



ATTENDANCE

Present: Aaron Loewen, Adenike Adelakun, Alejandra Botia, Alireza Kamyabi, Alison McClean, Andrew Zang, Axel Hauduc, Bethany Adair, Charfeddine Khalifa, Daniel He, Gillian Glass, Jackson Schumacher, Jenny Lee, Jin Wen, Julia Burnham, Kimani Karangu, Maria Jose Athie Martinez, Maryam Tayyab, Mostafa Hagar, Nevena Rebic, Nicolas Romualdi, Perrin Waldock, Sarah Park, Saud Lingawi, Shiva Zargar, Tarique Benbow, Taryn Scarff, Teesha Luehr, Temitayo Olarewaju, Virginia (Ginny) Pichler, Younus Ahmed, Yundi Wang, Kira Vandermeulen, Leila Matte-Kaci, Charlotte Alden (Ubysey), Ashni Gill, Kalith Nanayakkara (AMS VP External), Saad Shoaib (AMS AVP External), Julian Dierkes (G+PS Associate Dean, Funding), Sofie McComb, Remzi Xhemalce-Fuentes

Regrets:

Absent: Alexa Tanner, Arezoo Alemzadeh Mehrizi, Delarem Shojaei, Edgar Liao, Erik Frieling, Hannah Green, Jeanie Malone, Max Holmes, Mohammad Reza Karimi, Rachel Philips, Torin McLachlan, William Canero, Zhenyang Xu

Quorum: 19 Councillors

CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting will be called to order at **5:34 pm**.

SPECIAL RULES ADOPTION

WHEREAS the Council has not yet established in the policy suspending of Roberts Rules of Order and,

WHEREAS a similar decision has been made in the past and proved fruitful,

BIRT the Council adopts the following special rules of order for this Council meeting:

- Each member's speaking time limit per speaking turn is 3 minutes unless extended by the Council or otherwise specified in the agenda.
- The time limit of debate for each motion is 20 minutes unless extended by the Council; and
- There is no limit on how many times a member can speak on each motion.

MOVER: Kimani

SECONDER: Andrew

RESULT: Carried

AGENDA ADOPTION

BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

MOVER: Shiva

SECONDER: Aaron

RESULT: Carried



TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

President: Thank you Madam Speaker. And Happy New Year to everybody and thank you for coming. On behalf of the GSS, UBC, I would like to acknowledge that UBC Vancouver Point Grey campus is situated on the traditional, ancestral, unceded, territory of the Musqueam people. I would also like to acknowledge that you're joining us today from many places near and far and acknowledge the traditional owners and caretakers of those lands.

INTRODUCTIONS

[Introductions]

1 EXPEDIENT MATTERS

At the discretion of the President, the following are deemed urgent matters for Council and are presented at the beginning of Council (not exceeding 10mins):

1.1 GRADUATE FUNDRAISING CONTEXT AND PRIORITIES

Responsible: VP UAA, Nicolas Romualdi; Julian Dierkes (G+PS)

Description: A joint presentation to inform Council about Graduate Funding Priorities

Relevant Materials: [Funding Priorities.pptx](#)

[Presentation]

Motion to extend time by 10 minutes for discussion.

MOVER: Nicolas

SECONDER: Aaron

RESULT: Carried

DISCUSSION

Tayo: Thank you for work well done. I know this must have taken a lot of time and dedication. Shows the work our potential Executives can take on for at least 5 years. Big thank you.

Julia: Wanted to echo the thanks for coming here and presenting an ambitious and much needed roadmap towards funding for graduate students. Really appreciative of the collaboration between GPS and GSS. Thank you for being here.

Remzi: Thank you for the presentation. I just have a question, I don't know if I can ask it here. What happens with the students who currently have the minimum funding and they don't have access to the work as TA's? It has happened in my program. People are talking about going smaller. I got the chance to talk about this question in a previous forum. I just don't know, how would they be affected? Can I ask this question here? Thank you.

Julian: Programs have a number of funding mechanisms to support students, to put together minimum packages. I've mentioned 4YF's and GSI. Some have departmental awards and other revenues that come to a department. Ultimately, that's up to their planning on how they arrange different funding packages and what they're able to afford, given those funding packages. We keep also reminding programs that if they're facing a particular obstacle with this shift that has come from this vote in December to now next September, they can also borrow some funds from our central allocation that would ease that shift a little bit. They can plan for incoming years to increase those



packages. Overall for big population of PhD students, haven't seen a noticeable decrease in admissions that minimum funding policy has been in place. That was one of the fears that it would squeeze numbers, didn't happen on the population level, though may happen in some programs. Difficult to tell.

Kimani: Thank you Julian, Nicolas, for that wonderful presentation. I want to join the rest in commending, and it gives us a lot of hope. Pointing to the fact that having this kind of presentation, it's a great indication how great the GSS has been involved at the university level, engaging our partners, bridging the gap. I don't know what to say besides Nicolas your shoes are quite big. Thank you so much.

Remzi: I just wanted to thank for the answer. This transition fund is great, I think. Moving forward I know the average income for PhD students is over \$30k. Only thing I see is great disparity between programs. Do you have people in front of, where I work, they're from Education department, they're struggling to get minimum funding, even \$18k. People from my program in IRES that are struggling too. There's a lot of programs that have a lot of resource endowments, like in engineering, stuff like that, where people from the arts are struggling a little bit. Could we potentially think about leveling this gap? I don't know if capping people who have over \$50k in awards, stuff like that. I don't know, just a thought for the future.

Julian: We do try to keep an eye on these differences. They're out of our control. These arise from decentralized decision making. All we can do is watch and observe. Small correction, students in the arts, some of the average payments to PhD students in arts are the highest on campus. Those disparities are trickier to look at in broad categories. Clearly that varies across campus, no doubt. Just had a discussion with Canadian Association of Graduate Schools with representatives from Tri-Agencies about Vanier Program. Out position has long been \$50k stipends to the Vanier is not what we would pursue. We would rather give five awards of \$30k than three of \$50k but that's prioritization decision the Tri-Agencies has gone that way, under review. We don't offer awards like that, though they get topped up by programs to amount to that. We're aware, not much we want to do. We're not going to tax programs to redistribute, but an issue we're quite aware of.

Alejandra: Thank you so much for the excellent presentation. I wanted to clarify, for the 4YF sounds like it won't be increasing quite yet. Does that mean the program is going to top up so the minimum funding remains for people with the 4YF or is that going to be considered in the future?

Julian: Yes, next priority would be those increases to the stipend. There's simple version, all 4YF's meet that because it's \$18,200 stipend plus tuition, gets you over \$22k. Except for one category of domestic fourth year students because tuition payment decreases to continuing fees. Difference even with PAEIPA added in isn't quite there, and we've alerted programs to that. They will have to be making up that difference, relatively small. But in principle, apart from that small category all other 4YF's are above \$22k anyway, because tuition benefit is counted in funding package. So there's nothing different about that. Of course they receive the PAEIPA as well. Raising stipend is certainly high priority for our advocacy and in the near future.

1.2 GSS/AMS LOBBY DAYS 2021

Responsible: GSS VP External, Alireza Kamyabi; AMS VP External Kalith Nanayakkara

Description: The GSS & AMS held one of their first joint lobby weeks. Speaking with a multitude of Ministers and MLAs from all three provincial parties, we were able to bring pertinent student issues to the forefront and highlight the importance of supporting students and higher education sector.

Purpose: This joint presentation is to inform council on the results and feedback received from the 2021 GSS/AMS Lobby Week.



Supporting Documents: [GSS AMS Advocacy Week 2021 Presentation.pptx](#)

[Presentation]

Motion to extend time by 10 minutes to continue presentation and for discussion.

MOVER: Jackson

SECONDER: Jin

RESULT: Carried

DISCUSSION

Jackson: Thanks for coming to GSS Council. Thanks to both external teams, great year of advocacy. One question surrounding rental and housing asks. Are we making sure to emphasize inclusion of international students in all those asks?

Saad: Yes, that's something we're working on currently in tuition sector. In terms of housing, it's sort of up in the air whether international students are going to be included in future renter rebate, something we'll push for. Making sure they're prioritized as a result of the pandemic.

Kimani: Thank you for participating, thank you Ali. I participated in this process for 4 days and couldn't imagine the amount of time and energy that involves this particular thing. Thank you so much for doing that. Appreciate the relationship we built this year, hope we continue this relationship and create a formidable society for students. Hope for good results. Look forward to even better results.

Kalith: Thanks for having us. You said it all I think. All we have to make sure of now is making sure this relationship continues. Such high turnover, important to ensure we have system in place to make sure it continues beyond one individual's term.

