

# GSS Council Meeting Agenda

May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013

GSS Ballroom



Present: Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle, Barak Caracheo, Valeria Castellanos-Hurtado, Colúm Connolly, Christopher Dickman, Michael Fairchild, Tobias Friedel, George Furey, Julienne Jagdeo, Colleen Lau, Conny Lin, Yuanyuan Liu, Natalie Marshall, Lili Meng, Victor Padilla, Radu Racovita, Jahidur Rahman, Hafizur Rahman, Christopher Roach, Kathryn Rowswell, Rachel Roy, Ken Scott, Jens Vent-Schmidt, Jack Hickmott, Craig Kerr, Jeff Abeysekera, Baseer Abdul, Yifei Zhuang, Sima Valizadeh.

Regrets: Sneha Balani, Cynthia Mia, Ingrid Olson, Yvonne Dzal, Paul Save, Jan Luedert, David Waddell, Vivian Lam, Gwen Huber, Gabriela Badica. Marianne Haseloff, Bethany Schmidt

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:45.

1. BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

MOVED: Victor Padilla; SECOND: Conny Lin.

**PASSES**

## B. Introductions

## C. Presentations to Council

2. Business Operations and Building Update  
*Rob Teagle, Business Operations Supervisor*

- Rob described the process by which the Green room was cleaned and adapted for storage; thanks to adequate use of existing resources and volunteer efforts, the costs were lower than those budgeted (\$2,100 for cleaning; \$17,835 for lighting instead of \$3,500 and \$25,000, respectively).

3. Internal Review Task Force Plans for the Year  
Tobias Friedel, Internal Review Task Force Chair

- The main focuses of the IRTF are 1) a departmental review, 2) development of a communication strategy, and 3) creation of a GSS identity.
- The task force will review the code of practice, and present suggestions for improvement. They will also address the issue of people in the committee having overlapping responsibilities, as well as the number of staff at the GSS vs. our staffing needs. There will also be a focus on communication strategies towards graduate students, including newsletters, social media and spaces for feedback. It was suggested to review recommendations on communications practices by the AMS.
- Finally, there will be an analysis of the GSS organizational identity regarding other societies on campus, as well as other graduate student societies in Canada.

## D. Executive Remarks

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President – Christopher Roach:

- Spending a lot of time helping with the creation of the budget.
- Working to define the job responsibilities for the administrative assistant.
- Successfully updating all Council and committee contact lists.
- Been working on a MOU with the AMS and MBA Society; more details further down.

Vice-President Academic & External Affairs – Colúm Connolly:

- The Voice campaign is under way; will give more details in the next council meeting.
- Gave orientation to councillors seated at this meeting.
- Sent off the proposal against the Masters of Management international tuition increase to the UBC Board of Governors.

Vice-President Administration – Victor Padilla

- (see item 8).

Vice-President Finance – Lili Meng:

- Have been working mostly on the budget – thanks to everyone for their effort. More details in item number 10.

Vice-President Services – Yuanyuan Liu:

- Got a 10% discount for all GSS purchases from Save on Foods.
- Had a successful first hiking trip; the second hiking trip will take place on Sunday, May 26 and will be an intermediate hike (5 hours).
- Summer classes and sports leagues will begin next month; the latter will have 11 soccer teams and 12 softball teams.
- Had the first meeting with FOGS about orientation in which we scheduled events and speakers and discussed the communication strategies about orientation (considering having an info website).

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

Academic & External Committee – Colúm Connolly:

- Undergoing a review of all advocacy activities – UBC, provincial, federal – will begin with provincial-level graduate student associations.

Code and Policy Committee – Victor Padilla:

- Presented a plan for next year (item 8); it focuses on sending all the approved bylaws to the BC Society office and should be done before next meeting.

Human Resources Committee – Victor Padilla:

- Posted a job ad for the administrative assistant in 5 different places; have received 250 applications so far. We will start to conduct applicant pre-screenings shortly.

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Executive Oversight Committee

- None

House Finance Committee – Lili Meng:

- Discussed and received feedback on the budget from Services, House, Exec, and committee members.
- Approved two special event fund requests.

