



ATTENDANCE

Present: Alireza Kamyabi, Alvionne Gardner-Harrison, Andrew Zang (Kaiya Yamada as proxy), Arezoo Alemzadeh Mehrizi, Christina Wiesmann, Erik Frieling, Gloria Mellesmoen, Hilal Kina, Jenny Lee, Jordan Hamden, Judith Valerie Engel, Karanpreet Matharu, Kate Sedivy-Haley, Larissa Peck, Logan Lorenz, Maria Jose Athie Martinez, Negar Ghahramani, Nevena Rebic, Philip Karangu, Sara Hosseinirad, Sarah Park, Tarique Benbow, Tayo Olarewaju, Teesha Luehr, Temi Onifade (Samuel Adeniji as proxy), Victoria Gomez, Yee Fay Lim, Jonathan Turcotte-Summers

Regrets: Alexa Tanner, Jeanie Malone

Absent:

Quorum: 18 Councillors (*reached quorum at meeting*)

CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting will be called to order at 5: 54 pm.

AGENDA ADOPTION

BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

Mover: Nicolas

Seconded: Sarah

Result: Motion carries.

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

President: As we start our meeting, we acknowledge that we are on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded lands of the Musqueam people. We will also add another portion to this acknowledgement – acknowledgment of the history of our own misappropriation. As you may be aware, the GSS used to have a different logo; it looked similar to a whale. This was actually a symbol of the Haida family, and it was unclear how it became a logo for the GSS or if we had permission to be using it as our logo. As a result, we stopped when this was pointed out to us and we went through a process of crafting the new logo, which was done by Susan Pointe, who is a well-known Musqueam artist. This was art that we commissioned last year, and it's now what you currently see as the GSS logo. The reason we are acknowledging this is that, sometimes when we speak about reconciliation, it seems like it often happens in Victoria, Ottawa, or elsewhere that is not close to us, but this shows that – regardless of where we are – we all play a part both in appropriating a symbol that is sacred to a different culture, and in the reconciliation process.



October 2019 Council Minutes

October 17th, 2019 | Michael Kingsmill Forum, AMS Nest | 5:45 pm

INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions.

1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1.1 GSS COUNCIL MINUTES

BIRT the following GSS Council minutes be approved:

- August 15th, 2019
- September 19th, 2019

Mover: Philip

Seconded: Ryan

Result: Motion carries

1.2 COMMITTEE MINUTES

BIRT the following GSS Committee minutes be approved:

Academic & External Committee:		Human Resources Committee:	
Code and Policy Committee:	August 27, 2019 September 10, 2019	Services Committee:	August 22, 2019
Elections Committee:		House Finance Committee:	
Executive Committee:		Governance & Accountability Committee:	September 11, 2019 September 23, 2019
Executive Oversight Committee:	September 12, 2019		

Mover: Nicolas

Seconded: Nevena

Result: Motion carries



2 SEATINGS

2.1 NEW COUNCILLORS

BIRT the following Seating of new Councillors be approved:

Name	Department
Jonathan Summers	Educational Studies
Jenny Lee	Experimental Medicine
Kiana Yau	Experimental Medicine
Mina Rigby-Thompson	History
Gloria Mellesmoen	Linguistics
Oluwakemi Oke	Law
Tayo Olarewaju	Law
Jin Wen	Psychology
Maria Jose Athie Martinez	Curriculum and Pedagogy
Larissa Peck	Medical Genetics
Erik Frieling	Physics and Astronomy
Negar Ghahramani	Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences

Mover: Judith

Seconded: Alireza

Result: Motion carries

2.2 EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVES SEATINGS

BIRT the following External Representatives Seatings be approved:

Committee/Caucus	Nominee	Position	Vacancies
AMS Caucus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arash Shadkam • Nevena Rebic • Jackson Schumacher • Alireza Kamyabi 	Representative	4
Graduate Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yangfan Zhang 	Representative	5



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erik Frieling • Megha Kalia • Sarah Park • Alejandra Botia 		
Faculty of Arts Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arielle Kersey • Alvionne Gardner-Harrison 	Representative	2
Health and Dental Plan Caucus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nevena Rebic 	Representative	1

Mover: Ryan

Seconder: Tarique

Result: Motion carries

2.3 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	Nominee	Position	Vacancies
Academic & External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larissa Peck • Ryan Ji • Mina Rigby-Thompson • Sarah Park • Jonathan Summers 	Councillor	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaiya Yamada • Mollie Holmberg • Arielle Kersey 	Ordinary Member	5
Code & Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jordan Hamden • Kate Sedivy-Haley • Tayo Olarewaju • Timothy Luk • Oluwakemi Oke 	Councillor	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aaron Loewen 	Ordinary Member	5