Nicolas: I would like to highlight the wonderful collaboration between VP External offices of both societies. Not to say the rest didn't collaborate just that you did a great job. Want to use this opportunity to highlight that for grad students, proportion of international students is much higher. So whenever we speak up with any of these proposals, the fact that international students are not included, it's a much more significant portion of our population. Not to say that we should advocate for every single student regardless of how small of a portion that particular group makes. But whatever leaves out international students is in effect, and as the trend continues to rise, basically half of graduate students, really important that any initiative that we move forward is inclusive to both groups. Thank you.

Remzi: I wanted to congratulate Ali, Kalith, and Saad. Glad that despite health crisis they've managed to do great progress. Awesome you got to do this historically, partnering together. Believe many of us were hoping this would happen. Ali, glad you're working for permanent funding of BC graduate scholarship and expanding into STEM disciplines. For Saad, would like to ask him more about partnerships, who would be involved, especially in the climate partnership, are you going to be bringing people from Climate Justice UBC, for example? Who are you planning to include in this partnership?

Saad: We're always continuing to explore how we go about this. Been exploring recommendations around CleanBC Initiative. Voicing how we want to do this to students. Potentially can partner up with climate action groups on campus. Would love to include them in that advocacy.



1.3 CLARIFICATIONS ON ALLEGATION AGAINST THE BOARD

Responsible: President, Kimani Karangu

Purpose: To update the board members on the current situation regarding an allegation against Council as board of directors, and to get input.

Relevant Materials: Folder "EXP MATTERS – Allegations"

Kimani: Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. I'll be very brief on this particular matter, given the essence of timing here. Members of the board, I must have communicated to you about allegations that were made by one of our members on [January] 26. And members, although I sit here as chair of this Council, I do not make decisions on your behalf. I must always acknowledge that I have a fiduciary obligation to act in the best interest of this Society, especially when allegations are made involving the Council. Therefore today, I wanted to state the following: on [January] 26 2021, a member of our society claimed that he had reasons to believe that he was kept away from the Council meeting, because decisions had been made to affect his intentions to run for an executive position in 2021. And to be specific, I'm talking about Vice President External Affairs docket. Again members, I want to reiterate that the reason as to why I have to bring this matter, other than having a fiduciary responsibility to do so, it is because the allegation that are being made and the person making these allegation is a potential candidate to become a member of the board. And therefore, it would be very, very important the person herein substantiates these claims, and in this case, I want to invite Remzi to substantiate the claims he made on January 26. And I also want to make you understand that all these supporting documents are in our platform for your perusal and for support. And, also, don't forget the other issues, but I particularly took on this one, because it is you people who make the decision and not me. So thank you so much, Madam Speaker.

Remzi: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you, Kimani. Well, as I'm getting the floor like this, I would acknowledge I'm speaking from the traditional unceded territory of the Musqueam people. And well, I was invited here by President Kimani to talk about this. I'm concerned about the fact that I asked him not to. To be fair, I didn't make allegations against the Council. I welcome Mr. Kimani to show the documents. And I also asked him, that if he considers himself to be the Council, right. That is how these allegations, which was probably mostly a concern of mine, was directed to him and not the Council. I mean, I'm sorry, Mr. President, you're not Council. I'm sorry you took it personally. But I was just telling you and anybody who gets access to this, whatever information he's providing, you can judge for yourself. I mean, it's right there. And what I also sent him is a proposal to build a project with the equity and diversion office [Equity & Inclusion Office] to make the GSS a little bit more welcoming to people that are just starting off. So I think we need to move forward. Mr. President, I'm really sorry, you took this the way you took it. And I'm here if you need to talk more, if you need to clarify anything else, I'm here. Thank you.

Speaker: Alright, thank you guys. Just before we continue the conversation, I would like to remind everybody that Robert's Rules requires that you address your remarks to me, these are very nice rules to avoid conflict. Anybody want to speak?

Julia: Wondering if we could have discussion period on this for 10 minutes with 1 minute speaking time each.

Speaker: Any seconder? I have a motion to temporarily change the rules to 1 minute speaking time per person as well as total 10 minute discussion time.

Julia: We can do 2 minutes, maybe people would feel rushed with that.

Motion for 10 mins discussion period, 2 mins each.



MOVER: Julia

SECONDER: Kimani

RESULT: Carried

FOR (20): Sarah Park, Nevena Rebic, Daniel He, Alison McClean, Yundi Wang, Maria Jose Martinez, Alejandra Botia, Alireza Kamyabi, Charf Khalifa, Ginny Pichler, Adenike Adelakun, Jenny Lee, Taryn Scarff, Aaron Loewen, Teesha Luehr, Mostafa Hagar, Jin Wen, Perrin Waldock, Shiva Zargar, Julia Burnham; **AGAINST (0); ABSTAIN (0)**

DISCUSSION

Kimani: Madam Speaker, I would want to clarify what my colleague is talking about. What made this point to this floor is because, and I would go verbatim here, "I have reasons to believe that I have been kept away from the Council meetings because decisions have been made to affect my intentions to run this year for Vice-President External." My point was, what are these reasons? And what is this belief? And how did the council conspire to keep away this decision? And as I said, I had to bring this matter to Council, specifically because I have a fiduciary responsibility to all of you members. Therefore, I think I did not take any matter, or the President did not take any matter personally. So it's upon you people to get it right.

Julia: I read over these documents quite thoughtfully. And I was not in the GSS until this past fall, so perhaps there's some previous context from last year that I'm missing here. But it was equally alarming on both fronts to see that there are perhaps some gaps in the ways that students feel the GSS is accessible to them, while also noting how significant saying that adherence to policy and procedure in the ways that the GSS conducts its online meetings would be discrimination. So I think that we can have an opportunity here to think about perhaps amendments to this policy, because by looking at the documents, it appears that this has been followed correctly, and according to our procedure here, but perhaps there's the opportunity for conversations about making GSS council meetings more accessible, also noting the significance of transition to this online world in a pandemic. But I am quite concerned that there were remarks that would suggest that there was discrimination involved here, when that is not something that I identify with the process that has been followed through here, in terms of access to these council meetings and the way that process works. That would be my thoughts on the matter today. And hopefully, we can continue to have conversations around access, while also respecting the policies and procedures we currently have in place and being able to use that for the basis of the way that we are treated, and perhaps ways that we can improve these policies to make them more accessible for all.

Remzi: Thank you I think that was great what Julia said. I think it's about communication. If I ever had misunderstandings with the GSS before, mostly because of that, I send an email, I get a response, and then in a public setting, I get totally different information. So as I told the President, Madam Speaker, I think it would be beneficial to, if there's a new rule of having to send an email every month to get the Teams access for the meeting, I would just clarify that on the webpage. Because I think it's really important just to clarify, and because even some people can be discouraged of coming to the meetings if they have to send an email, and they don't really know if they have to send it each month. Like all my emails said I want access for all the continuing meetings of the year, because I really want to be involved with the GSS with the Council, I think they're doing a great job. You can read it in whatever communication is being transmitted to you by the President, it's on the basis that I want to be part of the GSS and I want to help out. It's just a matter of, I think, communication and I'm really sorry if we've had miscommunications in the past with any other people in the Council, and I really I want to move forward with this, and thank you.

Teesha: I would like to first state my position on this matter. I hope that will make it clear. I don't think that the President has made any mistakes or done anything wrong, I think he has responded to this matter as he saw fit. However I can also see the side from Remzi. I have personally experienced some difficulty with accessing these Teams meetings. From what I can understand, that's more on the side of Teams being a slightly quirky software and not as



"click-button" as we view Zoom. But I have had difficulties and I can empathize with Remzi- I'm a council member, so I have access to these meetings a lot easier, and I still have had difficulty. That is everything I'd like to state.

Aaron: Thank you everyone for putting your thoughts out there. I just want to make sure we're keeping this conversation on the right track. If we want to talk about the procedural accessing these meetings, can I ask that we do that in a separate forum. Mostly because I think we're discussing something a bit different from that. If we would like to discuss this any further, we can please just bring it to me as CPC chair, I think that would be a more appropriate place to discuss this. Thank you.

Gillian: Want to echo what Aaron is saying, the questions of policy or procedure are not what's on the floor right now. And the email, the information that was circulated does allege discrimination on the part of the Council towards this member, and that's a serious allegation. So we're discussing here whether or not access was granted or not, whether the procedure was clear to this member or not. I'm sorry if my tone comes across as critical, it's not, I wanted to echo what Aaron was saying about making sure we're on topic about whether or not the procedure for access to the meetings was clear to the member or not, if they weren't clear to the member. That's one case, if they were clear to the member. That's another case. And, of course, all members should have access to the council meetings. That's not up for debate. I would also like to add that I do think that our president acted in accordance with what he was supposed to do.

