

# GSS Council Meeting Agenda

Thursday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016 | GSS Ballroom | 5:30 pm.

**Present:** Adam Howe, Amada Pisio, Andrew Leyland( proxy Anna Ringsred), Andrew Alexander, Bradley Balaton, Charles Copeland, Christina Wiesmann, David Gill (proxy Dan Kehila), Elizabeth Bulaeva, Gen Cruz, Gillian Fuss, Hamza Khan, Harry Li, James Lawson, Jasleen Grewal, Jason Speidel, Jennifer DeBoer, John Dupuis, Karen Simmons, Katerina Othonos, Kaye Hare, Kelsi Lix (proxy Namrata Jain), Krish Maharaj, Marysol Garcia, Mashid Ghaffartehrani (Shalini), Michael Thejoe, Miranda Huron, Mirza Sarwar, Morgan Shepherd, Oguzhan Tuysuz, Shakun Singla, Shona Robinson, Xiao lei Deng, Yaseen Mottiar, Alexa Tanner, Nandinee Hag

**Regrets:** Dylan Burrows, Natalie Marshall, Natasha Little, Nicholas McGregor, Shadi Balandeh, Zoe Lam

**Absent:** Emily Gray, Emily Allan, Francisco Gomez-lopez, James Lawson, Jennifer Campbell, Jennifer Zhao, Jennifer Bok, Joann Anokwuru, Kyle Loewen, Logan McDonald, Peter Chan, Raghav Grover, Shadi Balandeh, Tal Shalev, Taqdir Bhandal, Veronica Knott, Yulia Merkulova

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

1. The meeting will be called to order at 6:06pm. Quorum was at 27. Minimum quorum was 26
2. BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.
  - Amendment to strike item D (3) and include it in the President's remarks.
  - Amendment to include the unseating of Michael Thejoe as the Departmental Representative for the School of Population and Public Health.
  - Amendment to include the unseating of Michael Thejoe as a GSS/AMS Representative.
  - Amendment to include seating for a GSS Representative to the AMS Council.
  - Amendment to include one Councillor seating to the Executive Oversight Committee.

## Adopted unanimously

**MOVER:** Yaseen Mottiar

**SECONDER:** Gen Cruz

## B. Introductions

Executives, Councillors and members of the house introduced themselves.

## 3. Approval of Minutes

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- a. BIRT the minutes of the GSS Council meeting dated “July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016” be approved as presented.

Amendment to remove Kaye Hare from present to regrets.

**MOVER:** Kaye Hare

**SECONDER:** Adam Howe

**Amendment passed.**

Amendment to add Yaseen Mottiar as present and to correct the unseating of Yaseen Mottiar from Academic and External Representative to Academic and External Committee.

**MOVER:** Yaseen Mottiar

**SECONDER:** Gillian Fuss

**Amendment Passed**

Motion to adopt the minutes

**Mover:** Yaseen Mottiar

**Seconder:** Jennifer DeBoer

**Motion Failed**

**3/3/22**

**Adopted unanimous**

- b. BIRT the following Committee minutes be approved as presented

- Academic and External Committee

May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016; May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016; May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016; ~~June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016~~; July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016; July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016

- House Finance Committee

April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016; May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016; May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016; June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016; June 23<sup>th</sup>, 2016; July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016

- Harassment and Discrimination Committee

April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016; May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016

- Human Resource Committee

Jan 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Feb 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016

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**MOVER:** Shona Robinson

**SECONDER:** Amanda Pisio

## Debate

- Amendment to strike June 20<sup>th</sup> Academic and External Committee minutes from the motion

**Mover:** Yaseen Mottiar

**Second:** Bradley Balaton

## Amendment Passed

Motion to adopt the Committee minutes.

