

GSS Annual General Meeting Agenda

Thursday, March 21st, 2019 | Thea's Lounge, Graduate Student Society (225-6371 Crescent Road) | 5:30 pm.

Guests: Bahareh Jokar

A. Call to Order & Adoption of the Agenda

Note: The President challenged The Speaker on the requirement of quorum. The President interpreted Bylaw 5.4 to mean that quorum is 67 ordinary members of the Society.

The meeting will be called to order at **5:38 pm**.

Quorum: 100 of the ordinary members of the Society.

BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

MOVED. SECONDED.

No discussion.

RESULT: Carried

B. Introductions

Introductions were made by the Executives.

C. Approval of Minutes

BIRT the minutes of the AGM dated March 24, 2016, March 23, 2017, and March 14, 2018 be approved as presented.

MOVED. SECONDED.

No discussion.

RESULT: Carried

D. AGM Motions

1. Appointment of Auditor

BIRT Thompkins, Wozny, Miller & Co. appointed as financial auditor for 2019-2020.

MOVED. SECONDED.

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Jun: My question to The Speaker: is it the same auditor as last year?

Speaker: Yes, it is the same auditor as last year.

RESULT: Carried

2. Bylaw Amendment

WHEREAS under GSS Bylaw section 8.5. Duties of Executive Officers, Bylaw 8.5.2 states that the President shall: (e) be responsible for Meetings of Council including: (i) chairing and setting the agenda for meetings of Council;

WHEREAS GSS Bylaw 7.6.1 states that Council shall hold regularly scheduled meetings at least once each month;

WHEREAS the President may interpret Bylaw 8.5.2 as he is able to cancel monthly Council meeting;

WHEREAS cancelling monthly Council meeting goes against Bylaw 7.6.1.

BIRT Bylaw 8.5.2.e be amended to add a new item (ii) below, with existing items ii-v being incremented accordingly: The President shall: (e) be responsible for Meetings of Council, including;

(i) chairing and setting the agenda for meetings of Council (ii) ensuring Council meetings occur at least once per month, pursuant to Bylaw 7.6.1. (iii) ensuring the proper operation of the meetings of Council; (iv) taking minutes at meetings of Council or appointing a designate to do so;

(v) ensuring copies of the minutes of the previous Council meeting, the agenda of the upcoming Council meeting, and any other relevant material is delivered to each Councillor in advance of each regular council meeting; and

(vi) signing Council Minutes and maintaining a minute book containing true copies of all signed Council minutes;

MOVED. SECONDED.

Kate: The motivation for this particular amendment is that it was unclear whether the President was able to cancel the monthly council meetings rather than reschedule it. We had a month where there was no council meeting. There's a Bylaw that also says that Council meetings do need to meet monthly, so this is just clarifying that that is true. And that it is the President's responsibility for holding it, that he's not given the authority to

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cancel it – a Council meeting has to be held at least once a month and rescheduled, if it cannot occur on the usual day.

RESULT: Carried

E. Presentations

(10 Minutes, 5 minutes for questions)

Presentation #1

Presentation Title: 2018/19 GSS Executive Year in Review

Proposed objective: Inform GSS Members about the Work of the GSS Executives

Group Responsible: GSS Executives

Presentation Time: 10 minutes

Relevant Materials: AGM Presentation Executive Committee

Presentation #2

Presentation Title: 2018/19 GSS Council Year in Review

Proposed objective: Inform GSS Members about the Work of Council

Group Responsible: GSS President

Presentation Time: 10 minutes

Relevant Materials: Council's Work

Speaker: There is a question period at the end of each presentation. It was missed for the first presentation. We will now have the question period for both presentations. Are there any questions?

Arezoo: Can the president explain more about the feasibility studies mentioned in the Executives presentation?

John: The Grad Life Center has to proceed in three steps. Firstly, the Grad Life Center is planned for this building – the Thea Koerner House. The plan is to have the building renovated and expanded for the GSS and grad students. For that to happen, there first has to be a technical and a functional feasibility study. Technical to look at the building and whether the structure can receive the enhancements, and functionality to be sure that the kind of stuff that we want to provide here is what grad students actually want.

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Arezoo: This question is for Pouya. First of all you showed the data regarding participation during last year. I was wondering what was the reason for the reduction in participation and what are your plans for solving that in the future? It had been hard work in previous years to increase participation, and seeing that reduction is disappointing.

Pouya: Last year, increased participation was 400. Some of it is coincidence. We can't expect the same amount of participation every year. For some of the events, we've held them in the year before and it was successful, but it might not be optimal to repeat the same event every year. For example, if we do not see the same level of participation as the previous year for curling, then we realize that we shouldn't hold this event every year. Maybe we held fewer events this year, but for programs, we can say that there were some issues with the instructors last year. And, for example, the event space was noisy for yoga, and because of that, we have fewer participants this year. Even though we had a better place and a better instructor, we can't control everything. We also invited Jasleen from off campus to give us some data, and what the needs of off-campus students are. We do not have enough data to make better decisions. And I made all the decisions with the help of Services and our Events Manager. And if we didn't organize more events, it was either because, for example, for orientation, there was no more space for more events, and for the other ones, I didn't have budget. When I started this position, one of the concerns was that although I wanted to increase the budget, I remembered the last VP Finance had said that we should try to maintain participation and that we should not expect more participation this year because of last year.