Speaker: Need an extension of time to allow more discussion.

Motion to extend discussion for 10 minutes.

MOVER: Alireza

SECONDER: Jackson

RESULT: Carried

Alejandra: This might also be a point of information or clarification, in terms of what we want to do in this conversation. If I'm understanding correctly, it does sound like there was frustration in terms of accessing the meetings and forum. What I'm understanding from this conversation, it does sound like it was a matter of miscommunication and not discrimination. Just wanted to clarify that point.

Speaker: I presume you're putting this question to Remzi?

Alejandra: Yes please.

Remzi: What happened is that on that day, the December meeting, I was trying to access and found out my credentials had been revoked. This was not the first time they'd been revoked. I just asked again to have access to the meetings. But I was never aware that I had to do this each month. I just thought it was something that had happened. So I tried to get into the meeting, I can't get into the meeting. I'm just trying, trying, trying. And then I send an email to Kimani, and Victoria which by the way, Victoria has done a wonderful job thank you very much. And I asked him to be allowed in the meeting. And well, of course they were busy with the meeting and couldn't really help me get in the meeting. So I couldn't, but I was not aware. And I was not made aware that every month I had to ask for having credentials again. So that was a little bit of my frustration. I do think I state it in the email that I was feeling like this. I don't know if we're going to talk about feeling discriminated. I do not think I made allegations against the President. I mean, he considers them allegations, but you know, it's a matter of how we speak and stuff like that.

Kimani: Thank you madame Speaker, I would want to clarify the issue here. It's not any allegations made against the President. The allegations are made against the Council. And I repeat again, everything Madam Speaker, being said here, everything is in the supporting documents that I supplied for this meeting. For this meeting and everything, anybody who wants to access the meeting, the procedures are always given. They are stipulated in the supporting



documents. So if the member felt that they were not given ample time, or ample information, that one doesn't sit quite well with me, because I know that we do our best to make sure that each and every member of our society feels represented and welcome, and that they have a say in all that we do. Again, bringing the attention to the members is the reason why we have this thing. This conversation going on is because the member said, "I have been kept away from the Council meetings" because "decisions have been made to affect my intentions to run this year for Vice-President External Affairs." So I don't think it's a matter of communication or something like that. And that's what I would want to have the clarifications, what are these reasons? What are these beliefs that we made behind our meeting? I don't believe in this meeting you chaired Speaker, that we were yielding conspiracy against a member in a discriminatory manner. So that's what doesn't settle well with me Madam Speaker.

Alireza: I'm going to go back to Alejandra's question and ask Mr. Fuentes to clarify his sentence that specifically says, and before saying the sentence, the words matter, these are very loaded words and allegations, the email clearly reads "I've been over a year battling the society executives on what I consider to be discrimination against me." And that allegation of discrimination is clearly written and communicated in email, and I think that's the point of discussion.

Remzi: Thank you for bringing that point. When someone mentions the executives of the GSS it doesn't mention the council. I don't say who is the GSS executives, so I really don't think there's an attack on the Council or whatever there's trying to say. And on the second point that the President is asking me to describe why I was being kept away from Council. I mean, we're on an electoral process right now, so as I consulted the electoral officer [Elections and Student Engagement Officer] before starting this presentation, I cannot say some things. So I don't know Madame Speaker if it's possible to postpone this discussion to a later date? I can't say things a lot of things in this conversation because not only is there a referendum process going on but an elections process going on. So I think it's for the best we do not interfere with this process right now, to be honest, but I mean whatever you guys consider the best.

Speaker: To postpone this conversation, there's actually no motion on the floor to postpone anything. When the time runs out, the time runs out.

Julia: Looking back on these documents, I do think it was appropriate and necessary for this to be brought to Council and interpreting the language of those emails to be alleging discrimination, which, as many folks, myself included here, have identified that that was, in fact, not what had occurred in terms of the way that policy and procedure was followed here. It's also worth noting that the ombuds office and a legal counsel office was cc-ed in some of these emails, which would definitely indicate to me that there was allegations that were intended to be taken quite seriously, and not so casually brought about, which is why I still am quite concerned. But it has transpired. And I think it's appropriate for Council to be aware of this and understanding that we ultimately are responsible for the GSS and executives, they report to us. Thankful that this is here and such a significant allegation of discrimination has been brought to this governing body. I hope that others identify that this perhaps would be an unfounded allegation of discrimination here.

Nicolas: First of all, I would like to state that I was refraining from participating because I was target of allegations in the past. I'm going to stick to fact here so we don't create any room for any interpretation of what I'm saying. With that said, would it be possible Madam Speaker for me to share screen?

Speaker: Yes but before I cut you off, are we okay to extend by 10 minutes?

Motion to extend discussion for 10 minutes.

MOVER: Andrew

SECONDER: Jackson

RESULT: Carried



Nicolas: I'm going to share what's in the supporting documents for this meeting, because I want to completely dispel the notion that there was any miscommunication or any absence of communication, and what the procedure to join a Council meeting is. This is an email from December 10th stating what the procedure to join Council is, clearly outlined. There's also an apology made by the Administrative Assistant explaining the reason why this is the process we currently use. So I believe that this sufficiently meets the threshold of proof that the member received information on how to join the meeting. On another note, I was moved by what Julia said, and the fact that the ombuds office was copied in this allegation that [inaudible] shared. Members of Council, I am responsible to battle discrimination for every graduate student who experiences this on campus, and the ombuds office is one of the resources that I have to access. So are many others. The fact that this allegation was made puts me in a very uncomfortable position to do the job that I have to do for every graduate student that I was selected to do, and that I do if I may say so, and put this to your judgement, very well. And to be accused of discrimination when a large portion of my work is to battle discrimination on campus, I take this very, very seriously, it's extremely troubling.

Remzi: There was a lack of communication. I did not have the information that I had to send this every month to access the meeting. I'm again not going against Council, I was just expressing my concerns about attitudes from GSS executives, and I do it now, being brought on trial for this, I think it's pretty unfair. I have been in this process for over a year now. I please ask the executives to just say if they don't want my participation in this forum, I don't have to be here. You can be honest and frank with me and I'll just leave it.

Maria: Thank you. I think it's been a back and forward and it hasn't been stated what is the problem. I think the President and the members have fulfilled their work and followed what is meant to do and the protocols, and he was given enough information. I'm really concerned also that there was an allegation of discrimination and that was brought to the legal and the ombudsman for[sic]. And that it hasn't been stated why is the reason that this person feels they are not being let in Council? Because if it's a matter of miscommunication to be in the Council, I think we've just seen that the information has been sent to him on time.

Gillian: Point of privilege, my Teams isn't working, please add me to the speakers list.

Speaker: Thank you. Next is Kimani.

Kimani: I yield my time.

Gillian: First want to clarify what goal we're working towards. Is there a motion on the floor, is it just Kimani's role to appraise council of the situation? If that's the case, I think that we're sufficiently informed. I also want to bring up what has been said by Alireza and others, and first of all I want to say that I can't imagine how uncomfortable for this must be for the member. I acknowledge this is uncomfortable and I'm sorry this must be very awkward if not distressing. I think this is an important moment for us to revisit the fact that our words and actions have consequences because having read the communications that were circulated prior to this meeting, they read as allegations of discrimination, which is very serious, and offices outside of the GSS were cc-ed on those emails, which resulted in us all having this conversation right now. Then the sort of backpedalling and disavowing of those actions, of those words said, is troubling to me, because we should send emails, we should speak words, we should make actions which we can stand behind.

Andrew: I just wanted to speak a little bit as well. I think listening to this whole situation is getting me quite passionate. I'm hearing a lot of back and forth that isn't going anywhere, I want to echo everybody else's opinion on that. Also want to raise concerns about what was stated by the member last speaking time, his indication that we should tell him that we don't want him to be here. I mean, to me that doesn't sound like the tone we were taking. It sounded like we were trying to get to the bottom of what was going on. As a Council we have a duty to look at it if there are actual allegations or claims or whatever it wants to be called. They need to be addressed and they need to



be looked at. I don't think that calling for people to not discuss this and say that they don't want to discuss this is an appropriate thing to say in this moment.

Remzi: Thank you for the notes and all the conversation, I think it's really good. Thank you for acknowledging this is a stressful situation, indeed it is, it's been going on for a while. Not trying to postpone discussion but I sent a nomination form to participate in elections and that has prohibited me from saying a lot of things in this forum as advised by electoral officer [Elections and Student Engagement Officer]. So that's why I was talking about postponing it, I'm not trying to run away from this. At the moment where I sent that email, there was a lot of frustration, and I did feel discriminated on the basis of the way I think. It was part of the whole issue of miscommunication with some GSS executives, right. But as I said, I want to move forward, I want to work with the GSS, if anyone else needs clarification on this, please let me know. I'm here. I'm open.