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Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jordan Hamden• Sarah Park• Alejandra Botia	Councillor	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alice Miao	Ordinary Member	5
Executive Oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Logan Lorenz• Kiana Yau• Tayo Olarewaju• Karanpreet Matharu• Alireza Kamyabi	Councillor	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kamaldeep Gill	Ordinary Member	5
Governance & Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alireza Kamyabi• Alvionne Gardner-Harrison• Jin Wen• Jenny Lee• Victoria Gomez	Councillor	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mo Shahsavari	Ordinary Member	5
House Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maria Jose Athie Martinez• Jungsoo Park• Sarah Park• Tayo Olarewaju	Councillor	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christina Wiesmann• Claire Preston• Jessie Zhang• Karen Thulasi• Devarsh Bhonde	Ordinary Member	5
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arezoo Mehrizi• Sarah Park• Kate Sedivy-Haley• Karanpreet Matharu	Councillor	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parsa Arabi• Samuel Adeniji	Ordinary Member	5



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Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Zang • Erik Frieling • Graham Donen • Negar Ghahramani • Karanpreet Matharu 	Councillor	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Dupuis • Rosanne Tam • Henry Walsgrove 	Ordinary Member	5

Mover: Sara

Seconder: Philip

Result: Motion carries

2.4 COMMITTEE SEATINGS

BIRT the following Committee Chair Seatings be approved:

Committee	Nominee	Position	Vacancies
Academic & External	Larissa Peck	Chair	1
Code & Policy	Kate Sedivy-Haley	Chair	1
Elections	Sarah Park	Chair	1
Governance & Accountability	Victoria Gomez	Chair	1
House Finance	Christina Wiesmann	Chair	1
Human Resources	Arezoo Mehrizi	Chair	1
Services	John Dupuis	Chair	1

Mover: Nevena

Seconder: Alejandra

Result: Motion carries

3 MATTERS FOR DECISION

3.1 AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION

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



BIRT the following organizations be recognized as Affiliate Organizations for one year, ending at the meeting of Council in October 2020:

Name of Affiliate Organization	Representative
Physics and Astronomy Graduate Student Association	Erik Frieling
Equity & Inclusion in Physics and Astronomy	Elham Khoda
Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Network	Abhilash Javaji

Arezoo: I was wondering if the Equity and Inclusion in Physics Astronomy organization has been active in asking for event fund.

Pouya: As far as I remember, they were going to apply for an event fund application – so, yes.

Arezoo: I was wondering if their events were really related to equity and inclusion.

Pouya: As of now, we haven't really considered the content of their event, but for the future we can see whether it is related to equity and inclusion.

Sarah: Is Equity and Inclusion grad-focused or is it open to anyone in the department?

Erik: I can talk about this – yes, they are grad-focused. They are only open to grad students. The Equity and Inclusion committee have quite a few events; they had a strong start and then there were some changes in leadership, so it was slow for a couple of months, but they are starting up again.

Jenny: I am wondering what the Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Network is?

Conny: If I may explain – because I created this organization. It includes any discipline; the goal is to get disciplines to start talking to each other.

Mover: Nicolas

Second: Andrew

Result: For (26): Tarique Benbow, Alejandra Botia, Judith Valerie Engel, Alvionne Gardner-Harrison, Negar Ghahramani, Sara Hosseinirad, Alireza Kamyabi, Philip Karangu, Jenny Lee, Logan Lorenz, Teesha Luehr, Arezoo M., Maria Martinez, Gloria Mellesmoen, Tayo Olarewaju, Temi Onifade, Sarah Park, Larissa Peck, Nevena Rebic, Mina Rigby-Thompson, Nicolas Romualdi, Kate Sedivy, Jonathan Summers, Jin Wen, Andrew Zang, Yangfan Zhang

Abstained: Eric Frieling, Pouya Rezaeinia



3.2 CODE AND POLICY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Group Responsible: Code and Policy Committee

Presentation Time: None

Subject Description: CPC Terms of Reference

Relevant Materials: [Policy Revision Form - Policy 8.3 CPC Terms of Reference.docx](#)

Motion:

WHEREAS the CPC Terms of Reference is not ideally aligned with either the strategic plan or with the activities of CPC, and improvements in clarity of the Terms of Reference can additionally be made,

WHEREAS the proposed new Terms of Reference were circulated in September, and no negative feedback has been received,