Nicolas: Out of respect for your time, I want to say that you're always welcome to reach out with questions – to committees or executives. But to let the meeting move more succinctly today, I move that the number of speaking times per person per presentation is one.

BIRT the number of times each person may speak per presentation is one.

MOVED. SECONDED.

Arezoo: At the end of the day, the whole point is that we get clarity. Let's say there is a discussion, but the one who asks the question doesn't get their answer, they cannot ask again?

Speaker: No.

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Arezoo: What is the whole point of the discussion? If the audience has a question, somebody answers, but the question is not completely answered, they should have the right to still ask questions until they get a satisfying answer.

RESULT: Carried (Against: 10).

Raluca: I have a question about the Affiliate Organization status: having a new executive, our committee has quite a frequent turnover. And apparently us becoming an AO was missed for a few years. I was wondering, moving with future committees, do we have to fill out the form every year? Or is there a more streamlined process? Because we're going to make sure the new committee knows what to do, but will that get lost if they don't do it, is there another process?

Amber: Out of order.

Speaker: Would you mind keeping that question later to ask VP Students. The meeting format is a little different. We talk right on the point, and for anything off the point, I have to call it out of order. The audience has also challenged me that it is out of order. We're following parliamentary rules of order. Can someone follow up with her after?

Pouya: Yes, I will.

Presentation #3

Presentation Title: 2018/19 GSS Financial Reports

Proposed objective: Inform GSS Members about the 2018/19 GSS Financial Reports

Group responsible: Finance and Executive Oversight Officer

Presentation time: 5 minutes

Relevant Materials: Coming

Nicholas: Point of privilege. Would you mind not using acronyms so ordinary members can understand.

Philip: CPIF stands for capital plan improvement fund.

Presentation #4

Presentation Title: End of the Year Report of the GSS/AMS Referendum Ad Hoc Committee

Proposed objective: Present on the Work of the Committee During 2018/2019

Group responsible: President

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Presentation time: 5 minutes

Relevant materials: None

Jun: How do you get grad students as a whole to engage with AMS – in what ways?

John: I have to discuss two things that we thought we would get out of that separation. First is autonomy, and second is more cash flow. We have the first already: GSS and grad students have complete autonomy and recognition in the view of the school authorities. We have autonomy because our government is separated, and our fees come separately. What we thought we would gain in financial rewards by saving the fees to the AMS was not going to be automatic. The way the GSS can work better than AMS is to negotiate on more specific situations for the graduate student community. The loft is one of such things, but we can push for more, if we thought that is necessary. The second most important is that grad students do not usually associate themselves with the AMS. We want to encourage grad students through Council and through emails that in AMS elections, AMS services, and AMS Council, all members can walk into Council, and they can make contributions on discussions on the floor. Thirdly, the executives of both AMS and GSS have agreed to work closer together and hold regular meetings. The objective is that on a monthly basis that GSS can tell the AMS executives what is particular interest to the GSS.

Amber: Could someone offer specific opportunities that grad students might participate in the AMS? Are they able to run for executive positions? And/or are there graduate student-specific opportunities within the AMS that graduate students should be made aware of?

John: Yes. Everyone on campus can run for an executive positions in the AMS. All services provided by the AMS are available to all of us on campus. Currently, we have 4 positions for grad students on AMS Council that vote on behalf of the GSS. Every member of GSS can join committees in the AMS.

Arezoo: Basically, one of the concerns that we're joined with the AMS is that we're not recognized under the UBC Act. So we have much less political power than the AMS. What that means is that when, for example, it comes to mental health or any other issue, the voice of undergraduate students is more powerful.

Speaker: I have read that clause in the UBC Act. It's from a date forward all the ones that are recognized, stay recognized. From a point afterwards, if you haven't been recognized, you must be listed under the regulation in order to be recognized. The GSS is recognized – we're 50+ years old, and that revision occurred in these previous years.

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Arezoo: Why is it then that the political power and influence of the GSS is less than AMS? UBC pays more attention to undergraduate students' needs. That shows that GSS has less political power. How can that be addressed?

John: Political influence is a thing of perception. To mitigate this observation, that's why we're encouraging grad students to pay more attention and to participate more in AMS activities. There's no political divide from my end.

Arezoo: I'm talking about the university level.

John: I wouldn't say the university level pays more attention to the AMS. In our term, at the university level, we have been invited, as GSS to every event and every meeting side-by-side with AMS. We received fair and equal consultation if you ask me.

