

# GSS Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 19, 2014

GSS Ballroom



GRADUATE STUDENT SOCIETY | UBC

**Present:** Colùm Connolly, Tobias Friedel, Arni Thrastarson, Shona Robinson, Sima Valizadeh, Pooyah Hosseini, Julienne Jagdeo, Alyssa Kirlin, Lena Patsa, Mary Connolly, Sarah Simon, Raphael Rocco, Parker Jobin, Michelle Kwon, George Furey, Iris Luk (Catherine Jenkins proxy), Nazral Islam, Rafia Mahzabin, Angela Zhou, Hamid Omid, Min Xiu, Hafizur Rahman, Alexis Black, Andrea Jones, Mario Jardon, Ekatarina Grguric (Proxy for Mitchell), Nichole DeMichelis (proxy for Inti), Natalie Marshall, Daniel Wood, Kresimir Sola, Adam Luna, Enav Zusman, Christopher Quick, Jack Hickmott, Kevin Mehr, Luz Cavdillo-Mata, Chris Dickman

**Regrets:** Mahsa Mojahednia, Omid Nourbakhsh, Sneha Salani, Vivian Lam, Jonathan Newell, Ali Mcaffé, Matt Sacheli, Laura Bohachvk

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:54pm.

1. BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

**MOVER:** George Furey

**SECONDER:** Min Xia

**MOTION PASSES**

Amend the agenda to add a presentation (at the start of the 'Presentations' section) and a corresponding motion from the Bangladesh Student Association (following the presentation).

**MOVER:** Colùm Connolly

**SECONDER:** Tobias Friedel

**MOTION PASSES**

## B. Introductions

## C. Presentations to Council

*(10 minutes, 5 minutes for questions)*

- **Bangladesh Student Association – Bengali New Year Celebration, Presenter: Yafee Muntasin**
  - An event to celebrate the Bengali New Year, one of the most important times in the Bengali-speaking areas of the world.
  - The event has an anticipated audience of 300 people. Its target audience is Bengali-speaking students and their families in greater Vancouver who are originally from Bangladesh and India, but it is open to all UBC students, faculty and alumni.
  - This is a cultural event including music, dance, drama and poetry, with a traditional Bengali dinner to follow the cultural program.
  - GSS sponsorship is to be acknowledged and boldly highlighted in all event materials and promotion.
  - The Bangladesh Student Association is also planning other events in the future to showcase Bengali culture. These include a rally and ethnic dinner, a showcase of Bengali handicrafts, an International Mother Language Day celebration, and Bengali movie nights at the Norm theatre in the SUB. All of the events will be aimed at all UBC students, alumni and other university associates.
  - An additional \$250.00 is requested for the Bengali New Year Celebration event.

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- It was asked if the event will be held solely in Bengali or if there will also be English components. The answer was that it will be a mixed-language event incorporating both Bengali and English – videos will have subtitles, and in the past non-Bengali speakers who attended offered feedback that all events were understandable.
- An inquiry was made about how many of the event participants are expected to be graduate students – the answer was a rate of 90%.

## 2. Bangladesh Student Association – Bengali New Year Celebration

WHEREAS the HF Committee recommends GSS Council to approve an additional \$250 to support this event;

BIRT GSS Council approves up to an additional \$250.00 from the Special Events Fund (12-809) to support the Bangladesh Student Association's Bengali New Year Celebration.