BIRT Policy 8.3 be repealed and replaced with the policy contained in the Policy Revision Form – Policy 8.3 CPC Terms of Reference.docx

Kate: It has been CPC's goal to review each committee's Terms of Reference; this time we have hit our own. We have got a couple of things that were done, as described in the Policy Revision form. One of the key things to note is that we are supposed to be adding the Strategic Plan to the Code, and also making sure that we are keeping an eye on making sure that our policy documents fit in with what is required of us by other stakeholders, including the government. After Societies Act came into play, it became obvious that this was something we need to watch out for. So CPC is now in charge of making sure that our policy documents fit with what is required by law. We have also got some clarifications about our function, with respect to consulting with other committees without needing the President to act as a go-between.

Mover: Maria

Seconder: Philip

Result: For (25): Tarique Benbow, Alejandra Botia, Judith Valerie Engel, Alvionne Gardner-Harrison, Negar Ghahramani, Victoria Gomez, Philip Karangu, Jenny Lee, Logan Lorenz, Teesha Luehr, Arezoo M., Maria Martinez, Gloria Mellesmoen, Oluwakemi Oke, Tayo Olarewaju, Sarah Park, Larissa Peck, Nevena Rebic, Mina Rigby-Thompson, Nicolas Romualdi, Kate Sedivy, Arash Shadkam, Jonathan Summers, Andrew Zang, Yangfan Zhang



3.3 POLICY FOR EXECUTIVES CHAIRING COMMITTEES

Group Responsible: Code and Policy Committee

Presentation Time: None

Subject Description: CPC Terms of Reference

Relevant Materials: [Policy Revision Form - 7.7 8.1 8.6 Executive Chairs.docx](#)

Motion:

WHEREAS Council was consulted in September regarding how to address potential power balance created by executives who are also committee chairs,

WHEREAS Council determined that these executives should continue to receive any honourarium, but should also be unseated at Council meetings requiring the continued chairship be re-assessed and alternative candidates be encouraged to take the chairship,

WHEREAS policy should also be clarified regarding executives who chair committees as part of their normal duties (currently the President for Executive Committee and FEOO for EOC, but possibly other executives in the future)

BIRT Policy 7.7.4 be adopted to read:

7.7.4 Except where a committee's Terms of Reference state that the committee should be chaired by an executive, any executive who holds a chair position will be unseated automatically at the beginning of every Council meeting. The executive may be re-elected chair at the meeting at which they are unseated, but preference must be given to a qualified alternative candidate outside the executive if one is available.

BIFRT Policy 7.7.4 be re-numbered 7.7.5 and revised to read:

7.7.5 Chairs will receive an honorarium of \$150 per month, except for cases in which the committee terms of reference specify that an executive will chair the committee. In this case, the chairship is considered part of the executive duties and no additional remuneration will be given.

BIFRT Policy 7.7.5 and 7.7.6 be renumbered to Policy 7.7.6 and 7.7.7,



BIFRT Policy 8.1.1.a be adopted as follows, and policy 8.1.1.a through d be renumbered accordingly:

8.1.1. The Executive Committee shall:

(a) be chaired by the President as per Bylaw 8.5.2.d.iii notwithstanding the terms of Policy 7.7.1-7.7.3.

BIFRT Policy 8.6.2 (a) be revised to read:

8.6.2 The Executive Oversight committee shall:

(a) Be chaired by the FEOO as per bylaw 8.5.6 (c) notwithstanding the terms of policy 7.7.1-7.7.3,

Kate: This was judged to be the best balance based on the consultation during last Council meeting.

Nicolas: Pursuant to Policy 3.3, I declare that I have a conflict of interest with this motion, given that I stand to be paid for chairing a committee that is not executive committee, should this policy amendment pass. That being said, I will leave the room after this, just to have free discussion here. I am not a fan of the wording of 7.7.4 – the portion about preference must be given to a qualified alternative candidate. It is not clear what preference means, and how that could be judged. I am leaning toward wanting to strike that portion.

Kate: The purpose of that line is to emphasize the fact that we want someone who is not an executive chairing whenever possible. The reason we are slightly fuzzy about who would qualify is because we don't want to be in a situation where we'd have to automatically elect anyone who stands for a Committee chair, if we think as Council that they are going to be very problematic in that role.

President leaves room to allow Council to vote freely.