## Motion Passed

## 26/0/2Seatings, Unseating and Appointments

### 4. Notice of Unseatings (*no vote necessary*)

**Anujit Chakraborty** - to be unseated as Departmental Representative to Economics

**Chad Rickaby** – To be unseated as the Departmental Representative to Public Policy and Global Affairs

**Taqdir Bhandal** – To be unseated as the Departmental Representative to Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Social Justice

**Chen Vu** – To be unseated as the Departmental Representative to Counselling Psychology

**Christie Waltham** - To be unseated as the Departmental Representative to the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies

**Jennifer Bok** – To be unseated as the Departmental Representative of Sauder Master of Business Administration

**Jennifer Zhao** – To be unseated as the Departmental Representative to Curriculum and Pedagogy

**Tal Shalev** - Chair and Member, Academic and External committee & Departmental Representative to Genome Science and Technology

**Michael Thejoe** – To be unseated as the Departmental Representative for The School of Population and Public Health.

**Michael Thejoe** – to be unseated as a GSS/AMS Representative

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5. BIRT the following Seatings are approved:

**Jasleen Grewal** be seated to the Code and Policy Committee.

**Dan Kehila** be seated as Academic and External committee Chair

**Christina Wiesmann** be seated to the House Finance Committee.

**Morgan Shepherd** be seated to the Human Resources Committee.

**Anna Ringsred** be seated as the GSS Representative to the AMS Council

**MOVER:** Kaye Hare

**SECONDER:** Morgan Shepherd

**Adopted Unanimously**

## **Presentations**

*(10minutes, 5 minutes for questions)*

### 1. House Finance Committee

Title: "GSS IT Infrastructure Upgrade Project: Phase 2"-

Speaker: Dante Mendoza

- The first phase was the assessment of the society's IT system requirements which was approved in February, 2016 Council.
- After the assessment it was realised that majority of the computer equipment within the GSS offices are outdated (over 5 years old), lacked required software, and are experiencing regular technical issues
- In order to carry out business and better represent our members, there is the need for an IT update.
- The society is not able to be run professionally as a result of poor IT equipment

### Recommendation

- o Follow a Corporation-like approach to build a reliable, professional and resilient IT infrastructure, taking advantage of the benefits as a non-profit to obtain software at low or no cost.
- o Did an extensive review of the equipment and concluded that the need for equipment that will last about five years

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- Use a 5 year span as a target to define the specifications
- Make it Scalable and easy to maintain
- Request extended coverage to protect the society's investment
- Professional installation of hardware and migration of files and mail
  - Professional assistance which includes warranty and extra cost.  
Estimate cost is \$50,000 including both hardware and software (laptops, desktop, server, UPS, security software for safe handle of society information)- Society will be saving by keeping monitors and using non-profit software discounts
- There is alternate equipment that could be obtained at a cheaper price but the recommended equipment and add-ons are not "no-name" so that warranties and next-day service will ensure that the GSS can function effectively
- House Finance Committee is still working to reduce the cost and so do not have final quotations on some elements like the tablet

## Importance of approving the project

- Our I.T. infrastructure is failing.
  - Server shutdown
  - Website failure
  - Security concerns
  - Inadequate backup
  - GSS email is buggy.
- To foster continuity of the society

## Questions/ Answers

Q. The Choice of laptop costing \$1600-\$18,000 is too much because

A . the Committee considered the long term target, have branded equipment that would aid in maintenance and equipment longevity

A The laptops are a small part of the big project. It is just an assumed amount which could change a little bit.

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Q. Suggestion on the advantage of using some computers like apple which will keep it longer to the five years.

A. The choice of brand is a recommendation from a knowledgeable distributor who the committee consulted

Motion to extend the time to 5 minutes

**Mover:** Yaseen Mottiar

**Seconded:** Shona Robinson

**Passed**

- Out of scope services is not included but the committee proposes to pass the motion plus 10% cost for contingencies to deal with unexpected costs. In any case, no additional cost is expected.
- Committee believes that the cost may go down a little after further discussions with the supplier
- Q. Michael Thejoe asked if the extra cost will include Security camera and other equipment.
- A. The committee said that they do not have any information on that.
- Michael said that it was a matter which could be dealt with without holding up this project

## 2. Strategic Planning Ad Hoc committee

Title: Draft, GSS Strategic Framework

Presenters: Sneha Balani and Yaseen Mottiar

- In continuation with last month's Council, a draft version of the Strategic Plan is discussed
- The draft for the Strategic Framework is twelve pages and describes how the Strategic Framework came into being and how the Framework works.
- The plan sets academic objectives and important areas- for collaboration with University, advocacy, supervisors,
- As previously presented to Council, the framework has three themes
- Each theme has goals and each goal has specific aims and actions
- The aim is to make the framework into a 10 page document to be placed on the GSS website