Speaker: I'll bring it to a close, to clarify there's no motion on the floor here. Wait, I see Remzi wants to speak but we need an extension from a Councillor to continue.

Motion to extend discussion by 5 minutes.

MOVER: Andrew

SECONDER: Mostafa

RESULT: Carried

FOR (18): Nicolas Romualdi, Alison McClean, Alireza Kamyabi, Taryn Scarff, Yundi Wang, Nevena Rebic, Younus Ahmed, Aaron Loewen, Charf Khalifa, Jin Wen, Jenny Lee, Adenike Adelakun, Daniel He, Julia Burnham, Mostafa Hagar, Perrin Waldock, Andrew Zang, Jackson Schumacher ; **AGAINST (1):** Gillian Glass; **ABSTAIN (3):** Teesha Luehr, Maria Jose Martinez, Sarah Park

Nicolas: I just want to quickly answer the question in the chat "**Remzi:** when did the December Council meeting take place?" We have minutes that state the member was present so I'm confused as to why he's confused when the meeting took place. But moving forward, I believe there's no more use to this discussion. And this Council has a lot of important work to do to serve the graduate students of this campus and hence, I move to dismiss this complaint.

Motion:

BIRT the Council dismiss the complaint from Remzi Xhemalce-Fuentes.

MOVER: Nicolas

SECONDER: Jackson

RESULT: Carried

FOR (11): Shiva Zargar, Aaron Loewen, Adenike Adelakun, Jenny Lee, Gillian Glass, Jin Wen, Teesha Luehr, Taryn Scarff, Nevena Rebic, Jackson Schumacher, Andrew Zang; **AGAINST (0); ABSTAIN (9):** Nicolas Romualdi, Maria Jose Martinez, Alison McClean, Daniel He, Yundi Wang, Sarah Park, Mostafa Hagar, Perrin Waldock, Alireza Kamyabi

DISCUSSION

Andrew: Point of information, does this mean the speakers list is not...?

Speaker: Good question, this is a discussion period, we're not in a motion. So we're not dismissing anything. But this will dismiss the allegation and complaint from Remzi as resolved. That's what this motion is trying to do.

Andrew: Okay another point of information, this motion is about a member, I want to hear from him first. How do I do that?



Speaker: I haven't started the vote. I'm waiting for discussion on this motion. There's a new speaker's list, so speaking list for previous discussion remains once we finish the motion discussion. Now we go back to that. Andrew, are you requesting Remzi speak to this?

Andrew: I guess so, just want to make sure he has the chance to say what he has to say if it's relevant to this motion.

Speaker: Remzi do you want to respond? You have the right to respond or not.

Remzi: I think I've been consistent trying to engage with the GSS wanting it to be a more welcoming thing. That's part of where my frustration comes in. I don't really think this being put on trial, which I wrote to Kimani that I don't want this, I really don't know what's to be gained from this. But whether I become a part of this or not, I really hope people just take into account that it needs to be a little bit more inclusive. Last year when I was running, a lot of people told me that this was their problem with not engaging with the GSS that they considered to be a forum for a specific type of students, so I just want you guys to make it more inclusive and whatever, I'm done.

Speaker: We're discussing the motion so if you don't want it you should speak up, otherwise everything you've said in the documents will be dismissed. Next is Kimani.

Kimani: I would want to respond, as we all know, GSS is very inclusive, we are very busy doing things as we started by explaining and presenting to members what the VP's are doing and what we are doing, all of us. I think it's a very welcoming space. I think whenever we have the meetings, ask people to come on time. At the same time, not putting anybody on trial. And as I said initially, President has fiduciary responsibility to Council to inform them what is happening, so hiding anything behind the curtain wouldn't help anybody. It is important to members to know that the meetings you do hold every month could be seen as a way of trying to discriminate, can be a very serious allegation. Therefore if the member cannot substantially say that, concrete talk about ABCD of being discriminated against, we all know we have challenges with systems and all that, I therefore suggest we move and continue dismissing the allegation on that basis, thank you.

Sarah: Hi everyone, just wanted to address something about the inclusive nature and trying to make GSS more inclusive. One thing we are doing is we are carrying out an EDI audit and I'd be happy to hear from the member if there are any events –

Speaker: Sarah, off topic. You can continue if there's something on-topic with dismissing the complaint.

Sarah: I yield, that's fine.

Jackson: I just want to respond briefly to Mr. Fuentes' point; I recognize this must be an uncomfortable process. However, as a councillor, having looked at these emails, I think it would have been extremely inappropriate for the President *not* to bring this to Council. I would have been very uncomfortable if we hadn't seen this. However, after seeing this, I think there's general consensus among councillors that the President and executives responded appropriately, so I'm in favour of this motion.

Teesha: Hi, thanks Madame Speaker. I would like to potentially request the possibility for Remzi's request to just have a conversation at a later date. He seemed concerned that an election was currently ongoing, and he maybe wasn't able to speak openly as he would've liked. Not sure how to...

Speaker: You can postpone the motion. I'll take this opportunity to respond to Remzi's request to postpone the conversation, I couldn't do so because there was no motion to postpone. Now we do, so any councillor can request to postpone the motion.

Teesha: Okay I move to postpone this discussion to next Council meeting.

Speaker: Any seconder?



Motion to postpone this motion to next Council meeting:

BIRT the Council dismiss the complaint from Remzi Xhemalce-Fuentes.

MOVER: Teesha

SECONDER: Perrin

RESULT: Failed

FOR (0); AGAINST (18): Sarah Park, Daniel He, Jackson Schumacher, Andrew Zang, Nevena Rebic, Nicolas Romualdi, Jenny Lee, Maria Jose Martinez, Kimani Karangu, Yundi Wang, Aaron Loewen, Julia Burnham, Taryn Scarff, Adenike Adelakun, Gillian Glass, Teesha Luehr, Alireza Kamyabi, Perrin Waldock; **ABSTAIN (0)**

DISCUSSION

Teesha: I just want to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to speak. I don't know if it necessarily should happen at council, happy to have an amendment to redirect this to a specific committee or different option. Not sure what's the best here. Just want this student to feel heard. One of the duties as the GSS is to make sure all students feel heard as they speak to us. Want to give this student the opportunity.

Speaker: In terms of rules, there is a refer to committee, however we can't do that now because we have a motion to postpone on the floor. Even if the Council's wish is to refer to committee specifically, we need to strike down this motion and do that. Secondly, even if we pass this motion to next Council, doesn't prevent a committee from addressing this issue from now until next Council meeting. Hope that clarifies.

Andrew: Point of information, does that mean if it was dismissed, the committees would no longer be able to discuss the issue?

Speaker: No, there's nothing that prevents the committee from discussing the issue.

Andrew: So even if we were to move forward with motion to dismiss the complaint, the student would still have the opportunity to be heard?

Speaker: Those are two separate motions. Great question. Right now we're talking about a motion to postpone. This is where we're at, to postpone this "dismissing the complaint" motion to the next Council meeting, meaning we're obligated to talk about it. If we strike this down, which means we don't want to postpone, we want to talk about this now. The main motion itself, "BIRT the Council dismiss the complaint from Remzi", if that passes, this issue is considered resolved, and no further action will be taken unless some additional activity happens about this issue. Remzi, now you are speaking on the motion to postpone.

Remzi: About the motion to postpone, I don't know if it's allowed, to tell people they're welcome to talk to me at any point and willing to discuss in a different setting what's going on without the current rules from the electoral office.

Speaker: Also a note that usually only councillors are allowed to speak in Council but I'm letting you because this is your matter.

Gillian: I'm against the motion to postpone, as has been explained, the motion to postpone obliges us to discuss again next month. I think it's been thoroughly discussed, doesn't prevent any of the necessary committees from looking at important inclusion at Council meetings. I will be voting against the motion to postpone this conversation.

Kimani: I speak against postponing this motion, as my colleague mentioned, we've spent significant time discussing the issue. I don't see a different result coming in the future from further discussion, other than maybe saying the claims or allegations are true or not. All I believe is a Council that I chaired did not in any way conspire with anybody to dismiss anybody from running for any position, and I will stand by that.



Jackson: I am also against the motion to postpone, I think the member in question has actually voiced this format is anxiety-inducing and not ideal. I think the most efficient and equitable solution is to vote against this motion to postpone, to vote to dismiss, and if members feel it necessary, explicitly refer this issue to committee to ensure it's dealt with.