Mover: Sarah

Secunder: Victoria

Result: For (22): Alejandra Botia, Judith Valerie Engel, Alvionne Gardner-Harrison, Alireza Kamyabi, Jenny Lee, Yee Fay Lim, Teesha Luehr, Karanpreet M., Maria Martinez, Gloria Mellesmoen, Oluwakemi Oke, Tayo Olarewaju, Temi Onifade, Larissa Peck, Nevena Rebic, Mina Rigby-Thompson, Kate Sedivy, Arash Shadkam, Jonathan Summers, Jin Wen, Andrew Zang, Yangfan Zhang

Abstained: Tarique Benbow, Philip Karangu, Logan Lorenz, Arezoo M.



3.4 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MSP OPEN LETTER

WHEREAS On Jan. 1, 2020, when the Provincial Government eliminates all MSP premiums, healthcare coverage fee for international students will rise to \$75 per month.

WHEREAS By imposing this fee, the government will place a significant financial burden on international graduate students, many of whom already struggle financially. GSS is also disappointed at both the timing of the decision and the lack of consultation.

BIRT GSS circulate the prepared [open letter](#).

Sara: This news was released in the beginning of August. There are three main problems with this decision – the first one is that the fee will be increased for both postsecondary and K-12 students. There was also a lack of consultation because they didn't consult with any administration or student organizations – to the best of our knowledge – and the timing was stealthy because they just announced this in the beginning of August, when students had decided on their funding package and where they will study. We prepared an open letter with AcEx committee; we want to get permission to circulate this letter with the students, administration, and student organizations so that we can lobby better for this. There are two options for the BC government to consider – 1) to eliminate the fee for international students, 2) put a pause on this and do proper consultation for at least two years.

Nicolas: I would like to move this discussion to in-camera.

Mover: Nicolas

Second: Gloria

Result: Motion carries

-IN-CAMERA DISCUSSION-

BIRT that Council sends the matter back to Academic and External committee:

Mover: Sarah

Second: Judith

Result: For (26): Tarique Benbow, Alejandra Botia, Judith Valerie Engel, Eric Frieling, Negar Ghahramani, Victoria Gomez, Sara Hosseinirad, Philip Karangu, Jenny Lee, Yee Fay Lim, Teesha Luehr, Arezoo M., Karanpreet



M., Maria Martinez, Gloria Mellesmoen, Oluwakemi Oke, Tayo Olarewaju, Larissa Peck, Nevena Rebic, Mina Rigby-Thompson, Nicolas Romualdi, Kate Sedivy, Jonathan Summers, Jin Wen, Andrew Zang, Yangfan Zhang

Against (3): Alvionne Gardner-Harrison, Alireza Kamyabi, Arash Shadkam

4 MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

4.1 FUNDING ADVOCACY AND SURVEY

Group Responsible: GSS President / VP Academic

Presentation Time: 15 minutes

Subject Description: Funding for graduate research students

Relevant Materials: a) [Funding Advocacy.pptx](#) b) [Graduate Student Finances.pptx](#)

Tarique: What we plan to do is develop and launch a research graduate student funding survey to gather empirical data on graduate students' income sources and their expenses. Graduate students with dependents – what do their expenses look like? Then we can use this empirical data to present to the UBC administration. I am just going to tell you guys a little bit more about the survey. Often times, the comment we get is that surveys aren't that much of an effective tool, and how grad student involvement in surveys are really low – as we see with our GSS – SSS. But we have put a plan forward to increase involvement by how we plan to administer this survey. First of all, because this issue is really specific to research students, we wanted to be able to target the audience – so we will be administering the data through personalized links. We at GSS have information on all graduate students in terms of their emails, contact information, so we have stratified that list in terms of which students are within the research stream; this allows us to reach a very focal target audience. In addition to having a very focalized survey, it allows us to reduce a lot of the demographic questions like “Which department are you in?” “What year are you in?” so as to increase survey engagement and completion.

General social media platforms – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, the GSS website – will be used to promote this survey. We have managed to gather the support of Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in terms of putting the survey out there to as many graduate students as possible. We understand that many students will have questions on why we are doing this survey, so the GSS website will have a specific page to answer graduate students' questions about the survey.

We plan to launch the survey in the next two weeks, and it will last for approximately three weeks. We anticipate that we will be able to collect the data within this time period and analyze it within a month, in time for us to possibly present to the UBC Senate and other university administration within the new year.

Larissa: My program is half research-based and half not. Can you address the students who are not research-based?



Tarique: Yes, that has been a concern we've been hearing, including from the GSS staff. For the students who are not in the research stream, we plan to start a focus group in the new year. We will be sending out calls for participants through the GSS newsletter and it will start in January – but for now, the personalized links will only be sent to the graduate students who are research-based.

4.2 GRADUATE LIFE CENTRE UPDATE

Group Responsible: GSS President

Presentation Time: 15 minutes

Subject Description: Update on the Graduate Life Centre renovation project.

Relevant Materials: [Graduate Life Centre update.pptx](#)

Christina: Was there any discussion about getting a new elevator?

Nicolas: Yes. That part is unnegotiable – we will be getting a fully accessible elevator.

Arezo: My question is about the space for zumba and yoga classes. How many people could fit in that space? The revenue from these types of classes are crucial for the VP Students.

Nicolas: We are not at that stage yet. We are still deciding the floor plan, but thank you for the comment.

4.3 AN INTRODUCTION TO AMS CAUCUS

Group Responsible: AMS Caucus

Presentation Time: 8 minutes

Subject Description: An introduction to AMS Caucus

Proposed objective: To introduce Council to AMS caucus and update them on its progress and plans

Relevant materials (i.e. links or filenames): [An Introduction to AMS Caucus.pptx](#)

Arash: Think of us as the Foreign Affairs of a country – we are the liaison between the GSS and the AMS Council.

Sara: Are there any other grad students on the AMS Council that are not under the GSS?

Jeanie: The AMS views any graduate school as a separate entity, in a way. Previously, any school is its own seat. Now, you need the school to be a certain size to get a seat, but because the schools are graduate programs, they don't usually meet the minimum size to have a seat.

4.4 TUITION CONSULTATION

Group Responsible: GSS President

Presentation Time: 10 minutes



Subject Description: Tuition Consultation submission. The AMS, GSS and SUO will produce a joint submission for the tuition consultation process.

Relevant Materials: [Tuition Consultation.pptx](#)

Arezo: I think it is important to do comparisons when doing tuition consultation. For example, University of Toronto eliminated the tuition fee for both international and Canadian PhD students. With UBC, it is just increasing every year; so, I think ultimately we can either eliminate or reduce the fee.

Alireza: I think there is a lot of room for you to tie the financial burdens of tuition to mental health and productivity of graduate students. Just a point.

4.5 SMART GOALS 2018-2019 END-OF-TERM PROGRESS

Group Responsible: Governance & Accountability Committee

Presentation Time: 10 minutes

Subject Description: Present a summary on the end-of-term review of the Committee, Caucus and FEOO goals.

Relevant Materials: [SMART Goals End-of-Term Report.pptx](#)

Victoria: Overall, great job everyone. Committees will be setting their new goals in November, and we will be reporting on the goals in January. We want your feedback though – how can we support you and your committees? Let us know. Thank you.

4.6 COMMITTEE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

Group Responsible: Governance & Accountability Committee

Presentation Time: 10 minutes

Subject Description: Currently, there is very little structure for assessing whether a committee/caucus is functioning effectively on a continuing basis. Issues usually noticed when it's "too late". Assessing a baseline of efficacy helps committees operate consistently and takes some of the onus off of committee chairs!

Relevant Materials: [Committee KPIs.pptx](#)

Victoria: SMART Goals vs. KPIs – I can explain the difference. SMART Goals are related to the Strategic Plan; they are set annually and they are based on projects. These are one-off projects – for example, I want to draft a revised Terms of Reference for my committee. It is not something that you are going to be doing every year, hopefully. Key Performance Indicators, however, are things we use to track your performance continuously and they would be easy to measure and report, because they would be basic things such as, "Does your committee meet? Do you submit updates to Council?"

We want to do this because otherwise issues are noticed when it is too late. We don't want to only realize after three months that a committee hasn't been meeting.



Nicolas: I fully support this idea. It would prevent unforeseen issues – like what happened with the HR committee earlier this year, in the middle of a hiring emergency.

4.6 COMMITTEE MEETING TIMES AND AGENDAS POLICY

Group Responsible: Code and Policy Committee

Presentation Time: 10 minutes

Subject Description: Committee policy has not been enforced relating to providing notice to meetings, submitting minutes, and ensuring confidentiality forms are signed. These policies are important to transparency and institutional memory. The purpose of this discussion is to identify any barriers to implementing these policies.

Relevant Materials: [Committee Policy.pptx](#)

Jonathan: Even the Council meetings and times on the website are not updated – maybe we should make sure that is done first.

Nicolas: We are launching a new website soon. The current one does not lend itself to doing the updating at all. I want to address that this a two-pronged problem – right now we are not following the rules because we don't know what the rules are, and we will not be able to figure it all out right now. This is going to be a comprehensive consultation that CPC should run. I wouldn't do too much brainstorming right now, given the time.

4.7 ACADEMIC FREEDOM ON THE UBC CAMPUS

Group Responsible: GSS President / Board of Governors Representatives

Presentation Time: 10 minutes

Subject Description: Academic freedom and respectful environments on UBC campus.

Relevant Materials: [Academic Freedom.pptx](#)

Jonathan: Thanks for the presentation and for bringing up this very crucial topic. There's an organization on campus that's being trying to call attention to these matters for a year now, called Students Against Bigotry; I have been working with this organization. I think this issue isn't quite as complex as the administration is making it seem. I would like to clarify what I mean: First of all, the attempt to extend academic freedom to absolutely everybody hollows it absolutely of meaning. UBC has been called out by UBC Law faculty member Emma Cunliffe for essentially making academic freedom meaningless by conflating it with freedom of expression. UBC has been using "academic freedom" and "freedom of expression" interchangeably. There is an important distinction to be made, but the university has purposefully chosen not to make that distinction.



Another thing is, I want to say that the policies we need already exist but the university is choosing to not use them for whatever reason. Everything is on paper already; this isn't a policy issue. I think we need to ask the administration why they are not enforcing what is already there, and why the GSS isn't standing up for the students who are targeted by neo-Nazis and white supremacists who keep coming to our campus.

Nicolas: Thank you for your heartfelt comment. The GSS has a procedure for position statements; I am not shrugging my responsibilities. I cannot take position without a two-thirds vote in Council. What I can do is what I am doing right now – telling Council about these matters. In my view, we need to redefine the policies so that they cannot be misinterpreted or subverted.

5 MATTERS TO NOTE

5.1 UPCOMING EVENTS

- Craft Untapped on October 23rd
- Thrive Pop Up Lounge on November 13th
- Koerner's Happy Hour on November 15th
- Professional Headshots on November 20th

5.2 EXECUTIVES

5.2.1 President:

- **Graduate Life Center, Graduate Student Funding, Tuition Consultation:**
See relevant matters for discussion.
- **New GSS Website**
An alpha version of the new GSS website has been circulated to the GSS Executives and feedback was provided. Launch is expected within the next 2 months.
- **GSS Newsletter**
Given the increase request for items into the GSS newsletter as a result of better community engagement, and the higher production of content by the GSS, we will soon migrate to a weekly newsletter format as opposed to the current bi-weekly.
- **Koerner's Pub New Address**
To direct traffic more easily into the pub, a new wayfinding address has been issued for it (1758 West Mall).



- **Councillor Training**

A councillor training is being organized for November 16th. This training will be mandatory for new Councillors and optional for Councillors who have already undergone training. New subjects will be including: Sexual Violence and how to handle Disclosures (delivered by SVPRO), and Conflict Management (delivered by the EDI Office).

- **Michael Kingsmill Forum Bookings**

The AMS VP Admin has graciously decided to waive the limitations of the AMS booking policy and allow the GSS to book the Michael Kingsmill Forum in advance until November of 2020, eliminating any potential booking conflicts for the foreseeable future.

5.2.2 VP University & Academic Affairs

- **Improving the Function and Structure of GSS Advocacy Office**

- Implementing Office Goals, KPIs, & Team Building

As a part of the strategy to improve the structure and function of the GSS Advocacy office; monthly meetings with all Advocates have begun. These meetings will foster greater communication within the office and allow for shared experiences to navigate challenges. Key Performance indicators (KPIs) have been developed and implemented to track performance periodically. SMART goals have also been produced in consultation with office members and will be tracked and reported on during these meetings.

- Constructing the Advocacy Panel

Discussions for an Advocacy Panel has begun in consultation with the AcEx Committee but is still within its infancy. The advocacy panel will allow for better integration of the advocacy office/staff within the GSS.

- **Supporting Graduate Student Mental Health & Wellbeing**

- Equity and Inclusion

Introductory Meeting with UBC EQI Office: A lunch meeting was attended along the VP External, to introduce GSS Executives to UBC EQI Office staff. A follow-up meeting was attended with an Associate from the UBC EQI office to discuss the development of a mutually beneficial working relationship with this office. We discussed collaborating in the upcoming 2020 GSS SSS especially within survey questions review, survey distribution channels and dissemination of results to support our advocacy asks in future.

- Student-Supervisor Relationship

Successfully Collaborated with UBC Wellbeing Centre: UBC Graduate Wellbeing Ambassador Training Program. We collaborated with UBC Wellbeing Centre to train the first cohort of graduate wellbeing ambassadors. These ambassadors will serve as conduits throughout the campus, directing graduate students to the most appropriate source as needed. The VP UAA presented the GSS SSS report and explained the GSS has can help graduate students in need.