Services Committee – Yuanyuan Liu:

- Finalized the Services budget.
- Setting up the GSS cultural month; the first collaboration we are looking into is Bangladesh and the committee invites councillors to volunteer.

Business Operations – Rob Teagle:

- Currently working on a building maintenance plan.
- Looking to have Thea's lounge and the Ballroom painted by the end of June/July; the stairs in the main hallway and make office spaces are next on this list.
- Currently working on a system for the opening of Koerners.
- Due to Seedling's success, they offered to rent out the Penthouse throughout the year which would bring in a fair bit of revenue for the GSS.

## F. Representative Reports

AMS Council – Colúm Connolly:

- The AMS has been working on their budget.
- They reviewed the issue of the Masters of Management fee with the GSS (discussed further down);
- The Pharm. Sc. Program increased their student fees recently for the first time in a while.

AMS Health & Dental Committee – Sancho McCann (not present)

Graduate Council – Kristan Marchak:

- Will harmonize the application and procedures for the Tri-Council master's awards and standardize the application for all Ph.D. awards in 2014.

Senate – Julienne Jagdeo:

- The UBC President made a remark about recent election results and stated that the university will continue pushing with the government for more grad student spaces, funding, and more stable and predictable research funding for faculty.
- There was a minor change to the student leave of absence policy to make it clearer.

## G. Approval of Minutes

4. BIRT the minutes of the GSS Council meeting dated "April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013" be approved as presented.

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MOVED: Barak Caracheo; SECOND: Colúm Connolly.

Observations: Jeff Abeysekera: Colúm did not state that Chris is a complete idiot and should be impeached. Jeff wins the May Council meeting's "Shit Council didn't Say".

This will be struck from the minutes; no other mistakes/changes.

**PASSED**

5. BIRT the following committee minutes be approved as presented: "Executive Committee Minutes – April 16", "IRTF Minutes – April 26", "Services Committee Minutes – March 25"

MOVED: Barak Caracheo; SECOND: Colúm Connolly.

**PASSED**

## H. Seatings, Unseatings, and Appointments

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

Zoe Beavis has been unseated from Council as a Departmental Representative.

Amanda Grochowich has been unseated from Council as a Departmental Representative.

Melody Ren has been unseated from Council as a Departmental Representative.

Sabrina Rashid has been unseated from Council as a Departmental Representative.

Andrew Patterson has been unseated from Graduate Council.

Amanda Grochowich has been unseated from Graduate Council.

Gwendolyn Huber has been unseated from Graduate Council.

Jamie Marra has been unseated from Graduate Council.

Maxim Stykow has been unseated from the Executive Oversight Committee.

Maxim Stykow has been unseated from the Internal Review Task Force.

Cara Dong has been unseated from as an AMS Representative.

Sabrina Rashid has been unseated from the Services Committee.

Amanda Grochowich has been unseated from the House Committee.

Amanda Grochowich has been unseated from the Finance Committee.

Alexandra Wieland has been unseated from the House Committee.

Alexandra Wieland has been unseated from the Finance Committee.

Andrew Patterson has been unseated from the Executive Oversight Committee.

Jamie Marra has been unseated from the Code and Policy Committee

7. Seatings and Appointments

BIRT the follow seatings are approved:

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Jack Hickmott, Baseer Abdul, Andrew McEwan, Craig Kerr, Colleen Lau, Jeff Abeysekera, Sima Valizadeh, and Yifei Zhuang be seated as Departmental Representatives to Council.

Hafizur Rahman be seated to Graduate Council as an at-large GSS Representative.

Colúm Connolly, Julienne Jagdeo be seated to Graduate Council as an at-large GSS Representative.

George Furey be seated to Graduate Council as the Faculty of Agricultural Science and Forestry GSS Representative. (Corrected to Faculty of Land and Food Systems instead of Agricultural Science)

Baseer Abdul be seated to the AMS Council as a GSS Representative.

Conny Lin be seated to the Executive Oversight Committee.

Yifei Zhuang and Sima Valizadeh be seated to the Services Committee.