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- The presentation is to give a snapshot of the draft and so councillors are advised to look at the draft that was emailed to them.
- The draft touches on a lot of things like communication, transparency and everything about graduate student society.
- It is a comprehensive strategic plan

## Importance of the presentation

- Each of the goals has been connected to portfolios.
- Strategic Framework will only work when people actually act and work on it.
- Further research is required on how specific people can be held accountable for their roles.
- The draft touches on the role of Executive and the role of Committee Chairs, staff etc.
- Committee hopes to get specific feedback.
- Request that Council approves the draft as the working draft and post the draft on the GSS website
- The Strat plan to be posted online will not be the finished copy but just a draft
- It will stay online for four (4) weeks and go back to Council
- The Committee have a month to post it online and needs internal feedback before it is posted online
- Councillors are encouraged to go through the draft and send feedback to [sgtcom@gss.ubc.ca](mailto:sgtcom@gss.ubc.ca)
- Committee would appreciate it if the draft is posted online by the September Council.

## Question/Answer

- ⊖ The presenter clarified that the idea is for people to go over the emailed draft and provide
- Q. How do you plan to evaluate success?

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- A. The Committee is hoping to have a Governance Committee that will make sure that things are accomplished (month to month and term to term)
- Also the goals, actions and aims are specific and so it will be easier to evaluate success based on the specified actions and goals listed
- Committee is open to suggestions and corrections
- Goals and aims are broad and actions are planned to be specific
- Prioritizing what is needed next is not the Committees work unless there is a change in the Committee's portfolio.

## ~~3. CASA and GU15 update~~

~~Title: A brief overview of key points and decisions made during CASA and GU15~~

~~Presenter: Gen Cruz~~

## 4. World University Service of Canada (WUSC)

Title: Refugee graduate students in UBC

Presenter: Jenna Omassi

Description: Challenges faced by graduate student refugees in UBC

- The UBC (AMS referendum) has voted to double the awards towards the support of the world university service of Canada refugee program.
- UBC has had a student refugee program since 1981.
- The UBC Refugee program supports 20–25 students each year
- \$185,000 is the annual contributed made by UBC
- The students come as students not as refugees. They have refugee status but are referred to as students.
- The world university service Canada is a non-profit organisation in Canada. It is the only non-profit organisation in the world that focuses on refugee and settlement issues in the world for students.
- There are other refugees who are not a part of the students' refugee program.



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- With the recent refugee crisis in the world, many universities and colleges have increased their support for student refugees.
- By the end of 2016, the AMS club would have privately sponsors 8 student refugees annually. Partners with UBC and WUSC-Ottawa
- At the AMS referendum in March, students voted to double the students levy from \$2 to \$ 5.22 towards the students' refugee fund and the other peace is supported by UBC
- The students come from Asia and Africa.
- There will be seven arriving in September 2016 and one arriving in January, 2017
- Three are from Syria and four from refugee camps in Kenya.
- There is a Selection Process which involves;
  - Normal BC high school students' selection process
  - It is at least a sixteen (16) month processing for the students
  - They do not choose UBC but they choose Canada
  - TOEFL tests, interview and one year English language program.
  - Medical tests, University placement and immigration process
  - Flight to Vancouver and placed in the Arts or Science program
- There are many groups that supports the program namely;
  - Departments, local Committee (Student-led AMS club), Academic advisors, etc.
- Note that all students are levied \$5. 22 towards this program.
- UBC supports Housing, tuition, books and \$1000 meal plan

## Challenges of the students

- They are not used to this environment (used to different settings)
- Schooled in local curriculum
- Disrupted Post-secondary Studies