**MOVER:** Jack Hickmott

**SECONDER:** Colúm Connolly

**MOTION PASSES**

- **GSS Event Funding Reform – Presenter: Shona Robinson**
  - Shona's presentation is inspired by the discussions of the House-Finance (HF) committee in respect to how the GSS can make the process of requesting funds easier for UBC's graduate student population
  - The HF committee has spent the past few meetings gathering and debating ideas. The committee could benefit from feedback and other ideas from the entire GSS Council
  - Under the current structure, there are two different funds: the Special Events Fund (SEF) and the Departmental Organization Fund (DOF):
    - The SEF can be used for events in any location that are organized by any or by multiple grad student organizations and that have a 50% or higher rate of grad student attendance.
    - The DOF can be used for events organized by a sole department; the events must take place in the GSS building.
  - While the GSS tries to encourage all event organizers to use our building, SEF beneficiaries do not have to hold their events in the Graduate Student Centre; this was identified as an issue
  - Approving funding for events under this current structure takes a lot of time in both HF and in Council meetings due to a lack of framework; hence the need for a new funding model.
  - One alternative is to assemble a list of immutable requirements for events, such as: must be non-profit, of social, cultural and/or academic significance to grad students, and organized by grad students for grad students. We could offer more funding if more than one department is involved, if the event is longer, if it is held in the Graduate Student Centre, etc.
  - One of the central questions the HF committee is considering is who should have the authority to accept or decline funding proposals:
    - Currently, the HF committee compares the event to the existing guidelines and to past events in order to determine precedent.
    - An alternative is to have the VP-Finance review the funding proposals, make a decision and then have two other Executives sign-off on the decision (such as the VP-Finance, VP-Admin, or the President)

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- The HF committee is considering two options for how to distribute funds:
  - (A) Combine the SEF and DOF into one fund
    - Identified pros: allows the GSS to consider each graduate student organization separately and to have contact with each one, thereby helping to integrate the GSS across campus
    - Identified cons: each department would no longer be guaranteed its current \$3/grad student
  - (B) Create a third fund in addition to the SEF and DOF for interdepartmental/interorganization events
    - Identified pros: it retains the \$3/grad student guarantee for departments; it explicitly encourages interdepartmental and interorganization co-operation.
    - Identified cons: creating a third fund doesn't address the central issue of trying to simply the process of applying for funding for events from the GSS; there is increased potential for loopholes that may lead to uneven distribution of funding.
- It was asked how the GSS can actually check the rate of grad student participants in an event, to which the answer was that currently we operate on the trust system, knowing that we can take a look back at event records. The VP-Finance pointed out that an easy way to check would be to ask that each event keep a sign-up sheet with attendees' names and student numbers.
- The HF Committee Chair emphasized that nothing is yet final and that the committee is looking for more ideas at this point.
- **GSS Budget Proposal – Tobias Friedel**
  - The VP-Finance identified a series of general changes: streamlining the use of budget lines, combining several expenses to prevent over budgeting, reallocating costs to appropriate departments/budget lines, implementing a new staff model, and some changes in the services that the GSS offers students (possibly offering legal and financial aid to grad students -especially during tax season -, holding more regular social events, and creating a few 'GSS signature events' that would reach more students).
  - The 'House' budget now includes all full-time staff members and accounts for the additional staff members (corresponding to the new staff model).
  - The 'Executive' budget includes a budget for a SGM (planned to be held in late fall)
  - The 'Academic and External' budget includes an increased travel budget so as to facilitate higher GSS involvement across Canada.
  - An inquiry was made into why the GSS should provide assistance with taxes to grad students when the UBC tax clinic already runs a tax-help clinic that is open to all students. The VP-Services pointed out that in contrast with the UBC tax clinic, the GSS would organize general seminars and info sessions, and would not take on individual cases of filling out paperwork, etc.; thus meeting a different need and fulfilling a different purpose than the UBC tax clinic.
  - A concern was raised that conducting year-to-year comparisons of staff salaries would become more difficult under the new budget. It was asked how the GSS can maintain comparison within one department consistent with previous years (for such issues as the distribution of staff time across

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different departments). The VP-Finance pointed out that departments shouldn't necessarily be thought of as separate entities, because they all have the common goal of providing services to grad students.

- It was asked if the GSS should take up the issue of providing all grad students with a general lounge space to study, gather, etc. The answer was that there have been some past initiatives to make the Graduate Student Centre such a place, but they never came to full fruition. The VP-Admin pointed out that the upcoming opening of the AMS Student Nest will be a good opportunity for the GSS to consider how to use our space in the new building.
- It was asked how much of the GSS budget will be used on staffing and conference travel compared to other items? The VP-Finance answered that in the long term, we are spending about \$250 000 - \$270 000 on staffing out of the roughly \$600 000 that we have as income, and about \$30 000 for travel expenses.
- An inquiry was made in regards to what happens with any carried-over funds from year to year. The VP-Finance explained that it goes towards additional projects and initiatives for the following year. The VP-Finance pointed out that this year the figures are high because after the pub was closed and the Society had a large amount of deficit, spending has been conservative and actual figures have been much lower than what was budgeted. The VP-Finance indicated that a lot of money has accumulated, which puts the GSS in a position to invest in the future and make appropriate structural changes.