Mostafa: I want to clarify what kind of restrictions have been placed on this discussion by the Elections Committee. We just we didn't want this to be a place for a platform to be delivered to the Council regarding any election, so these are sort of the restrictions that we placed, no extensive self-promotion. As far as how this limits the conversation enough to justify being postponed later, I just thought I would explain the reasoning. We basically just didn't want this agenda item to be a place for a candidate to promote any specific platform.

Andrew: I wanted to express that having worked very closely with Mostafa, I'm also a bit confused which information can't be delivered here. That being the case, and having heard everything, from my perspective, I would echo the idea that we should dismiss the postponing of this motion and proceed with the dismissal of the complaint.

Teesha: Thank you Madam Speaker, I'd first like to send an apology to yourself and the remaining people attending, I did not intend to cause a prolonging of this matter, I was feeling undereducated on the matter. Sounds like more of the members that are involved in this process have spoken up and said their opinion, I trust those who have spoke and would like it to be stated that I'm in favour of going against the motion to postpone. And I would like to call to question this motion and the second motion as well.

Speaker: I will take the call to question for the motion to postpone since that's all I can do. Call to question is immediate vote, no discussion. Call to question needs special resolution because we're taking away the right to speak of those on the speakers list. If this passes, we will vote on the motion to postpone immediately.

Motion to call to question on the motion:

BIRT the Council dismiss the complaint from Remzi Xhemalce-Fuentes.

MOVER: Teesha

SECONDER: Nicolas

RESULT: Carried, none opposed

Speaker: Now we're voting on the motion to postpone. If you vote in favour, this motion: "**BIRT** the Council dismiss the complaint from Remzi Xhemalce-Fuentes" will be discussed next Council. If you vote against, we'll come back to the motion to discuss further.

Nicolas: I think I'm going to do everyone a favour, I'm going to call to question.

Speaker: I have no one on the speaker's list, so if no one says speak right now, we will vote to call to question right now, and then decide if we still want to talk. Hearing no one else, lets go straight into voting this motion:

BIRT the Council dismiss the complaint from Remzi Xhemalce-Fuentes.

2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2.1 GSS COUNCIL MINUTES

BIRT the following GSS Council minutes be approved:



- [January 21, 2021](#)

MOVER: Aaron

SECONDER: Shiva

RESULT: Carried

2.2 COMMITTEE MINUTES

BIRT the following GSS Committee minutes be approved:

Academic & External Committee:		House Finance Committee:	December 3, 2020; December 17, 2020; January 19, 2021; January 26 , 2021
Code and Policy Committee:	January 6, 2021; January 20, 2021	Human Resources Committee:	
Elections Committee:	October 22, 2020	Services Committee:	December 1, 2020; January 20, 2021
Executive Committee:	January 8, 2021	AMS Caucus:	
Executive Oversight Committee:		Graduate Council Caucus:	
Governance & Accountability Committee:	July 23, 2020; November 12, 2020	Strategic Planning ad-hoc Committee:	December 16, 2020
All-Chairs Meeting:	December 11, 2020; January 22, 2021		

MOVER: Andrew

SECONDER: Maria

RESULT: Carried

FOR (20): Nevena Rebic, Mostafa Hagar, Nicolas Romualdi, Alison McClean, Jackson Schumacher, Perrin Waldock, Sarah Park, Andrew Zang, Kimani Karangu, Shiva Zargar, Yundi Wang, Gillian Glass, Adenike Adelakun, Julia Burnham, Daniel He, Jenny Lee, Aaron Loewen, Taryn Scarff, Teesha Luehr, Maria Jose Martinez; **AGAINST (0); ABSTAIN (0)**

DISCUSSION:

Devarsh: I just wanted to offer a small correction in the HF minutes, it's January 26 instead of 28.

Motion to amend.

MOVER: Devarsh

SECONDER: Nicolas

RESULT: Carried

Jin: Hi everyone, just want to as a general announcement that G&A will be using the Council submission form for tracking KPIs so please try and get your minutes in and I see that we submitted minutes for November 25 as well.

Speaker: AA, were those in the package?

Victoria (AA): [In chat] I do not have these minutes in the supporting documents.



Jin: I retract that then.

3 SEATINGS

3.1 NEW COUNCILLORS

BIRT the following Seating of new Councillors be approved:

Name	Department
Kira Vandermeulen	School of Information
Leila Matte-Kaci	School of Information

MOVER: Andrew

SECONDER: Jackson

RESULT: Carried

DISCUSSION:

Nicolas: Thank you for your patience especially as they have been waiting a month to be seated.

3.2 EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVES SEATINGS

All GSS Councillors are required by the bylaws to sit on at least one committee.

[*Committee descriptions and meeting times can be found here.*](#)

BIRT the seating of the following external representatives be approved:

Committee/Caucus	Nominee	Position	Vacancies
AMS Caucus		Representative	2
Graduate Council		Representative	0
Health and Dental Plan Caucus		Representative	0

MOVER: Jackson

SECONDER: Aaron

RESULT: Carried

FOR (17): Maria Jose Martinez, Jenny Lee, Aaron Loewen, Jackson Schumacher, Kimani Karangu, Andrew Zang, Adenike Adelakun, Axel Hauduc, Alejandra Botia, Gillian Glass, Taryn Scarff, Yundi Wang, Shiva Zargar, Sarah Park, Perrin Waldock, Daniel He, Mostafa Hagar; **AGAINST (0); ABSTAIN (0)**

DISCUSSION

Jackson: If any councillors are interested in representing grad students in the AMS, I encourage them to message me and ask what the job entails.



3.3 COMMITTEE CHAIR SEATINGS

BIRT the following Committee Chair Seatings be approved:

Committee/Caucus	Nominee
Strategic Planning ad-hoc Committee	Axel Hauduc

MOVER: Kimani

SECONDER: Jackson

RESULT:

FOR (10): Aaron Loewen, Shiva Zargar, Teesha Luehr, Adenike Adelakun, Alejandra Botia, Maria Jose Martinez, Taryn Scarff, Kimani Karangu, Jenny Lee, Jackson Schumacher; **AGAINST (0); ABSTAIN (1):** Axel Hauduc

DISCUSSION

Jackson: I'll be super quick, would like to thank Axel for agreeing to take on this role, me and the rest of the committee are looking forward to what he does under his leadership.

Nicolas: I will say I'm extremely surprised, not surprised, but the way that Ali and Jackson have led the committee with such a distinguished succession is for the best of the society, I fully support this decision.

Gillian: Point of privilege, my Teams isn't working and voting isn't either.

Speaker: Please record your votes and send to AA later, if there's a close vote I'll ask you for yours. Does that work?

Gillian: Yes, thank you.

3.4 COMMITTEE SEATINGS

All GSS Councillors are required by the bylaws to sit on at least one committee.

[Committee descriptions and meeting times can be found here.](#)

BIRT the following Committee seatings be approved:

Committee/Caucus	Nominee	Position	Vacancies
Academic & External		Councillor	1
		Ordinary Member	0
Code & Policy		Councillor	2
		Ordinary Member	2
Elections		Councillor	1
		Ordinary Member	5
Executive Oversight		Councillor	2
		Ordinary Member	3



Governance & Accountability		Councillor	0
		Ordinary Member	2
House Finance		Councillor	2
		Ordinary Member	2
Human Resources		Councillor	2
		Ordinary Member	4
Services		Councillor	0
		Ordinary Member	2
Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee		Councillor	0
		Ordinary Member	3

MOVER: Alireza

SECONDER: Aaron

RESULT: Carried

4 MATTERS FOR DECISION

4.1 AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION

WHEREAS the following organizations have submitted a petition for recognition as an Affiliate Organization,

BIRT the following organizations be recognized as Affiliate Organizations for one year, ending at the meeting of Council in February 2022:

Name of Affiliate Organization	Representative
The Association of Population and Public Health Students (TAPPHS)	Alison McClean
Civil Engineering Graduate Student Society	Ana Valverde
School of Journalism Students Association (SJSA)	Alex Missick
Equity and Inclusion in PHAS	Theresa Liao
Statistics Graduate Association	Jonathan Agyeman
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Graduate Student Association	Teesha Luehr
RDS Student Organization	Dwayne Tucker



MOVER: VP Students

SECONDER: Alireza

RESULT: Carried

FOR (17): Nevena Rebic, Alejandra Botia, Andrew Zang, Shiva Zargar, Daniel He, Gillian Glass, Alireza Kamyabi, Julia Burnham, Sarah Park, Kimani Karangu, Yundi Wang, Taryn Scarff, Perrin Waldock, Ginny Pichler, Teesha Luehr, Aaron Loewen, Jenny Lee; **AGAINST (0); ABSTAIN (1):** Alison McClean

DISCUSSION:

Teesha: Point of information, can we have what PHAS means?

Sarah: Physics and Astronomy.