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- Supporting Students Survivors of Significant Hardships e.g. War
- Trust Building Between Students and Public Institutions
- Pre-arrival Academic Program Confusion
- Faculty and Department Changes
- Access to Financial Resources & Employment
- Unique Family Situations & Responsibilities
- The biggest issue is that since 1981 UBC have not had any of the students admitted into the graduate programs.
- The refugee program is well vest in supporting undergraduate students but not graduate students
- The graduate programs are not really more receptive to the diverse background of these students.
- There are struggles on how to make the network support for the students stronger at the graduate level and that contributes to the reason for this presentation which is to ;
  - Figure out how to work with councillors to advocate for the refugee program
  - Think about how to further support the students in the graduate level potentially and hopefully the support of the GSS.
  - Seven students will arrive on Monday, three from Syria will arrive in mid-day at 11:40am and Four from Kenya at 7:10 pm
  - There is a Facebook event called UBC student refugee welcome.
  - Space is offered to students who can meet the refugee students at the airport
  - All are encouraged to join especially at 11:40 when for the Syrian refugees because two of them will join the graduate school
  - Contact president at [president.wusc.ubc@gmail.com](mailto:president.wusc.ubc@gmail.com) for any further information or question.

Questions/ Answer

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- Q. How does GSS get involved when they are not graduate students?
- A. Two of the students will eventually join the graduate school. One will take English before stating graduate school.
- They are both not classified as graduate students.
- The program will get them into classes, meet faculty members in programs that they will potentially join in future
- The issue that the organisation came up with is that graduate programs is more spread out through departments than centralised and so many departments do not understand who the students are, why their application looks different and how they could fit into graduate programs
- Also needs GSS help to bring get graduate students involved to help refugee students fit into the graduate program.
- The two students coming have both been graduate students before in Damascus. One from Chemical engineering and the other in their version of Public health
- Q. Do they enrol in only all faculties or only the arts and science?
- In the past the refugee students sent to UBC had were from camps which had no universities and so they were put in the undergrad programs but these students are different because they already have a degree
- The students could eventually divert from the Art and Science to other programs but they usually start from the Art and Science
- Q. What does 'Fit' meant?
- Jenna Omassi said that the feedback from the department heads of eight different health sciences program was that they could not demonstrate enough quantifiable educational capabilities even though they had completed graduate programs before.
- One was a medical doctor and had practiced at the front of a war.
- She said again that the organisation use the word 'Fit' to describe why the students are not accepted into these departments.

Motion to extend to the presentation for 5 minutes.

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MOVER: Michael Thejoe

SECONDER: Henry Li

## Passed

- Q. When will the students arrive?
- A. The graduate students who are two of the three Syrian students will arrive in the morning at 11:40 am and so the bus will leave UBC at 11:00 am and arrive back at 1:00 pm and there will be a welcome lunch after
- There will be events ongoing which will be communicated later.
- A. The Faculty of graduate and post-doctoral studies is helping the *WUSC* to reach out to the various departments.
- The difficulty the *WUSC* has is from the Department and Admissions Committees
- Some of the documentations of these students are a little different from regular students. Others cannot go back home or even find their certificates
- The students are brought in even though they have not secured space in the programs yet, so that they do not exceed the age limit of 25 years.
- Q. Xiao Lie Deng asked if a part of the 'Fit' problem has to do with funding
- A. Jenna Omassi said department cannot guarantee funding. This is problem because the refugee students are fully funded by UBC not the department.

## C. Council motions

- WHEREAS the Society requires an up-to-date IT infrastructure in order to carry out business and represent our members and,

WHEREAS the GSS has had the IT requirements and infrastructure professionally assessed as part of a two-phase project by DTM and,

WHEREAS this project satisfies the definition of a Capital Improvement Project (CIF) as defined in Section 16.3 of the GSS Policy Manual,

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BIRT Council approves the expenditure of up to \$55,000 (including a 10% contingency) from the Capital Improvement Fund budget line (10-785) for the suggested IT upgrades (Phase 2 of IT Infrastructure Upgrade Project).

**MOVER:** Yaseen Mottiar

**SECOND:** Kaye Hare

## Discussion

- Yaseen Mottiar asked Shona Robinson;
  - About the large cost associated with professional services.
  - Whether she felt that it was reasonable to spend \$13,000 on a \$55,000 project and what would be involved in those professional services.
  - Whether the expenditure for professional services would qualify for CIF as GSS Bylaw 16.3.b states that projects are eligible for CIF only if the funds are not allocated elsewhere and we do already have a budget line for professional services.
  - Shona Robinson answered that the \$13k involved initial consulting as well as hardware and software implementation, including Accpac and email migration.
  - The HF interpretation of policy 16.3b is that even though there is a budget line for professional services, the regular budget cannot accommodate this project.
  - Shona Robinson said that the company was recommended to the committee by AMS (who has an IT manager).