Motion to extend time by five minutes.

**MOVER:** Colúm Connolly

**SECONDER:** Pooya Hosseini

**MOTION PASSES**

- It was asked how the GSS is planning to encourage attendance at the planned SGM, as meeting quorum has been a challenge in the past. The VP-Finance indicated that the Society needs to bring its most interesting issues to the table (such as the Strategic Plan).
- **Graduate Council Seating Reform – Presenter: George Furey**
  - The Graduate Council is a council composed of individuals at the university who discuss grad student issues and policies and help improve grad student life at UBC.
  - The Council is undergoing some structural changes; the number of faculty who sit on it is being significantly reduced and the number of composing grad students is being reduced from 15 to 6. This is because meeting quorum has been a consistent challenge.
  - A lot of the Council's policies require Senate approval before being implemented, but the restructuring represents a great opportunity for grad students to have our voices heard
  - It was highlighted that the GSS' current involvement could be increased as poor attendance has been a problem.
  - The Graduate Council is an important body that we could get more benefit from on behalf of all grad students. It was emphasized that the 2013-2014 GSS President's suggestion that grad student representatives organize pre-meetings in order to prepare and to present a united front at the Council meetings was very successful and that this practice should be continued.

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- It is completely up to the GSS how to choose its six representatives to the Graduate Council.
- Under the current structure of 15 representatives, 8 are from different faculties, 6 are at-large, and the Graduate Student Senator also got a seat. The figure of 15 now needs to be reduced to 6.
- There are also four seats on standing committees – the GSS is currently waiting for clarification on whether these four seats need to be filled from the six student members on the Graduate Council or if they can be filled by other grad students.
- The two central questions GSS Council faces are: (a) does the Society want representation across different faculties and (b) should Senators and/or Executives receive ex-officio seats?
- There are two main options the GSS Council should consider:
  - (a) Faculty representation. If there is no representative from one faculty, the respective seat becomes open to any other faculty.
  - (b) Independent of faculty representation. Five seats are to be elected at large from general GSS membership at GSS Council. The ex-officio member can be the VP-Academic and External Affairs or anyone from the Ac-Ex committee.
- A clarification was requested on the definition of 'GSS membership' and it was explained that a GSS 'member-at-large' refers to any UBC graduate student. Should a grad student who does not sit on GSS Council be elected to the Graduate Council, the individual would also then be seated on GSS Council.
- It was pointed out that there could also be an 'in-between' option in which no single faculty could hold a majority of seats on the Graduate Council. The answer was that such an option was discussed but that it would be difficult to determine where to draw the boundary in a manner that wouldn't be simply arbitrary.

### D. Executive Remarks

*(3 minutes)*

- **President - Colúm Connolly**  
The GSS hosted the Alliance of BC Students AGM. The last month involved work on this event, on the GSS budget, on human resources tasks, on the initiative for the Society to be able to directly send e-mails to grad students, and on the Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey (a key initiative for future Society lobbying and strategic planning).
- **Vice-President Academic and External Affairs – Daniel Wood**  
Worked on budget and on Executive goals. In addition, has been heavily focused on external lobbying and met with the UBC-area MLA David Eby. Hired and trained a new Advocacy Coordinator. Currently seeking the participation of Councillors for different volunteer projects across campus – Writing Week, IT Services, Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey participation (focus groups, etc.).
- **Vice-President Administration – Kevin Mehr**  
Ran a busy and successful convocations season. Also working on improving resources; as the GSS is currently in the process of replacing two full-time staff members, has taken on a variety of tasks as needed, such as providing bookings and event-planning assistance for students.

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- **Vice-President Services – Min Xia**

Worked on organizing and finalizing a variety of events, classes (Zumba, French, art, etc.) and the summer sports league (18 soccer teams). Carried out a successful World Cup social in Koerner's pub and will organize about two more of these socials over the next month as the soccer tournament unfolds. In addition, currently working on preparing for the upcoming September Orientation and meeting with the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

- **Vice-President Finance – Tobias Friedel**

Focused on preparing the budget and assisted other Executives in finalizing their budgets. Worked on events funding reform and recently started editing the pamphlet for the September GSS Orientation in collaboration with the VP-Services.

Motion to recess for 10 minutes.

**MOVER:** Colúm Connolly

**SECONDER:** Arni Thrastarson

**MOTION PASSES**

Meeting reconvened at 7:28pm.

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

*(3 minutes)*

- **Academic and External Affairs Committee – George Furey**

The committee had two meetings since the last GSS Council meeting. Emergency Fund policy changes have now been passed to the Code and Policy Committee. Currently working on other policy changes. The committee is to meet frequently throughout the rest of the summer.

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

The committee has been working on putting together the motions regarding changes to the Policy Manual that are now ready to be voted on. As sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 have been reviewed, the committee is now a quarter of the way through the manual. The committee has also been working in collaboration with the Academic and External Affairs committee on changes to the Emergency Fund Policy in order to make it easier for grad students to apply. At this time, the committee is requesting feedback from Councillors for a policy defining the role of GSS Councillors.

- **Executive Oversight Committee – Jeff Abeysekera**

The committee began analyzing the results from the feedback surveys on Executives' performance with the intent to present them to Council in the upcoming months. Will meet with each Executive member and present them with their individual results. Also documented a new policy for dealing with Executive conflict and currently working on guidelines for Executive reimbursement.

- **House-Finance Committee – Pooya Hosseini**

The committee met three times in the last four weeks and worked on several issues in collaboration with the VP-Finance and the VP-Administration. Also worked with the VP-Finance on the budget. Will

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continue work on events funding reform and booking rate policy; the Committee is recruiting new members to help with these tasks at this exciting time.

- **Human Resources Committee – Jack Hickmott**

The committee has completed two big tasks. After reviewing 100 resumes and conducting 6 interviews, a new Events Coordinator has been hired and is to start in the position in July. The committee has also extended an offer to an individual to fill the Administrative Assistant position.

- **Services Committee – Sima Valizadeh**

The committee has approved two documents: one for event promotion and another for event organization and data collection. Moreover, the group is working on the various classes offered (such as ice skating and the World Cup socials).

### F. Representative Reports

*(3 minutes)*

- **AMS Council – Christopher Roach**

There have been two AMS Council meetings since the last GSS Council meeting.

The AMS' preliminary budget was passed; it is noteworthy that the Society is planning on having a budgeted surplus for the first time in two years.

The AMS has begun working on its own strategic plan for the Society.

The AMS has signed an agreement with UBC on the child care facility that will be in the AMS Student Nest.

The Society has rejoined the Alliance of British Columbia Students, something that all members must now do, with organizational fees in effect.

The AMS is considering cancelling the 2015 Block Party due to a reported lack of suitable venue.

- **Board of Governors – Christopher Roach**

There were three items of interest during the open session of the Board of Governors meeting:

(1) The report on student financial aid indicated that the amount of aid the university has been giving out through bursaries and scholarships has decreased by 1.9% over the past year, despite tuition increases of 2%. The Board raised concern about this matter and it was agreed that this would be looked into in order to see what can be changed for next year.

(2) Tuition was increased in five professional programs: the Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD), the Masters in Community and Regional Planning, the Masters of Engineering in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering, the Masters in Physical Therapy/PhD in Rehabilitation Sciences, and the Graduate Certificate in Adult Education.

(3) Several campus buildings received important Board approval, allowing them to move forward. They include Orchard Commons (a new 1000-member residence), the new UBC Aquatics Centre, and the UBC Athletics National Soccer Development Centre/Whitecaps Football Club.

- **Graduate Council – George Furey**

Refer to the minutes of the 'Reforms on Graduate Council' presentation.

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- **Senate – Julienne Jagdeo**  
No updates; Senate does not meet in the summer period.

### G. Approval of Minutes

3. BIRT the minutes of the GSS Council meeting dated “May 15, 2014” be approved as presented.

**MOVER:** Christopher Dickman

**SECONDER:** Tobias Friedel

Some modifications are needed (attendance needs to be added, on page 4 it needs to be indicated that seatings were passed, full names are needed for motion movers and seconders and for appointments, adjournment time needs to be added). Speaker recommends tabling the approval of the minutes.

BIRT the minutes of the GSS Council meeting dated “May 15, 2014” be tabled for approval at the July GSS Council meeting.

**MOVER:** Jack Hickmott

**SECONDER:** Tobias Friedel

**MOTION PASSES**

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

*Code and Policy Committee – April 25, 2014*

*Code and Policy Committee – May 16, 2014*

*Academic and External Committee – May 8, 2014*

*Academic and External Committee – May 21, 2014*

*Executive Committee – April 8, 2014*

*Executive Committee – April 15, 2014*

*Executive Committee – April 22, 2014*

**MOVER:** Tobias Friedel

**SECONDER:** Arni Thrastarson

**MOTION PASSES**

### H. Seatings, Unseatings, and Appointments

5. BIRT the following seating is approved:

Enav Zusman be seated to the Services Committee (non-voting).

**MOVER:** Christopher Dickman

**SECONDER:** Christopher Quick

**MOTION PASSES**

Amend the agenda to include a seating to the UBC Student Sustainability Council.

**MOVER:** George Furey

**SECONDER:** Daniel Wood

**MOTION PASSES**

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6. BIRT Lena Patsa be seated to the UBC Student Sustainability Council.

**MOVER:** Christopher Dickman

**SECONDER:** Christopher Quick

**MOTION PASSES**

Amend the agenda to include a seating to the University Health and Safety Committee.

**MOVER:** Colúm Connolly

**SECONDER:** George Furey

**MOTION PASSES**

7. BIRT Enav Zusman be seated to the University Health and Safety Committee.

**MOVER:** Christopher Quick

**SECONDER:** Jeff Abeysekera

**MOTION PASSES**

### I. Council Motions

8. GSS Budget 2014/2015

Whereas the HF committee recommends the GSS budget proposal (2014/2015) for GSS Council approval. Motion Passed (5 in favour, 1 abstention. Note: 4 Executive members in the meeting and 2 Councillors);

BIRT GSS Council adopts the GSS budget proposal 2014/2015 as the GSS budget 2014/2015.

**MOVER:** Tobias Friedel

**SECONDER:** Arni Thrastarson

- A concern was raised in regards to the increase in the House budget line for staff salaries; the issue was brought up that this increase is perhaps too high.
- The President stated that based on the retreat, the Executive team wanted to make sure the GSS would be well-supported. After consulting the GSS mission statement, it seemed fitting to have three full-time staff (once the hiring process is complete). The President added that a Policy Research position and a General Manager position will be added in order for the Society to function more smoothly. There is also the potential in the future for a Communications and Marketing staff member, as communication with members-at-large has consistently been a core issue for the Society.
- The VP-Finance indicated that while the increase looks quite substantial, several budget lines were merged first, therefore making the difference seem much bigger at first glance. It was noted that other budget lines have been used to accommodate for that increase.
- It was pointed out that while a substantial amount of the budget is being used for staff salaries, membership fees do not represent the Society's only source of funding. Having more staff will make the GSS more effective so that the Society can in turn provide more services to students.
- The VP-Administration pointed out that having a full-time staff member to manage building operations and building management is very needed, as we do not have anyone at the moment who is in the building the entire day.

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## Vote:

**MOTION PASSES (24 for, 0 against, 5 abstentions)**

### 9. GSS Alliance of British Columbia Students (ABCS) membership

Whereas the GSS is a founding member of the ABCS;

Whereas the GSS has been an active member of the Alliance and is committed to continuing provincial advocacy within the ABCS;

BIRT GSS Council ratifies membership in the Alliance of BC Students with the membership fee of \$0.75 per FTE + \$100.

**MOVER:** Christopher Dickman

**SECONDER:** Jack Hickmott

- The VP-Academic and External highlighted that it is very important that the GSS Executive expand the Society's external lobbying this year. The Alliance is composed of 150 000 students across the province and the GSS VP-Academic and External is one of the Vice-Chairs of the ABCS.
- The President pointed out that the GSS is already a member of the Alliance, but that this motion is being brought forward in the interest of transparency. When the GSS first joined, it was under a 'whereas there are no fees' clause and there are now fees associated with ABCS membership. The President indicated that the membership fee was incorporated into the 2014/2015 Society budget (that was just passed in the previous motion).

## Vote:

**MOTION PASSES (24 in favour, 3 abstentions, 0 against)**

Amend the agenda to include a seating for a GSS Representative to the ABCS Board of Directors.

**MOVER:** Colúm Connolly

**SECONDER:** Tobias Friedel

**MOTION PASSES**

- The VP-Academic and External explained that the ABCS puts forward policies to lobby the government for. There is a three-day session in Victoria in which organization leaders sit in with MLAs and discuss student issues with them.
- It was asked what the meeting schedule is, in response to which the President clarified that there is no set meeting schedule. There is one board meeting per month and there are also three subcommittees, but it is up to the individual how many subcommittees to sit on.
- Nominations were taken for Tobias Friedel and for Julienne Jagdeo to serve as the GSS Representative to the ABCS Board of Directors, but a call for quorum was called before the representative could be chosen through a vote.

A call for quorum took place at 8:24pm.

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It was determined that the meeting lost quorum (28 needed, only 25 present).  
Meeting to proceed by entertaining discussions but not motions.

~~10. Policy Manual Section 1~~

~~BIRT Council approves the proposed amendments to Section 1 of the Policy Manual as presented.~~

~~BIFRT these amendments will not take effect until September 1, 2014.~~

~~11. Policy Manual Section 3~~

~~BIRT Council approves the proposed amendments to Section 3 of the Policy Manual as presented.~~

~~BIFRT these amendments will not take effect until September 1, 2014.~~

~~12. Policy Manual Section 4~~

~~BIRT Council approves the proposed amendments to Section 4 of the Policy Manual as presented.~~

~~BIFRT these amendments will not take effect until September 1, 2014.~~

~~BIFRT any current Executive who has, as of the May 2014 Council Meeting, already exceeded their allocated vacation time under this amended policy shall be granted the appropriate amount of additional vacation time as to not require deductions from their honorarium.~~

~~13. Policy Manual Section 14~~

~~BIRT Council approves the proposed amendments to Section 14 of the Policy Manual as presented.~~

## J. Other Business and Notice of Motions

None.

## K. Discussion Period

### A) Graduate Council Seating Reform

- The two main things that have to be decided is whether we want our composition to be Faculty representation-based and if we want ex-officio places reserved for Senators and/or Executives.
- The President emphasized that the Graduate Council wants the names of the 6 individuals by the end of August, so the next Council meeting in July will be the last time that GSS Council discusses this issue, hence the current need for deliberations.
- It was pointed out that now that the GSS has two representatives on the UBC-Vancouver Senate, GSS Council would have to decide if the ex-officio position would go to just one of the Senators or if we need to have two ex-officio positions.

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- The possibility of having a by-election so the GSS general membership could vote was raised. Another possibility would be to have a just-GSS-Council-wide election. The President pointed out that running an election might not be the best option as we should be able to rely on Council members to fill these places on the Graduate Council.
- It was brought up that GSS Council should make sure that there is at least some diversity within the group, whatever form it may take (such as no single faculty being allowed to hold a majority of seats).
- It was emphasized that the main argument against the faculty representation-based option is that in the quest for total faculty representation balance, the GSS might end up selecting individuals who might be less motivated than others simply to meet the goal of needing someone from a particular faculty.
- The suggestion was made that GSS Council should select people who have gone to meetings in the past so that we nominate graduate students who are committed and interested and who could really make a difference.
- It was brought up that the definition of “Faculty” also matters, as such parameters sometimes put smaller programs at a disadvantage. The example of Nursing was given, which is categorized under the Faculty of Applied Science, but whose members often have different needs and concerns than those of Engineering students.
- It was asked if there would be a way to unseat any representatives who do not regularly attend the meetings. The President pointed out that as per the Graduate Council’s policies, the term of membership is one year; therefore, we need to focus on choosing motivated individuals as we cannot replace them for an entire year.
- It was suggested that a GSS committee with extra graduate students be created, and that this body could be used as a pool of proxies should a selected representative not be able to attend a meeting. The President pointed out that this might be counterintuitive to the Graduate Council’s current direction – they are reducing their numbers in order to choose only a small group of highly motivated individuals.
- A concern was raised that if both GSS representatives to the UBC-Vancouver Senate are seated as ex-officio members, this would represent one third of the available seats – and therefore go against the spirit of encouraging diversity.
- The point was raised that GSS Council should focus on identifying specific criteria that representatives should demonstrate and then evaluate applicants based on the established criteria.

### **B) GSS Events Funding**

- The VP-Finance reiterated that the House Finance Committee is open to all ideas and suggestions on how the GSS can support grad student events. The goal is to make the funds easy to access and to build relationships with grad student organizations around campus.
- The HF Committee Chair indicated that there are three main ways in which GSS Council can proceed:
  - (1) Avoid any new fund restructuring proposal and simply revise existing structure – this would be very time-consuming.
  - (2) Bring forward an entire new structuring proposal that will cover pre-existing loopholes – this is where the committee is looking for more feedback and insight.
  - (3) Add an entirely new kind of fund.
- It was emphasized that it would be a good idea to keep documentation on events that we support – copies of proposals, photos, etc. for GSS institutional memory. The VP-Finance responded that regardless of what is decided for funding reform, keeping more data and having an event report returned to the GSS for any event that receives financial support is something that will be implemented.

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- The President indicated that the Executive team would really like to see the GSS reform the existing structure and to have it accessible for September events. The Events Director position will be used to facilitate support for graduate students who are planning events, so that along with funding, we also offer grad students some mentorship.
- It was asked how much money will be offered per event if the currently existing SEF and DOF will be combined. It was also asked if the GSS will provide signage with our name and logo for the events. The answer was that regardless of its structure, the fund(s) will always have a limit, and that applicants can always present their case to Council should they want additional funding. The GSS provides banners with the Society name and logo that successful applicants can put up at their events.
- It was suggested that the new Marketing and Communications staff member (should the Society create this position) help the leaders of the sponsored events with GSS name and logo display and with event advertisement.
- It was also suggested that the GSS keep a list of groups and events that we sponsor, and publish this list on the Society website in order to increase visibility of our support.
- The President pointed out that the Executive team wants the Society to sponsor 100 events this year (more than in the past); if the House-Finance committee were to vote on every single one, this would stall the committee. Avoiding such a problem is the central rationale behind the reform principle. It was also highlighted that other universities require members of their Council to attend all or some of the events that the Society sponsors – likewise, it would be wonderful to have a few UBC GSS Councillors attend each event that the Society supports.
- It was put forward that Council reflect on what kind of events we want to sponsor – the specific example of grad student conferences was brought up, and it was suggested that Council could declare to fund either all or none, in the interest of expedience and simplification.
- The President encouraged all Councillors to reach out to all of the graduate students in their department for feedback on event funding reform. Once Councillors have collected such comments, they are to bring them to the House-Finance Committee Chair and/or to the next GSS Council meeting in July.

### C) Other Discussion

The July council meeting falls on the birthday of beloved councillor Arni Thrastarson!

### 10. Submissions

### 11. Next Meeting

Thursday, July 17, 2014.

### 12. Adjournment

14. BIRT there being no further business, the meeting be adjourned at 9:18 pm.

**MOVER:** Colúm Connolly  
**MOTION PASSES**

**SECONDER:** Tobias Friedel