4.2 ESEO AND BACKUP ESEO POLICY

Group Responsible: Code & Policy Committee

Description: Previously, the VP UAA was the backup Electoral Officer (EO) for situations where no EO can be found. There has been agreement between previous VP UAA's and CPC that the backup role should not be placed on the VP UAA. Working with the Elections Committee, we have determined that the best backup EO should be the chair of the Elections Committee. Furthermore, the position of Electoral Officer has been updated to the title "Electoral and Student Engagement Officer" and therefore the Policy Manual must be updated to reflect this title change.

Proposed Objective: To approve policy changes regarding the position of Electoral and Student Engagement Officer (ESEO).

Supporting Documents: [Policy Revision Form – ESEO and Backup ESEO duties.pdf](#)

WHEREAS the title of the Electoral Officer (EO) has been changed to Electoral and Student Engagement Officer,

WHEREAS the current back-up EO is the Vice President University and Academic Affairs,

WHEREAS the VP-UAA holding the role of back-up EO may present a conflict of interest,

WHEREAS the Chair of the Elections Committee has been determined to be the most suitable back-up for the role,

BIRT all mentions of the Electoral Officer in the Policy Manual be changed to Electoral and Student Engagement Officer, and

BIFRT the back-up EO position shall be moved from the VP-UAA to the Chair of the Elections Committee

MOVER: Andrew

SECONDER: Alireza

RESULT: Carried

FOR (19): Shiva Zargar, Mostafa Hagar, Nevena Rebic, Ginny Pichler, Julia Burnham, Perrin Waldock, Alireza Kamyabi, Jackson Schumacher, Alison McClean, Aaron Loewen, Axel Hauduc, Sarah Park, Andrew Zang, Jenny Lee, Yundi Wang, Kimani Karangu, Taryn Scarff, Alejandra Botia, Maria Jose Martinez ; **AGAINST (0); ABSTAIN (0)**

DISCUSSION

Aaron: This has predominantly been created with Elections Committee, currently the backup electoral officer is the VP UAA. We have thought that they would not be the most suitable backup due to potential conflict of interest if they chose to run or choose their successor, or be involved with that. So, through discussions we have determined that the



best backup electoral officer would be the chair of Elections Committee. The next small change which is more of just a procedural one is that this term Electoral Officer has now been changed to Electoral and Student Engagement Officer to reflect this new position. All mentions of Electoral Officer will be changed to this new Electoral and Student Engagement Officer.

Nicolas: I fully support this motion. I don't think the Vice-President University and Academic Affairs should be involved in the electoral process at all. And campaigning has not started luckily for me, so I don't want to be involved in this at all personally, but also from a process point of view. It is good that we separate this out so strongly in favor of this motion and I thank the Elections Committee and the Code & Policy Committee for putting this forward.

4.3 AO FORMS AND POLICIES UPDATE

Group Responsible: Code & Policy Committee

Description: Updates are needed for the current policies and forms for Affiliate Organizations. VP Students has provided the changes after consultation with others.

Proposed Objective: To approve policy updates regarding Affiliate Organization application and event fund forms and policies.

Supporting Documents: [Policy Revision Form - AO Forms and Section 9.pdf](#); [Appendix VIII Updates.pdf](#)

WHEREAS the current forms and policies regarding Affiliate Organization application and event fund application are not up-to-date,

BIRT the policies and forms listed in the supporting documents be implemented.

MOVER: Kimani

SECONDER: Aaron

RESULT: Carried

FOR (20): Aaron Loewen, Nicolas Romualdi, Jackson Schumacher, Nevena Rebic, Maria Jose Martinez, Gillian Glass, Axel Hauduc, Julia Burnham, Daniel He, Jenny Lee, Yundi Wang, Alejandra Botia, Perrin Waldock, Alison McClean, Taryn Scarff, Shiva Zargar, Kimani Karangu, Ginny Pichler, Mostafa Hagar, Andrew Zang; **AGAINST (0); ABSTAIN (0)**

DISCUSSION

Aaron: This has been in collaboration with VP students. We have been working to update the affiliate organization forms and event fund forms. These are fairly normal, nothing too ground-breaking in terms of the forms being changed. But yeah, we just wanted to update them a bit more, and this is the product of those updates.

4.4 CODE OF CONDUCT

Group Responsible: Code & Policy Committee

Description: As per CPC's SMART goals last year, we have been tasked with the creation of a Code of Conduct. After consultation with various groups, we are bringing forth a definitive version of the Code of Conduct for approval from Council.

Proposed Objective: To approve the addition of the Code of Conduct.

Supporting Documents: [Policy Revision Form - Code of Conduct.pdf](#); [GSS Code of Conduct.pdf](#)



WHEREAS there has been an acknowledgement that there is a need for a Code of Conduct in the GSS,

WHEREAS CPC was tasked with the creation of this document,

WHEREAS CPC has drafted, consulted, and re-drafted this document over the past year and has completed a final version,

BIRT this Code of Conduct document be implemented as per the Policy Revision Form

MOVER: Aaron

SECONDER: Kimani

RESULT: Carried

FOR (23): Nevena Rebic, Alison McClean, Aaron Loewen, Teesha Luehr, Andrew Zang, Jin Wen, Alejandra Botia, Ginny Pichler, Jenny Lee, Adenike Adelakun, Axel Hauduc, Sarah Park, Jackson Schumacher, Shiva Zargar, Perrin Waldock, Daniel He, Yundi Wang, Mostafa Hagar, Nicolas Romualdi, Taryn Scarff, Gillian Glass, Kimani Karangu, Maria Jose Martinez ; **AGAINST (0); ABSTAIN (0)**

DISCUSSION:

Aaron: This is basically the accumulation of the SMART goals as put forward by CPC in 2020. Worked hard prior to Council to be looked at by councillors and get feedback on, took some of that feedback in and made adjustments and now we are presenting the first edition of this Code of Conduct. I want to clarify that this is not enforceable at the moment; there is no rules behind whether if you follow this, there will be consequences. However, this will be something that will be discussed potentially in the future. But for now, we are putting this forward. And this will be for councillors and committee members to follow.

Nicolas: I would like to speak strongly in favour. Even if the Code of Conduct in its current form is not enforceable and the mechanisms to enforce it are not there. The fact that we already have a set of values and conducts that we need to adhere to more clearly outlined is a huge step forward in increasing the accountability of every one of us that participates in the GSS. So with that, I thank the Code & Policy Committee for this work and I strongly support this motion.

4.5 GRADUATE STUDENT SOCIETIES OF BC

Responsible: VP External, Alireza Kamyabi

Purpose: A presentation and motion to inform council about successful joint advocacy initiatives taken alongside the four GSS's in BC and plans for extending our collaboration going forward under the umbrella of GSSBC

Supporting Documents: [GSSBC MOU – Final Draft – Ratified by SFU.pdf](#)

WHEREAS effective advocacy would be improved by allyship between graduate student societies,

WHEREAS the graduate student societies in BC have significant circumstantial commonalities and common advocacy goals,

WHEREAS graduate student societies have been working closely together in the past year with great success,

WHEREAS the information on this motion has been given through this presentation,

BIRT the GSS Council endorse the presented Memorandum of Understanding for the Graduate Student Societies of BC (GSSBC);



BIFRT Council supports future GSSBC Executive Committee efforts to build an effective force for graduate student advocacy.

MOVER: Alireza

SECONDER: Kimani

RESULT:

FOR (23): Alison McClean, Jackson Schumacher, Nicolas Romualdi, Jin Wen, Sarah Park, Axel Hauduc, Shiva Zargar, Jenny Lee, Nevena Rebic, Kimani Karangu, Gillian Glass, Ginny Pichler, Julia Burnham, Mostafa Hagar, Andrew Zang, Aaron Loewen, Perrin Waldock, Alireza Kamyabi, Alejandra Botia, Yundi Wang, Maria Jose Martinez, Taryn Scarff, Daniel He ; **AGAINST (0); ABSTAIN (0)**

DISCUSSION

Julia: I wanted to take the opportunity to really point out how much leadership Alireza has demonstrated in the process of developing this MOU and being so proactive and trying to establish this GSS's of BC collaboration. Really fantastic to see this MOU on the table and all of the work that's gone in to really analyze the GSS's in the province. So much of provincial and federal advocacy that takes place for student societies really leaves out some really core graduate student issues. So the idea of having this collective here, which is solely focusing on issues that are unique to graduate students, and aren't very well represented within overall student and undergraduate students lobby groups, this is really fantastic. And I'm really, really excited that this work is being done and I have my full support behind this, so thank you.

Kimani: Want to begin by wishing Ali a very happy birthday today. Cannot have another way better to celebrate. Other than today, you've been blazing, so proud of you. Echoing what Julia mentioned, important that the work that you've done, we acknowledge and recognize and hope that it shall continue beyond our time in office. So thank you so much, Ali, and I truly and appreciate what you do.