Presentation #5

Presentation Title: GSS AMS Health and Dental Plan - Student Care Annual Report

Proposed Objective: Report to GSS Members on 2018/19 AMS/GSS Health & Dental Plan

Group responsible: Bahareh Jokar

Presentation time: 10 minutes

Relevant Materials: Coming

Amber: Point of clarification. The coverage for mental health for psychologists is currently \$300 – is that not correct? You said \$400.

Bahareh: It's \$300. I also have brochures here with complete breakdowns.

Alexa: For your travel plans, you mentioned a certain number of days. Do you have to tell the insurance people that you're traveling? How do you indicate the days?

Bahareh: If you are traveling for personal reasons, you have 120 days, and you don't need to tell anybody – you just have 120 days from the day you leave the country. If you're travelling for academic purposes and you need more than 120 days, then you contact us, and we'll cover you for the duration of your academic trip. So if it is up to a year, you can have coverage for a year without paying extra, to top up the 120 and it'll cover you for 120 days before the academic experience, and 120 days after the academic experience; but we would need to know so we can inform the insurance company.

Amber: Could you please clarify how GSS members benefit from the added numbers through collaborating with the AMS in terms of what it costs for us in a health plan?

Bahareh: Two years ago, we polled the number of claims that were coming from graduate students, and the majority of claims from this plan are coming from graduate students. So

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how that works and why that's relevant is that group plans are priced based on the size and the pool of the plan itself. If you have 10,000 or if you have 60,000 students, the economy of scale for the 60,000 student group is going to be more aggressive and the negotiating power would be higher. You are very unique – the majority of graduate students across the country do not have the ability to combine plans. Your plan is established by both grad students and undergrads whereby everyone else's were just separate. Your counterparts at SFU pay upward of \$500 for their plan per year. You paid roughly \$244 for last year. And they are roughly the same size as you. The key drivers in the cost of the plan are claims so that the more students use, the cost of the plan goes up. We also have to factor in a number of inflationary indexes which are different from CPI and your basic numbers that you would see, just because health plans function differently. In general, the graduate students in the GSS have benefits from the purchasing power of the collective.

Kate: What's the relationship between the Empower Me program and the rest of the health plan?

Bahareh: Studentcare brought in Empower Me as a service on a national level in 2017. Empower Me, regardless how much it is used, will not impact the cost of the plan. It is a flat and fixed fee that is built into the plan for students. Next year, the Empower Me program will be completely removed from the cost of the plan, and the University is taking over. That means that every student, regardless of whether they're enrolled in the extended health and dental plan, will have access to Empower Me. It will still be administered by Studentcare, and it will be very similar to how you access other resources. The only variance is that Empower Me, just from a pricing standpoint, is a little bit different from other benefits. Unlike your psychology coverage as part of the health practitioners, you don't have to pay up front for this. There is a dedicated 1-800 number for Empower Me that if you contact, the service itself will set you up with a in-person counsellor if you'd like. It also does video conferencing and telephonic counselling if that's the preferred method for you, if visiting them in person is just not feasible. And you don't have to pay for those sessions. Typically, the average number of sessions that a student will get per issue is 3 to 4, but it really depends because it's an uncapped model, so if the counsellor determines that 5 sessions would be better, it would be 5; if 2 sessions, then it would be 2. On top of that, they have other services such as counselling, speaking to a dietician, and life coaching, etc.

Victoria: Can you explain what Psyvitaliti is, is that not the same thing as Empower Me?

Bahareh: Psyvitaliti is part of our national network. It is a psychology service. You would have to pay for it similar to any other health practitioners, but the difference is that it is

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completely through a secure video conferencing channel. So it's a secure platform where you can access a psychologist. And similar to accessing a psychologist in person, you would pay for it and get it reimbursed through the insurance company. Whereas Empower Me is an employer-assisted plan so you won't have to pay for it out of pocket, and it allows you to see someone in person, whereas Psyvitality is completely online.

Phillip: There are some drugs that you can not get coverage for from the Fair Pharmacare Formulary. Are you trying to do anything so some of these can come on board?

Bahareh: Each plan has a drug formulary for the medications that are covered by the plan. Your plan is under the BC Formulary – it is the most updated and most frequently used formulary in BC, and it's managed and maintained by the government of BC in conjunction with local insurance companies. There are some medications that do not get covered by the Fair Pharmacare formulary. However, students can apply through a special exception process – that information is outlined in detail on our website. You have to provide supplementary information to explain why the medication cannot be covered by a generic that is potentially on the formulary. Whatever the medication is, we need further documentation from your GP that explains what it is you need it for that would satisfy the insurance company's requirements. And there's a slightly lower cap for how much you can claim per year. But for most students, it will satisfy whatever claim it is they're trying to make; they just need to provide additional information. Please visit the office if you have any questions. Just to quickly note, over the counter medications are not covered.

F. Hockey Ticket Raffle

Winners are chosen.

G. Notices

- **The following ad hoc committees are automatically dissolved upon adjournment of AGM 2018:**

1. GSS/AMS Referendum Ad-Hoc Committee

H. Adjournment

BIRT there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 7:06pm.

MOVED. SECONDED.

RESULT: Carried