Yifei Zhuang be seated to the Internal Review Task Force.

Christopher Roach be seated at the GSS Representative to the UBC Presidential Search Committee.

Voting: Christopher Roach wins unanimously over Cynthia Mia.

Sima Valizadeh be seated to the House Finance Committee as a non-voting member.

Jack Hickmott, Barak, Baseer Abdul be seated at the Administrative Assistant Extraordinary Hiring Committee.

MOVED: Christopher Roach; SECOND: Conny Lin  
**PASSED**

15 min break for dinner.

## I. Council Motions

### 8. Vice-President Administration Report

- Update on VP Administration on goings and plan for the year:
  - The Pub: After Koerner's Pub was closed in 2010, it wasn't until 2012 that a bargaining agreement was reached with the union. In June 2012 the GSS decided against running the pub on its own and issued a request for proposals from 3<sup>rd</sup> parties to run the pub. In September, 2012 the GSS chose HK Commerce's proposal. In February 2013 the legal paperwork was

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finished and it was agreed to have a joint venture agreement that defines how much they'll pay, who will hold liabilities, and how the pub will be managed. The liquor licence issue was decided during the last council meeting. The application was sent to the licence board and is now concluded.

- Code and Policy Committee: The committee is looking to simplify the process for students to use GSS funds, and to restructure the current way in which the Executive Oversight Committee works. They are also looking to streamline processes through which decisions are made in the GSS and consultations about our constitution.
- Human Resources Committee: The committee is seeking to prevent HR-related problems and grievances, which are onerous to the GSS. Will revise the HR handbook in line with related (provincial and federal) laws. Additional items include reviewing the GSS coordinators pay-rate and the GSS evaluation formats.
- Victor announced that he would be resigning on July 1<sup>st</sup>. For the election to fill his vacancy, there are two options: to have a by-election or for Council to directly appoint someone.
- To help decide which of the two options Council wanted, the following motion was presented:

WHEREAS when the 2011/12 Vice-President Finance resigned in December 2011, Council directed the Executive committee to appoint a new interim Vice-President Finance;

WHEREAS when the 2012/13 Vice-President Academic and External Affairs resigned in June 2012, Council gave the Elections Committee the ability to determine the method of electing this position;

WHEREAS current Bylaw 6.5 "Executive Vacancies" states that Council may choose to fill the vacancy by either an appointment of any GSS member or a by-election open to all GSS members;

WHEREAS in the past two years the appointment has been made by a Council appointment;

BIRT Council will appoint a replacement to the current Vice-President Administration at the June Council meeting as per Bylaw 6.5.2;

BIFRT this appointee will be selected by an election at Council;

BIFRT the President will ensure all graduate Students are informed of this appointment election through a UBC-wide email.

MOVED: Christopher Roach; SECOND: Conny Lin

Christopher motivated the motion and supported the direct appointment. All students will receive an email; nominations will be received until June 3<sup>rd</sup>; the election will take place on June 20<sup>th</sup>. Every candidate will give a brief speech, followed by a question period.

- It was asked and answered that the by-election's advantage is having the same protocol as a full-on election, but it is more costly as we'd have to pay the chief electoral officer and create

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advertisements; Chris emphasizes that the costs shouldn't be the deciding factor. Regarding the appointment option, it is faster and historically we've had more candidates and excellent execs chosen this way. Conny confirmed that the by-election is considerably more cost effective and the results are good as the process is more intimidating for candidates.

- It was asked and answered that in the last by-election there were no external candidates.

**PASSED**

## 9. MBA MOU

- The MBA Society was recently looking to get 3<sup>rd</sup> party liability insurance for events they hold off campus. The GSS was unable to give this to them, so they were looking to incorporate and become a Society. However the University was not keen on this idea and suggested they become a club of the AMS which would solve the problem.
- In order to be an AMS club, all of their money must be held by the AMS. Because the GSS collects the MBA Society's student fees, an MOU must be approved by the AMS and GSS in which the GSS states it will hand over all money to the AMS once collected; this is the reason for this motion.

WHEREAS the MBA Society is the student organization that represents MBA students;

WHEREAS the MBA Society would like to become an AMS Club to access their off-site liability insurance;

WHEREAS in order to become an AMS Club the MBA Society must agree that all money collected on their behalf must be held by the AMS;

BIRT Council approves the Memorandum of Understanding between the Alma Mater Society and the Graduate Student Society, concerning the MBA Society, as presented.

MOVED: Christopher Roach; SECOND: Victor Padilla.

**PASSED**

## 10. GSS 2013/2014 Budget

- The GSS had a surplus of \$118,074 in 2012 so far. As such more money will be spent this year on initiative's that will benefit the GSS and graduate students.
- Services: there were 5 major expenditure items: Special events, Contract work, Orientations, Weekly events and Athletics. The proposed budget will allow the GSS to have 6 multicultural events this year at the costs of \$1,000 per event.
- Academic and External Affairs: there is an increase in the budget, mainly because Advocacy will now have its own budget line and because it now includes the Grad Student Emergency Fund as well.

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- Bookings: The room rental costs are expected to increase a bit, but equipment rental should bring in profits. The building requires several repairs/maintenance which will be costly as well.
- Executives: Travel/conference costs were reduced. More budget required for the awareness campaign (videos for advertising/promotion of GSS and other clubs and associations), as well as new elements to be incorporated into the elections process.
- It was asked and answered that the income from ski trips was put into weekly events, and it is estimated to be around \$5,000.
- It was asked and answered that actual weekly events will break even (costs and income of \$800 both), and special events are expected to bring a revenue of \$6,000.
- It was asked and answered that hiking and ski trips have positive revenues, but no information on the upcoming cultural events was given despite requests for it from councillors.
- It was asked and answered that the study room has potential for additional revenues; right now it is used by the advocacy office, but will be available as rentable space soon.
- It was asked and answered that the GSS will host meetings with graduate student organizations across campus to find how we can work together, improve student life and increase involvement. The budget for this is \$1,000 per meeting for two meetings, to cover room and food.
- It was asked and answered that we have organizations working with graduate students off campus, such as GrasPods; this program will be extended to other places within VGH.

BIRT Council approves the 2013/2014 preliminary budget as presented.

MOVED: Lili Meng; SECOND: Jeff.

**PASSED**

## 11. Masters of Management International Tuition Differential Proposal

- Colúm informed Council that the GSS submitted their feedback on the MM international tuition differential proposal to the UBC Board of Governors in a joint document with the AMS.

WHEREAS the Sauder School of Business has proposed the introduction of a \$12,000 tuition differential for international students in the Masters of Management programs;

WHEREAS the proposed tuition increase would make international tuition 45% greater than domestic tuition in a program where domestic student seats are not government subsidized;

WHEREAS this proposed tuition increase is not a cost recovery measure;

WHEREAS the GSS and AMS have concerns about the proposed allocation of the additional tuition revenue and the deficit in rational and assurance of direct benefit to international students;

BIRT the GSS oppose the proposed international student tuition differential for the Masters of Management programs;



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BIFRT the Vice-President Academic and External Relations express the GSS's stance to the University Board of Governors through a formal submission;

BIFRT the GSS Council accepts the submission prepared by the GSS and AMS entitled "*Board of Governors Submission - Master of Management International Tuition Differential*".

BIFRT the GSS recommend that the Board of Governors adopt resolutions that provide a tuition guarantee for multi-year graduate programs and require that international graduate student tuition be cost recovery only.

MOVED: Colúm Connolly; SECOND: Tobias Friedel.

**PASSED**

## **J. Other Business and Notice of Motions**

Natalie reported that UBC Ph.D. students have been consistently receiving 10 to 12% of the available Tri-Council funding available nationally.

## **K. Discussion Period**

### **L. Submissions**

None

### **M. Next Meeting**

June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013

### **N. Adjournment**

12. BIRT there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 8:10 pm.

MOVED: Jahidur Rahman, SECOND: Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle.

**PASSED**

### **O. Social**

TO THE PUB!