Nicolas: I would like to speak very much in favor of signing this memorandum of understanding. I've spoken very positively today about a number of proposals that were on the floor. Not that I didn't mean it in the last times, but this is particularly important because the position I hold, the President, the Vice President's students, there have been many that have been great at that position. And Tarique Benbow did amazing work for students with disabilities. But there's never been a Vice-President External that has done what Alireza has done. He has set the standard, not only for the VP External of the GSS, but for VP Externals of the whole province, and potentially the country in the way that he has reformed the way in which we advocate for graduate students at the provincial and federal level. I am pleased to see this memorandum of understanding on the floor. I am very, very much in favor of it. I wish I had words to express the level of support that I have, and congratulations for my colleague.

Remzi: Just wanted to say that this is a great initiative, as others have said before, I think it's amazing. Indeed, grad student priorities are very different in some sense. I think whoever comes after needs to totally focus on getting this new association going. The only comment I would have is that, Ali, you mentioned that graduate students from other universities are the main ally for graduate students at UBC. I think that we have to be careful with that. Because when we set priorities, which as somebody mentioned earlier, we need to set priorities right? Like free tuition, and other things like this. When we do that, I believe undergraduate students from our own university are our basic and most important ally. Let's not forget about them and have a good balance between your great initiative and also communicating with the partnerships mentioned before with AMS and undergraduate students. Thank you. Great job.



4.6 GSS PHOTO CONTEST: GRAD LIFE THROUGH A LENS 2021

Responsible: VP Students, Sarah Park

Description: A presentation and motion to decide the winner of the GSS Photo Contest of February 2021.

Purpose: To select a photo contest winner and direct the Events Manager and VP Students to award a prize to said winner.

Supporting Documents: [Photo Contest Grad Student Impact \(Feb 2021\).pptx](#)

WHEREAS graduate students of UBC Vancouver submitted photos for the “Grad Life Through a Lens 2021” photo contest with the theme “Graduate Student Impact”, and

WHEREAS the VP Students would like to engage the Council as student peers to select a winner, having looked at the entries submitted in the supporting documents,

BIRT Council approves that Photo #1 is voted the winner of the Winter 2021 GSS Photo Contest and the Events team will follow-up with the individual who took the photo for prizing, and the photo will be included in marketing in the GSS Newsletter as well as social media.

MOVER: Kimani

SECONDER: Jackson

RESULT: Carried

Photo 1 (13); Photo 3 (1); Photo 4 (2); Photo 5 (3); Photo 6 (2); Photo 7 (1); Photo 9 (6); Photo 10 (1); Photo 13 (2); Photo 14 (1); Photo 16 (8); Photo 17 (9); Photo 18 (2)

5 MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

5.1 JANUARY 2020 GSS FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Group responsible: Financial and Executive Oversight Officer

Presentation time: 10 minutes

Presentation description: January 2020 GSS Financial Overview

Proposed objective: Update on GSS Revenues and Expenditures

Relevant materials: [January 2021 Financial presentation 02142021.pptx](#)

5.2 GRADUATE LIFE CENTRE UPDATE

Responsible: VP UAA

Purpose: Inform Council about new developments and the plan forward. Discuss the draft Memorandum of Understanding with prospects of signing it in March.

Relevant materials: (none submitted)

DISCUSSION

Nicolas: I would like to move that we continue this session in camera on the basis that the presentation that I have includes questions of agreements between the GSS and the university.



Motion to move in-camera.

MOVER: Nicolas

SECONDER: Kimani

RESULT: Carried

[Discussion moves in-camera]

Motion to stay in-camera.

MOVER: Nicolas

SECONDER: Kimani

RESULT: Failed, all against

[Meeting moves out of camera]

6 MATTERS TO NOTE

Time reserved for questions regarding updates below.

6.1 UPCOMING EVENTS

- W2021 Flow Yoga, Boot Camp, Latin Funk, French programs: February – April
- [Virtual Games: Among Us](#): February 17 @ 4pm
- Virtual Games: Among Us (Councillor Edition!): February 19 @ 6:30pm – [Councillors RSVP here!](#)
- [Local Mountains Subsidy Program](#): Feb 15 – Mar 15 – Get your mountain day pass discounted!
- [GSS x G+PS BHM Panel: Black Experiences in Graduate Education](#): Feb 25 @ 5:30pm

6.2 EXECUTIVES

6.2.1 President

- Staff update: Currently staff are working hard on several initiatives, including GSS Values and Culture documents, documenting staff workflows and procedures, initializing an internal EDI audit, undergoing Organization Coaching Project, preparing 2021-22 Budget, and supporting the elections and referendum processes; please note Admin Assistant is acting as Events Manager since Jan 2021 to cover the Events Manager's leave of absence
- Reviewed smart goals submitted by the Governance and Accountability committee. All the 3 goals were attended to, with two fully completed. One of the goals is still ongoing as it took a different route and approach mid-way. The executive committee is satisfied with the progress made by G&A.
- Climate Emergency Funding Proposal Meeting (Jan 25)
- A meeting with Nicolas (VP UAA) and Nancy (BOG Chair) before the Feb Board cycle. (Jan 27)
- Held consultation meeting with the GSS legal department.
- Held referendum consultation meeting with ESEO and IT and communications manager.
- Together with other committee chairs, GM, AA, held a GSS strategic documents meeting-aligning our documents.
- Monthly meeting with the G+PS. Updates on the CAGS conference and the upcoming funding opportunities and GLC issue discussed.
- Attended collaborative Black History Month meeting. This year the GSS will participate in commemorating the BHM. A Graduate Students lead event on the 25th Feb 2021 alongside the VP Students



-
- Held a successful GSS-Longhouse consultation meeting on possible collaborative opportunities.
 - ARTF- meeting developed a 40-question survey
 - Staff meeting
 - All chairs meeting.
 - Executive meeting
 - Actively participated in the ongoing ABCS 2021 bbying alongside the VP External Affairs. Main area represented to the MLAs Graduate Financial Aid.

6.2.2 FEOO

- (None submitted)

6.2.3 VP University & Academic Affairs

- **Academic Integrity Working Group:** As indicated earlier, a working group has been assembled through the Centre for Teaching and Learning Technology (CTLT) the university has started a process to analyze the possibility of taking a more proactive approach to academic integrity, instead of a purely punitive one. The group is scheduled to meet, and Council will be updated as this work progresses.
- **Main Outcomes of the CAGS Conference for the VP UAA Portfolio:** Conversations have started following discussion at the conference to develop strategies to incorporate broader skill development into graduate programs to increase success and ease of transition for graduate to both academic and non-academic careers. These are likely long-term conversations that will need to be continued to develop a general consensus for a strategy in this direction.
- **Development of an Advocacy Platform for Students with Disabilities:** A SEEDS research proposal had been developed by one of our and approved to develop a researched based advocacy platform for graduate students with disabilities based on the existing research carried out on the issues that these students experience in graduate school.
- The advocacy coordinator has begun meeting with the students and the work is in progress. A deliverable is expected for April 2021.
- **Furthering Research in Students with Dependents:** Similarly, to the previous proposal, a SEEDS research proposal has been developed by one of our advocacies and has now been approved. The project is in its earlier stages and updates will follow.
- **Quarantine Package for International Students:** Conversations are ongoing about possible alternative options for incoming international students who require to self-quarantine and cannot afford the cost recovery fee. There is also the issue of newly announced federal restrictions which will need to be worked into the package offering.

6.2.4 VP External

- **Graduate Student Societies of British Columbia Memorandum of Understanding:** Following many months of collaborating and working closely together on graduate student-focused advocacy initiatives, with great success. Together, we have finalized an MOU that lays out the framework for future collaboration between SFU, UNBC, UVIC and UBC graduate student societies. The MOU has been passed by SFU board already. Following endorsement by all Boards, the Graduate Student Societies of British Columbia would be the first and only graduate student focussed alliance in British Columbia and the latest addition to the advanced education landscape.