- **Sexual Violence & Assault Prevention**



- Sexual Violence and Assault (SAAM) Month Campaign: We continue to make preparation for Sexual Violence and Assault (SAAM) Month (Jan. 2020). We have met with potential groups (internal and external organisations) to collaborate on what will be a SAAM Campaign. This campaign is aimed at raising awareness around the issue. This campaign is still within the planning stages.
- Meeting with Sexual Violence and Prevention and Response Office (SVPRO): Met with representatives from the SVPRO office, to discuss how the GSS can collaborate with this office to support our advocacy efforts. Discussed sharing information/resource around the topic that can be used as resource for GSS website advocacy pages.
- Graduate Student Funding/Stipend
 - GSS Research Graduate Student Funding Survey
This survey will gather vital empirical data needed to support our advocacy ask around research graduate student stipend to the university. The Survey will run from the final week of October to mid-November 2019. Preparations for the GSS Funding survey is well on the way. The administrative planning functions have been realised and post-survey media and profiling will begin later next week and into the survey distribution period.

5.2.3 VP External Relations

ABCS:

- Attended weekly advocacy committee meetings.
- 4 asks for lobby days are prepared.
 - i. Needs-Based Grant: recommends that the BC government provides another channel for funding graduate students.
 - ii. International Student Tuition: recommends that the BC government determines a cap for yearly increases in the international student tuition.
 - iii. Student Mental Health: recommends BC government provides funding for universities to hire counsellors.
 - iv. Sexualized Violence on Campus: recommends that the Province of British Columbia adopt into regulation the 11 minimum standards identified by Students For Consent Culture supporting the Sexualized Violence and Misconduct Policy Act.
- The lobby days will happen from October 25th to October 30th.

Federal Election Campaign:

- “Meet the Candidates” event is held on September 25th.
- Interviewed by the Ubessey about the GSS events and campaign.
- The Federal Election Coordinator provided information and resources for graduate students online about voting.



UBC Climate Strike:

- Signed the open letter on behalf of the society.
- Updated the transition report to inform the next VP External about the position statement.
- Alongside GSS executives and staff attended the strike on September 27th, 2019.

ACEX committee:

- Discussed the International Student MSP Open Letter.

5.2.4 VP Students

- **FIREtalks with G+PS:**

Collaborations on FIREtalks (Facilitated Interdisciplinary Research Exchange talks - originally created by graduate students in the research commons) with Jacqui Brinkman and the graduate student ambassador. A FIREtalk event focuses on a specific theme and consists of 3-4 brief (approximately 5-10 minutes) presentations by UBC graduate students from different disciplines, followed by a period for questions and discussion. The theme of our first FIREtalk will be around drinking water which is going to take place in November.

- **Off-campus Career Fair:**

Off-campus Career Fair in collaboration with the off-campus students held on October 8, 2019. Received a lot of positive feedback and had around 50 attendees. We are in the process of planning more events that are specific to the off-campus students.

- **Mental Health Workshop Series:**

The third session (on Financial Pressures) in the Support Group Series for Graduate Student Mental Health and Wellbeing scheduled for Thursday, October 24 in collaboration with the Wellness Centre and the Director of Academic Support in Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

5.2.5 Financial and Executive Oversight Officer

-



5.3 COMMITTEES

5.3.1 Academic & External Committee

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5.3.2 Code & Policy Committee

- While updating the Policy Manual to include an appendix including the Position Statement passed by Council in the September meeting, CPC also updated the numbering of the appendices, incrementing the final appendix (HR Manual) by one in order to facilitate appending that document to the Policy Manual, and updating references to that appendix number within the manual. The position statement was also dated in order to facilitate the execution of Policy 14.4 regarding expiration of position statements.

Continuing our terms of reference review, CPC drafted revisions to the G&A Terms of Reference and consulted with G&A (Sept 26 and Oct 7, G&A Oct 8); this will be brought to November Council. We also drafted revisions to the HR Terms of Reference (Sept 26th), which have been sent to HR committee for comment.

CPC drafted a policy on executives chairing committees, based on the consultation in September Council (minutes Sept 26th). This policy is brought to October Council. We also discussed the use of web-based versions of the forms in the policy manual (Oct 7th), and expect to draft a policy allowing for such at some point within the next month. Finally, we have begun discussion (Oct 7th) regarding some issues with general committee policy identified by the G&A chair.

5.3.3 Elections Committee

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5.3.4 Executive Committee

-

5.3.5 Executive Oversight Committee

-

5.3.6 Governance & Accountability Committee

- The G&A has been working on assessing the End-of-Term Progress on Committee SMART Goals. This is done around September and presented in October, towards the end of the "committee year" (October



- September). Our assessment is presented in a presentation at this Council - please see in the supporting documents.

We are also focusing on supporting committees as they enter possible new chairship/membership in the new “committee year” - recent discussion include tracking KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and Council Agenda submission template/guide.

To facilitate our own operations, the committee is finalizing a “Operations Calendar” that will show a big-picture view of what G&A does (ie. governance vs. accountability portfolios), as well as a timeline for recurring tasks and responsibilities throughout the year. This will aid current as well as future members understand what is involved in their new role as a committee member.

Upcoming: G&A will be helping committees develop SMART Goals for a new year (deadline ~ Oct/Nov), so please be aware that your committees should be thinking about these. We may also be implementing KPI tracking, and considering additional ways to support committees functioning successfully and with less undue workload/transition stress.

As always, the G&A would love to hear from people about how we can support your committees, or make Council more aware of what we’re doing. Please contact us in-person (*Victoria is friendly!*) or by email (gacom@gss.ubc.ca)

5.3.7 House Finance Committee

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5.3.8 Human Resources

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5.3.9 Services Committee

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5.3.10 Strategic Plan Ad Hoc Committee

- The Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee has met monthly since its inception in August 2019. In the first meeting we reviewed the Committee’s terms of reference and established a procedure for going forward on our first deliverable – a SWOT analysis of the society as a whole. By our second meeting, we had reviewed and analysed a docket of selected documents to categorize the performance of GSS and develop themes which would guide our SWOT analysis. Going forward, we plan to initiate a



consultation process to hear from GSS Committees and Council Members on the performance of GSS and potential areas for improvement.

5.3.11 AMS Caucus

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5.3.12 Graduate Council Caucus

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5.4 SENATORS AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS

5.4.1 Senators

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5.4.2 Board of Governors Representatives

All of the committees and Board meetings have finished for this cycle, including the full Board meetings at UBC Okanagan and a strategic retreat. [Agenda items and materials are on the Board website](#). Topics discussed this cycle included:

- Okanagan 2040 (strategic plan) and capital planning, including an allocation of \$4mil to fund their priorities from the main endowment
- Intercampus mobility for students and faculty
- Presentations from AMS/SUO on their goals (GSS coming in November)
- Updates on digital research infrastructure (UBC Sockeye), an undergraduate research program (PURE), and research excellence clusters
- A presentation on graduate students in the research enterprise from Dr. Liisa Galea
- Preliminary information about food insecurity on campus
- Student housing waitlist numbers
- Non-UBC use of UBC facilities
- Divestment approaches
- Indigenous strategic plan progress

The next meetings will be held in late November (committees – Nov 26, full Board – Dec 5) in the third floor of the Alumni Centre.



5.5 GSS STAFF

- The GSS participated in the UBC President's Longboat Challenge on Saturday, September 28th at Jericho Beach. We built team rapport, *did not capsize*, and came back to shore feeling all energized and accomplished.
- On October 1st, General Manager Vivian attended a training on fatigue management, muscular and skeletal health as well as first aid, from 8 am to 3:30 pm.

6 NOTICES

6.1 NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING

Date: Thursday, November 21 at 5:30 pm

Location: Michael Kingsmill Forum, AMS Nest

6.2 NOTICE OF UNSEATINGS

Policy 7.3.6: Excluding positions occupied by executive officers, all standing committee memberships shall be reseated at the October Council meeting.

Councillor unseatings:

- Andras Szeitz was unseated as Departmental Representative of Geography
- Tayo Olarewaju was unseated as Departmental Representative of Law
- Sebastien Rettie unseated as Departmental Representative of Physics and Astronomy
- Gloria Mellesmoen was unseated as Departmental Representative of Linguistics
- Negar Ghahamarani was unseated as Departmental Representative of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences
- Solomon Atta was unseated as Departmental Representative of School of Public Policy and Global Affairs
- Maria Jose Athie Martinez was unseated as Departmental Representative of Curriculum and Pedagogy
- Karen Thulasi was unseated as Departmental Representative of Botany
- Kiana Yau was unseated as Departmental Representative of Experimental Medicine
- Larissa Peck was unseated as Departmental Representative of Medical Genetics



4 ADJOURNMENT

BIRT there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 10 : 07 pm.

Mover: Philip

Seconder: Victoria

Result: Motion carries