin King, Hamid Omid, Kathryn Knudson, Michelle Hak Hepburn, Mirza Sarwar, Naman Paul, Natalie Marshall, Omid Nourbakhsh, Raphael Rocco, Rebeca Sherbo, Susan Song, Suzie Maginley.

Absent: Ambrose Chan, Chhavi Tripathi, Colúm Connolly, Debolina Majumder, Enav Zusman, Eva Choi, Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle, James Lawson, Janice Valdez, Kevin Mehr, Olenka Forde, Robin Kim, Sarah Simon, Sarah Fernando, Tahara Bhate.

Chair: Abdul Alnaar

Guests: Mark Wellington, GSS General Manager
Neal Yonson, GSS Policy Researcher

A. Call to Order and Adoption of the Agenda

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm.

BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

MOVER: Andrea Jones

SECONDER: Marcelo Bravo

Chair called appointment to Graduate Council to be out of order. As per Code seating will take place in September unless Council decides to suspend the Policy Manual.

[seating to Grad Council is removed from agenda]

Back to motion as amended.

MOTION PASSED

24/0/0

B. Introductions

C. Seatings, Unseating and Appointments

2. Notice of Unseatings (*no vote necessary*)

Yu Guo to be unseated as Departmental Representative.

Mirza Sarwar to be unseated as House Finance Representative.

3. BIRT the following appointment is approved:

Conny Lin be seated as AMS/GSS Health and Dental Representative.

Point of information. Conny: if second seat is filled?



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Tobias: yes. President is automatically seated to the committee.

MOVER: Antoine Ponsard SECONDER: Andrea Jones

MOTION PASSED by unanimous consent

4. BIRT the following appointment is approved:

Charlie Deng be appointed as GSS Financial and Executive Oversight Officer for a term of 1 year beginning August 31, 2015.

MOVER: Krish Maharaj SECONDER: Kreso Sola

Point of information. Maayan: isn't it an elected position?

Tobias: recent changes to the Bylaws approved at December SGM established a new position of Financial and Executive Oversight Officer to be appointed at July Council for a one-year term. Because of the gap between Executive Elections and FEO appointment, Charlie was appointed Interim FEO to align to the policies set out in the Bylaws. Term starts on August 1st.

MOTION PASSED

D. Approval of Minutes

5. BIRT the minutes of the GSS Council meeting dated "June 25th, 2015" be approved as presented.

Amendment: to remove submission "Crucifix Neck Crank" deemed friendly.

Back to motion as amended.

MOVER: Andrea Jones SECONDER: David Gill

MOTION PASSED

22/0/3

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

Academic and External committee January 7, 2015;

Academic and External committee January 21, 2015;

Academic and External committee February 4, 2015;

Academic and External committee February 17, 2015;

Academic and External committee March 3, 2015;

Academic and External committee March 17, 2015;

Academic and External committee April 7, 2015;

Academic and External committee April 21, 2015;

Academic and External committee May 5, 2015;

Academic and External committee May 19, 2015;

Academic and External committee June 2, 2015;

Academic and External committee June 16, 2015;

House Finance committee May 19, 2015;

House Finance committee June 2, 2015;

House Finance committee June 16, 2015;

MOVER: Kreso Sola

SECONDER: Antoine Ponsard

MOTION PASSED

22/0/4

E. Executive Remarks

(3 minutes)

- President – Tobias Friedel
 - Thanked everyone for coming out, nice to have quorum present;
 - Had meetings with UBC VP Students, and recently appointed VP Finance; UBC budget has been presented along with the information on how it's been done; will share details at the next Councils;
 - Charlie D. presented GSS goals to student leadership and UBC administration; expecting to collaborate on that with student leaders; continue to have an ongoing conversation, hope to be fruitful.
- Vice-President External Relations – Gloria Liu
 - Started working on Federal election campaign – contacting different political parties and student organizations. Have already met with various groups on campus, neighbourhood, and with New Democrats, Liberal and Green parties. Receiving a very good response. Also, contacted CASA, and working with SFU. In the next couple of months will be setting up information booths.
 - Attending CASA in August to share experience about how to promote Federal elections.
- Financial and Executive Oversight Officer – Charlie Deng
 - Met with VPS, a lot of issues discussed are of academic nature – advocacy, student engagement, supervisor-student relationships. Looking to push some policies. Discussion on different topics including experiential learning will be continued. GSS will strive to influence and have a stronger voice for grad specific interests.
 - Next Monday, July 21, fiscal year will be set up with a report to be prepared, and presented to Council. Working with HF and staff to find ways to become more efficient in terms of expenses – cutting travelling cost, catering to minimize waste, etc. Also brought this to CPC to develop some policies. EOC met once to go over Executive goals and provide feedback.

F. Committee, Taskforce, and Operations Reports

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(3 minutes)

- Academic & External Affairs Committee – Bingyu Liu
 - Reviewed an Emergency Fund application which was later rejected;
 - Discussed Graduate Scholarships;
 - Discussed if can vie AMS for bursary funds (\$10,000) coming from Province. Will update Council on this;
 - Discussed strategies on Acadia Park.
- Code and Policy Committee – Julienne Jagdeo
 - CPC met at least once a month;
 - Worked on Signing Authority, HR Handbook approved at the past Council meetings;
 - Currently working on updating Policy Manual regarding Executive; making sure that new positions fit in the Policy Manual with respective responsibilities and duties;
 - Working with FEO to expand policies.
- Executive Oversight Committee – Charlie Deng
 - Working on executive goals making sure that they align;
 - Provided feedback to be more specific and inclusive.
- House-Finance Committee – Shona Robinson
 - Looking into the ways to save money in terms of food for committees, etc.;
 - Getting regular event reports from Charlie for events like departmental BBQs, etc.
- Human Resources Committee – Tobias Friedel
 - Nothing to report.
- Services Committee – Sima Valizadeh
 - Reviewed plans for GSS orientation.
- Strategic Planning ad hoc committee – Chris Roach
 - Hasn't met.
- Building Lease Renewal ad hoc committee – Kevin Mehr
 - Hasn't met.

G. Representative Reports

(3 minutes)

- AMS Council – Tobias Friedel
 - Missed meetings, so nothing to report.

- Senate – Sarah Simon and Nick Dawson
- on summer break.

J. Council Motions

10. Event Fund Application

WHEREAS \$140 from the Events Fund was previously approved for the Mechanical Engineering Graduate Association (MEGA) Ice Skating Social and Luncheon (February 17th, 2015), and

WHEREAS the total cost of the event was \$201.86 and no other funding has been available to cover the cost of this graduate student event,

BIRT Council allocates up to an additional \$62 from the Events Fund to help MEGA cover the costs of this event.

MOVER: Krish Maharaj

SECONDER: Chen Vu

Motion to postpone till next Council meeting.

MOVER: Tobias Friedel

SECONDER: Kreso Sola

Motivation: Have not received any more information since last month.

Q from Maayan: can we invite this person to the next Council meeting to explain?

Chair: yes.

MOTION PASSED

11. Ad hoc Committee on Harassment and Discrimination

BIRT Council strikes an ad hoc committee on Harassment and Discrimination with the following terms of reference.

- conduct research on graduate student experiences with harassment and discrimination at UBC
- investigate the concept of consent with a focus on the graduate student perspective
- identify potential solutions, processes and policies at other organisations in Canada, USA and worldwide.
- develop external policies and procedures to address and prevent issues of harassment and discrimination at UBC
- make recommendations on advocacy strategies to the offices of the GSS President, GSS VP Academic and GSS VP External.

MOVER: David Gill

SECONDER: Charlie Deng

Motivation: At least 3 Execs will be working on the harassment and discrimination issues as a goal for the year. This comes out of recent assaults which have happened on campus. Want to hear graduate student stories and invite to participate in our advocacy work on it.

Antoine: have heard about assault cases, but this is about harassment and discrimination which is not quite the same. Why?

Tobias: assault is a form of harassment and discrimination. Want to have a board view on the issue.

Conny: Can you give any examples about what types of things are harassment and discrimination?

Tobias: Sexual assault, bullying, racism, accent discrimination, threats from supervisors are all example. Committee would collect stories about the types of things grad students experience at UBC.

David: Harassment and Discrimination is vague, so we want to know what this committee will do.

Nick: why go after this in particular? At Senate, they are doing Mental and Health and Wellbeing which is even more holistic. Why not look at all those issues too?

Tobias: want to be able to get into specific actions rather than umbrella terms around wellness.

Conny: advocacy has been an important part of the GSS, students who go through this need our support.

Charlie: with supervisor, this is an issue that is specific to graduate students and not undergraduates. There's a power imbalance there and this is something we should tackle head on through this committee.

Dylan: The GSS is really the only body we can go to right now about these issues. Departments often lack resources to deal with this appropriately.

David: the ad hoc committee is about research, right?

Speaker: the terms of reference are laid out in the motion.

Yaseen: how will the consultation with the wider community be achieved?

Tobias: many options. We have done world cafes for the strategic plan. There will probably also be an anonymous online form that we can use to gather stories. We have basic outreach tools, but we will try to be as open and creative as possible.

Yaseen: just want to make sure it's not just a lip service. Please focus on outcomes.

Julienne: What's the membership composition of this committee?

Tobias: Intention was to have it follow general rules for membership in Policy Manual.

Nick: Think this is 100% awesome. Strongly encourage to take the work achieved to the Senate committee on mental health and wellbeing.

Tobias: Senate, UBC Administration, Universities Canada are the obvious places to bring our conclusions once the committee's work is done.

Antoine: We seem to have a lot of committees, and many empty spots that aren't filled. Concerned that we may have more committees that can properly be supported.

Tobias: Ad hoc committees are of temporary nature and generally expire at the next General meeting. Other ad hoc committees currently in existence have expiry dates before then. They are set to do project work focused in a specific area. Depending on how this goes it could go for a longer term or become a standing committee.

Christie: Think this is an important topic, but wondering if there's a set of rules under which committees operate for things like privacy.

Tobias: training will be provided to ensure committee members, executives and staff treat things with the sensitivity that is required in these situations.

David: Please consider ethical concerns about how data and information is stored.

MOTION PASSED by unanimous consent.

K. Other Business and Notice of Motions

L. Discussion Period

- Health and Dental Plan - Coverage for Practitioners



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Tobias: seat on AMS/GSS Health and Dental Plan committee. A possible change of coverage is being discussed. Have not seen the proposal yet. There are two options: continue with a current plan, or have upgrades to the current one - higher per visit coverage, up to a \$25 starting at first visit, but lower overall cap down to \$400 of combined practitioner services. With the new terms, the cost of plan will go up only by \$1.30 per year. Want to get a feel what grads think, also asking to bring this to the constituencies for consultation.

Q from Jun: what do these services cover?

Tobias: massage, chiropractic, therapist – this type of services. Asked Plan Provider to show usage, to which response was that they do not collect data separately, rather for grad and undergrad together.

Yulia: are there any deductibles?

Tobias: \$25 gets reimbursed starting at the first visit.

Yulia: do you have to pay the full amount and will be reimbursed later, or first visit is covered?

Tobias: don't have those details. Will follow up.

Charlie: used massage and etc.; it becomes financially beneficial only if used less than 20 times.

Chair: billing depends on a provider.

Tobias: did research themselves. Inquiry started by the previous members. So, came up with a proposal to cover more services by reducing overall cap with higher reimbursement rate per visit. Committee felt not ready to make the decision, need to have a good idea of what grads think and voice it there.

Maayan: is it possible to remind us of details in the email?

Tobias: certainly.

M. Submissions

- ABCS Regulations.
- Letter from the UBC President

N. Next Meeting

Thursday, August 20th 2015

O. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 7:04pm.

Meeting adjourned.