- **ABCS Lobby Days 2021:** As a member of the ABCS, UBC-GSS took part in the 2021 ABCS Lobby days, meeting with MLAs and ministers to discuss:
 - post-secondary investments and tuition,
 - development of a BC International Student Strategy,
 - sexual violence prevention policy,
 - permanently funding and expanding the BC Graduate Scholarship to students in non-STEM disciplines
 - expanding the BC Access Grant program to provide needs-based upfront non-repayable grants to graduate students from low-middle income backgrounds.
 - Investments in student mental health services to provide free- to low-cost, multi-session counselling through new investments in e-health and other remote technologies.
 - A province wide survey to examine accessibility needs of students with disability.
- More details will be provided about the result from the lobby meeting at the next council meeting.
- **ThinkGrad:** The UBC GSS scheduled and chaired the first ThinkGrad meeting since April 2020 to discuss future of the organization with delegates. ThinkGRAD is a group comprised of graduate student representatives who are focused on spearheading research to strategically address pressing problems affecting higher education in Canada, especially graduate studies.
- **Graduate Student Societies of U15:** The UBC-GSS continues to lead the work on letter to federal government with U15 GSS's. The 2nd General Meeting of U15 GSS's is scheduled for Feb 22nd. The group will discuss MOU and framework to establish and maintain our collaboration into the future.
- **Graduate Education & Public Good Report:** Continuing our work in writing and preparing the 'Graduate Education and Public Good Report.'
- **GSS Privacy Policy:** The first draft of the revised and revamped GSS Privacy Policy is finished and under review. We are working on a Privacy guideline that would outline the practical steps and new practices that are necessary to implementing the new GSS Privacy Policy.
- **GSS Council Restructuring:** Working with G&A to finalize list of academic units and the recalculation of departmental representatives based on the sizes of the academic units. Once the list is finalized, VP Students will begin reaching out to academic units with missing representatives to ensure we have adequate and democratic representation in GSS council in accordance with the GSS bylaws.

6.2.5 VP Students

- Met with Applied Science Associate Dean to discuss setting up a graduate/undergraduate mentorship program, like the current program with Science Undergraduate Society (SUS)
- Planned events for the rest of the term with Victoria (EM)
- Hosted several events: Savings Strategy Workshop, Studentcare Q&A
- Programs started last week during the first week of February 😊: Latin Funk, Bootcamp, Yoga, French
- Met with several AOs for the orientation: Experimental Medicine, Geography, IDEAS
- Went through the initial survey draft for EDI audit
- Planning a Black History Month panel discussion with G+PS and Graduate Student Ambassadors – February 25th 5:00 – 7:30PM PST
- Grad Impact Photo Contest – closes February 15th - get your friends and peers to submit their photos! It can be anything, ranging from work from home set-up, what the lab looks like, what research looks like, etc.
- Updated all AO and event fund related forms, as well as policy changes to reflect current practices – sent and approved by CPC, to be approved in February Council



- Hosting Rainbow Speed Friending next week with Nicolas – Feb 11th @ 6pm
- Attended CAGS 2021 – thanks Alireza 😊
- Sitting on Physical Activity Committee, DIMENSIONS EDI Committee
- Curating content for referendum promotion through Instagram – shares @ubcgss with your friends and family to spread the news regarding the referendum, elections, etc.
- Collaborating with UBC REC for a Lunch + Lift program end of March

6.3 COMMITTEES

6.3.1 Academic & External Committee

AcEx met on January 27th and discussed:

- UBC's current tuition consultation and proposed increases, and what the GSS's approach to responding to this consultation should be
- Developing a GSS position on safety > speediness in campus reopening as we look towards the future
- AMS/GSS 2021 Provincial Lobby Week debrief
- Proposal from VPX on the creation of issue-based policies to help guide advocacy strategies longterm
- U15 GSSes joint letter to the federal government
- AcEx will be holding an Advocacy workshop on Feb 19th from 12pm-2pm to help equip members to learn more about university and government advocacy as we look towards setting our new SMART goals. Email Julia acexchair@gss.ubc.ca if you want to attend as a guest!

6.3.2 Code & Policy Committee

CPC has been working on the following:

- Finalizing CPC's 2021 SMART goals
- Worked on integrating changes to AO application and event fund forms
- Discussed and worked on establishing further rules regarding how Departmental Representatives are calculated with G&A
- Had discussions with VP External regarding ways to make sure advocacy is consistent over time
- Finalized Code of Conduct

6.3.3 Elections Committee

- Opened for nominations, seated Elections Policy Panel to moderate the election, began reviewing campaign material, began organizing events to engage GSS members with the election.

6.3.4 Executive Committee

- (None submitted)

6.3.5 Executive Oversight Committee

- EOC discussed executives' time commitment and remuneration. We have reached out to House Finance Committee and Human Resources Committee to get feedback on the proposed increase.



6.3.6 Governance & Accountability Committee

- G&A sent out a request to all standing committees to submit 2021 SMART Goals by March 9th.
- G&A is still currently working on finalizing the ToR for the indigenous ad-hoc committee.
- G&A sent over recommendations for determining department representatives to CPC.
- G&A has been working on addressing and filling potential loopholes in mediation processes and sent over our recommendations to HR.
- G&A is currently piloting the efficacy of tracking KPIs using the council submission form.

6.3.7 House Finance Committee

- The House finance committee has been primarily on developing its SMART goals since the last council meeting. During the last HF meeting, the proposal to increase Weekly time commitment and remuneration for the executives was put forward by the EOC representatives. HF committee is currently evaluating the financial feasibility of the proposed increase and provided suggestions to EOC representatives to look into mechanisms to link the proposed increase with the performance metrics of the executives.

6.3.8 Human Resources

- (None submitted)

6.3.9 Services Committee

- Note: was informed I have to re-submit the minutes that didn't make the last meeting. Also realized we have another set of approved minutes for our January meeting (keeping track of everything is crazy sometimes).
Services Update: The Services committee has been hard at work helping to support the elections and the Elections committee. We have set in motion a series of events to help tackle the challenging situation of engagement this year. We are all hands on deck to make sure the Elections committee and elections are well supported.

6.3.10 Strategic Planning ad-hoc Committee

- SPAHC is primarily working on it's draft of the SWOT analysis of the society. Upon completion that document will be circulated to executives and committees for feedback (late february/early march) and will inform the construction of strategic priorities. We are also scheduling some of our remaining meetings with key GSS members and external experts to inform the SWOT analysis of the society. If you have any questions please email us at sptcom@gss.ubc.ca. Thanks!

6.3.11 AMS Caucus

- We have coordinated advocacy efforts offline but didn't have reason to hold an official caucus meeting.
- AMS council met last Thursday (Feb 11th). Pertinent updates from that meeting are: -Undergraduates of Canadian Research Intensive Universities (UCRU) is consulting the AMS and other member organizations on formalization. UCRU is currently an ad-hoc partnership of student societies in the top 15 research universities in Canada that lobbies the federal government on behalf of students. The AMS VP external is currently the chair of the UCRU governance committee so please let us know if you are interested in the UCRU constitution and have feedback you would like us to pass along to him. -Council voted to task the AMS governance committee with pursuing student-lead student Senator elections going forward. This means that



if AMS govcomm is successful, GSS will run elections for grad student senators in future years (this year they are being run by student enrollment services). If you have comments or questions please email me (Jackson) at [REDACTED]. Thanks!

6.3.12 Graduate Council Caucus

- The Caucus has identified the three main areas for their SMART Goals: Awards, Graduate Wellbeing, and Part Time Offerings. The goals are being fleshed out and will be sent to the Governance & Accountability Committee on schedule.

6.4 SENATORS AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS

6.4.1 Senators:

- (None submitted)

6.4.2 Board of Governors Representatives:

- The Board of Governors met for our regular committee cycle on Feb 3rd & 4th and for full Board on Feb 16th.
- The Board discussed matters including: the [integrated renewal program](#), [tuition increase consultation](#), the [In Plain Sight Report and Faculty of Medicine Response](#), a [presentation from student members of the Black Caucus](#), the [Cloud Innovation Center collaboration with AWS](#), the [enrolment report](#), the [student financial support program](#), the [process towards divestment](#), the [climate emergency task force's report](#), and the [climate action plan 2030](#).
- You can view the docket and the recordings here: <https://bog.ubc.ca/meeting-agenda-minutes/2021-agenda-packages-and-minutes/february-2021/>.

7 NOTICES

7.1 NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING

Date: Thursday, March 18th at 5:30 pm

Location: Online Via Teams

7.2 NOTICE OF UNSEATINGS

- Jennifer Lipka was unseated as Ordinary Member from Services Committee.
- Thomas Smith was unseated as Departmental Representative from Institute for the Ocean and Fisheries effective December 2020.
- Arjav Shah was unseated as Ordinary Member from Elections Committee effective January 2021.
- Alexa Tanner was unseated as Representative from AMS Council Caucus.
- Jackson Schumacher was unseated as Chair from Strategic Planning ad-hoc Committee.
- Zhengyan (Nancy) Yang was unseated as Councillor from Human Resources Committee.
- Kevin Gonzalez was unseated as Ordinary Member from Human Resources Committee.



8 ADJOURNMENT

BIRT there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at **9:53 pm**.

MOVER: Andrew

SECONDER: Nicolas

RESULT: Carried, none opposed