## Motion passed.

- Whereas the Human Resources Committee has updated confidentiality agreements for GSS Staff and Councillors

BIRT Council approves the proposed amendments to confidentiality agreements

BIFRT Council approves the updated confidentiality agreements for councilors

and

BIFRT that council require all current and new councillors to sign the updated confidentiality agreements

**MOVER:** Jennifer Deboer

**SECONDER:** Gen Cruz

## Kaye Hare Motivated

- Started in February on the need to update the confidentiality forms.
- The form has been converted it into a two forms PIPA form and confidentiality form. There has been no confidentiality form for councillors. The Councillor confidentiality form protects the private information of the GSS

## Discussion

- The AMS also have confidentiality forms for proxies and it would help to have that too.
- Q. Can proxies be counted as members?
- A. Proxies could be someone who has not been a councillor and has not signed a confidentiality or PIPA form.
- The AMS has a confidentiality form in a pouch together with the clicker and this procedure could be adopted by the GSS
- Councillors could forward them to their proxies to sign before they come in
- Yaseen suggested that councillors be given a GSS email account
- Some Councillors were concerned how feasible the suggestion was because students already have other email accounts and it will be hard to manage extra accounts considering the busy schedules
- It could be expensive.

The Speaker surrenders the Chair temporarily to GSS President in order to answer questions on legal matters concerning the signing of confidentiality form.

- Part 8 reads;
  - 8. This instrument, including any attached exhibits and addenda, constitutes the entire agreement of the parties. No representation or promises have been made except those that are set out in this agreement. This agreement may not be modified except in writing signed by all the parties concerned.
- Yaseen asked about 'signing' with reference to Part 8
- Krish Maharaj said that with some exceptions signature is not necessary. When signed it means that both parties agree to the form.

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- Krish Maharaj said that HR Committee could delete everything that sounds problematic.
- Q. Not comfortable about deleting everything and transferring to the next person.
- A. There should be a Policy that tells how confidential documents should be stored as a society.
- The Committee said that the document needed more work to be done on it but spoke against delaying it for another year
- Suggestion to the Committee to find out about how AMS does theirs.

Motion to amend Part 2 to include 'they'. Part 2 would read:

2. The Member hereby covenants and agrees that he/she/they will at no time, during or after the term of volunteer or paid activities for the GSS, use for his/her/their own benefit or the benefit of others, or disclose or divulge to others, any such confidential information.

**Amended unanimously.**

Friendly motion to return Chair to speaker.

Motion to amend Part 3 to read;

- Upon termination of their formal involvement with the GSS, the Member will maintain the confidentiality of all documents related to the GSS in perpetuity if they are unable to return them, including, but not limited to, reports, manuals, drawings, diagrams, blueprints, correspondence, customer lists, computer programs, and all other materials and all copies of such materials, obtained by the Member during their term of volunteer or paid activities for the GSS.

Motion to amend the amendment to replace 'return' with 'destroy' for Part 3 to read;

- Member will maintain the confidentiality of all documents related to GSS in perpetuity if they are unable to destroy them, including, but not limited to, reports, manuals, drawings, diagrams, blueprints, correspondence, customer lists, computer programs, and all other materials and all copies of such materials, obtained by the Member during their term of volunteer or paid activities for the GSS.

Motion to amend the amendment of the amendment for Part 3 to read;

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- Upon termination of their formal involvement with the GSS, the Member will maintain the confidentiality of all documents related to the GSS in perpetuity if they are unable to destroy them, including, but not limited to, reports, manuals, drawings, diagrams, blueprints, correspondence, customer lists, computer programs, and all other materials and all copies of such materials, obtained by the Member during their term of volunteer or paid activities for the GSS.

## **Amendment Passed unanimously**

Motion to pass the amended confidentiality form

**MOVER:** Kaye Hare

**SECONDER:** Maichael Thejoe

**26 / o/ 1**

Motion to recess for 30 minutes

**MOVER:** Gen Cruz  
Balaton

**SECONDER:** Bradley

Quorum was Lost after recess with only 22 councillors present

Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm