



ATTENDANCE

Present: Franziska Mey, Violeta Fabiani, Sam Kenston, Aaron Loewen, Alex Babin, Marco Sotres, Jonah Berean-Dutcher, Tonje Molyneux, Muxi Guo, Binurai Senarithna, Aroshi Senanayaki, Abhishek Somanogoudar, Chijioke Nwidari, Sabbir Hossain, Conny Lin (Speaker), Simarjeet Nagpal, Lily Liu, Gayatri Gopalan, Nick Phin, Ali Khajegili, Mehmet Hilmi, Ismail Muftau, Tobi Olowoyo.

Regrets:

Absent:

Quorum: 16 Councillors

CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting will be called to order at 7:28 pm.

1.2 AGENDA ADOPTION

BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

Mover: Aaron

Second: Violeta

Result: Carried

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

President: We recognize that we are currently gathered on the ancestral lands of the Musqueam people, who have not ceded this territory, and that this location has served as a center for education and knowledge-sharing for many years.

INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions.

2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2.1 GSS COUNCIL MINUTES

BIRT the following GSS Council minutes be approved:



- [February 16th, 2023](#)

Mover: Muxi

Second: Nick

Result: Carried

2.2 COMMITTEE MINUTES

BIRT the following GSS Committee minutes be approved:

Academic & External Committee:		Human Resources Committee:	
Code & Policy Committee:	January 6 th 2023, Nov 28 th 2022	AMS Caucus:	Feb 13 th , 2023
Engagement & Elections Committee:	March 10 th , 2023	Graduate Council:	Feb 14 th , 2023
Executive Committee:	Feb 1 st , 2023	Health and Dental Plan Caucus:	
Executive Oversight Committee		All-Chairs:	Jan 13 th , 2023
Governance & Accountability Committee:	March 1 st , 2023	House Finance Committee:	Nov 11 th , 2022; Dec 6 th 2022; Feb 7 th 2023

Mover: Franziska

Second: Sabbir

Result: Carried

3 SEATINGS

3.1 NEW COUNCILLORS

BIRT the following Seating of new Councillors be approved:

Name	Department
Ali Khajegili	Bioinformatics



Mover: Sam **Second:** Aaron **Result:** Carried

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
Faculty of Arts Council		Representative	2
Graduate Council Caucus		Representative	0
AMS Caucus	Aroshi, Binura	Representative	2
Health & Dental		Representative	0

Mover: Sabbir **Second:** Muxi **Result:** Carried

DISCUSSION

Discussion about the number of seats in the AMS Caucus.

Motion to change the number of vacancies in the AMS Caucus from one to two.

Mover: Franziska **Second:** Tonje **Result:** Carried

3.3 COMMITTEE SEATINGS

All GSS Councillors shall endeavor to sit on at least one committee as per Policy 6.2.2.

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

BIRT the following Committee seatings be approved:

Committee/Caucus	Nominee	Position	Vacancies
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Academic & External		Councillor	0
		Ordinary Member	0
Code & Policy		Councillor	3
		Ordinary Member	1
Engagement & Elections		Councillor	2
		Ordinary Member	0
Executive Oversight		Councillor	3
		Ordinary Member	0
Governance & Accountability		Councillor	4
	Yigeng Tan (Mondo)	Ordinary Member	1
House Finance		Councillor	3
		Ordinary Member	0
Human Resources		Councillor	0
	Chijioke Nwadike	Ordinary Member	1

Mover: Muxi

Second: Aaron

Result: Carried

3.4 COMMITTEE CHAIR SEATINGS

BIRT the following Committee Chair Seatings be approved:

Committee/Caucus	Nominee
Academic & External	Simarjeet Nagpal

Mover: Alex

Second: 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 March 2024:

Name of Affiliate Organization	Representative
Master of Public Policy and Global Affairs Student Association	Rakashdeep Kainth
Graduate Students in Nursing Association (GSNA)	Zachary Daly

MOVER: VP Students

SECONDER: Sabbir

RESULT: Carried

4.2 ELECTIONS RESULT

WHEREAS Elections & Engagement Committee has overseen the 2023 GSS elections

BIRT Council ratifies the result of the 2023 election

MOVER: Sam

SECONDER: Nick

RESULT: Carried

5 MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

5.1 THE GSS KOERNER'S PUB

Presenter: Sam Kenston

Time: 10 minutes

Description: Presentation about the contract renewal of Koerner's Pub

Objective: To know the councillors' opinions on this matter

Relevant materials: [Presentation](#)

DISCUSSION



Cara: So, can you like start asking around for quotes from people who want to run it? Koerner's has been going on since like the 60s or 70s, I think.

Sam: Okay, so a couple of months ago someone asked me how long I planned on sticking around and if I really wanted to be here. That's why I decided to run for re-election. Personally, I'm fine with the council voting to keep the same operator, no problem with that. Our main goal is to generate good revenue for the society and have more events. Everyone knows that students can benefit from an extra 10,000 and we can use the money to improve the centers and security. We could even increase it to 50,000 so that more people can benefit. If the current operator doesn't agree with that, then they can leave, and we'll find someone else. But I think we should pay more since it's \$6,000 in Vancouver for the pub on UBC campus and that's for only 200 people. They know he won't be around for long. Luckily, I'm not worried because I'll be here for one more year. So, what do you think?

Tobi: I just wanted to mention that although they've been around for a while, it can be really challenging to work with them at times. As Sam mentioned, there's a high turnover rate because if you don't run for election next year, you're out. And that can be frustrating when trying to plan events for grad students that are subsidized or free, but we can't get the space we need. It's not like we're getting a handout, we still have to pay for labor and other costs. It's frustrating when we don't have enough resources to organize events that would benefit students. They make a lot of money, but we don't see much of it. Personally, I find it frustrating because I have to plan events and my colleagues and I have tried many times to organize events, only to have them cancelled or denied due to lack of resources. It just feels unfair and there should be some kind of renegotiation to address these issues. I just wanted to put that out there.

Stephen: Thank you for your input. I see two main issues arising from the discussion. Firstly, there's the relationship between the GSS and the operator, and secondly, there's the issue of the rent or operation fee that the GSS is charged. From my perspective, I believe it's important to focus on the financial aspect, considering the current economic status and inflation rates. As we saw in the AGM, many expenses have increased compared to the previous financial year. Therefore, I suggest that the current leadership team explore other options outside of the current premises that may offer similar capacity at a more reasonable cost. We should also consider what charges would be necessary and reasonable, and then it's up to the operator to decide if they can fit that within their budget or if they need to explore other options.

Sam: I'd like to invite the Speaker to share her experience since she was the GSS President.

Speaker: I just wanted to share some information in response to Cara's question. About 10 years ago, we used to run the pub ourselves, but we had to close it down because it was bleeding half of our revenue due to poor management. After that, we went through an RFP process where anyone could bid and the winner would get the contract to operate the pub. So we have the option of either running it ourselves or going through a similar process to choose a new operator. That's one of the options we have. I'm just sharing this information, not making any decisions for us. Just wanted to clarify that. So, what other options do you think we have in terms of deciding who operates the pub? We could explore different avenues and see what fits within our budget and comfort level. It's up to them to decide if they can meet our requirements or not. That's what I think would be necessary to consider in terms of charges and operations. What are your suggestions or thoughts on this? Let's discuss further.



Violeta: Thank you for sharing your perspective. It's important to keep in mind the best interests of graduate students and prioritize their needs. The current arrangement with the operator seems to be unfavorable for GSS in terms of financial benefit. Exploring options for renegotiation and potentially considering alternative arrangements, such as running the operations ourselves or going through a bidding process, could be viable solutions to address this issue. Careful analysis and consideration of the financial aspects, including the operator's revenue and GSS's share, should be taken into account in the renegotiation process. It's essential to advocate for the best interests of graduate students and work towards a fair and mutually beneficial arrangement.

Speaker: It sounds like you are recommending that the decision on how to proceed with renegotiating charges or fees with the JSs and the operator be delegated to a committee, such as House Finance or a subcommittee/task force created by House Finance, or potentially the executive committee. This would allow for a more in-depth analysis and discussion of the issue before making any decisions, and avoid prolonging the current meeting unnecessarily. Ultimately, the decision on which committee or group to delegate to would be up to the assembly to decide. Is that a correct summary of your recommendation? Let me know if you would like to provide any further input on this matter. I'm here to help!

Cara proposes the following motion:

BIRT GSS renegotiate with the current contract of the Koerner's Pub operator

Aaron: I would like to express that while I understand the intent behind the motion, I personally do not agree with it. I am not sure if we are arguing about the motion itself or just the wording of it. I feel that rushing into making a decision without considering all the other factors and consequences feels a bit hasty. It would be helpful to gather more information from other buildings and sites, such as the AMS, to see how they deal with similar situations in the gallery. Making the motion as it stands seems like we are heading into negotiations without all the necessary information, and I am not comfortable agreeing to something that feels incomplete. I am not sure if I can offer a better solution, but perhaps we can consider delegating this to a subcommittee or assigning someone to gather more information before making a decision. I just want to emphasize that what we say today carries a lot of weight in this matter. So, it's important to thoroughly consider all aspects before moving forward. That's my perspective on the issue. I hope it's helpful. Thank you.

Nick: I agree with the first motion and find it favorable. In regards to the second motion, I would suggest amending it so that if negotiations fail, it would be referred to a subcommittee to explore other options and potential alternative operators. That way, we can ensure a thorough consideration of all possibilities.

Sam: Knowing how House Finance is currently operating I'd suggest delegating it to the Executive Committee.

Cara: I was going to say, I have to leave now. And that's the reason nothing ever gets done in this council is because all we talk about is amending wording, and putting subcommittees and putting committees and we have a tight deadline for this. I just think it's really frustrating. And I don't really have anything else to say, and I'm sorry, I know you guys are trying your best, but it's just really frustrating as a council member coming to



these councils and nothing happens. And we debate amendments of amendments for half an hour, and we add 10 minutes to it.

Ali: So then what's the what is it that what is it that the GSS exec needs from the council? What is it that they're looking to get from the council?

Sam: As elected executives, we cannot make a unilateral decision, we can fully enforce whatever council as mandated as we can bring feedback back to council.

Aaron: My understanding, you're already in renegotiations with them, you're speaking about terms you're considering trying to cut them off. And I don't even know what information is privy to everyone here as it is. But I don't think that there's grounds to stand on this. So what are we voting on at the end, because you're already doing the first part, you're talking with them, you're negotiating for lack of a better term. And I agreed that you can do that at down when talking about the motion here, and not even what the result of that is going to be. But if we're going to be talking about this, it's really that second one that we're talking about is what if it fails, because from what it sounds like you've taught, it hasn't happened. So why are we not just voting on delegating this to someone right off the bat, because we don't even need that first part that's just frivolous at this point, really, I want I want the GSS to be able to get the best deal they can. I understand that those can be difficult. But it seems like we're not really coming into this with a lot of information. And it sounds from what from what it sounds like we have a month that we can come back, we can do the hard work. And then we don't need to deliberate here over the motion itself, we can actually just come and make an informed decision together. After all the work has been presented to us so that you can go to the negotiation table with actual support, and data and everything else.

Sam: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I understand your frustration, and I share it as well. To clarify, if I hadn't won the election two weeks ago, this conversation wouldn't have even started in the first place. The current operator would have continued without any challenge. So I understand your frustration, and that's why I brought it here. Thankfully, I won, and I have one year to address this issue. Just two weeks ago, the new executives wouldn't have had the authority to bring this to council, and it would have been a continuation of the same situation. What we are doing now is keeping council informed and seeking their view, because as elected executives, we do have some authority to act on behalf of the society. But it's also important to keep council informed. How many people were aware of this scenario before today? Chances are, only a few apart from those I spoke with individually. How many people even know that we've been paid only \$6,000 for the past five years? Chances are, very few. So, in my nature, I wanted to inform council about what's happening. I could have chosen to keep it to myself or ignore it, but I believe it's important for council to be involved. Everybody here needs to know what's going on, and everyone should be aware that this is a possibility. Personally, if the operator agrees to our negotiation request and increases the payment, the conversation would end there. But if they refuse, then we can make a recommendation to council to look for other operators. So you never know, maybe if we say this is a decision of council, the whole conversation will end there. They might agree to pay more. So we can enter into a real negotiation with them. As elected officials, we need to have meetings with all our property renters, and we informed them personally. My executives were there when I said that paying only \$6,020 for such a big place doesn't make sense, but the decision lies with council. If council feels we should renegotiate, then fine. If council feels no, let's just leave them to keep the \$6,500, then that will be the decision. I just wanted to give



some background on where we're coming from. I hope that makes sense, and I hope it provides enough information for everyone. Thank you.

Tobi: call to question

BIRT GSS renegotiate with the current contract of the Koerner's Pub operator

BIFRT if negotiation fails, then delegate the task to Executive Committee and House Finance Committee

MOVER: Sam

SECONDER: Tobi

RESULT: Carried

6 MATTERS TO NOTE

Time reserved for questions regarding updates below.

6.1 EXECUTIVES

6.1.1 President:

Had a meeting with Ainsley Carry and Samantha to discuss Grad students needs and give update on GLC (Graduate Life Centre)

Had a meeting with President Deborah to discuss Grad Students needs

Attended the AMS/GSS Health and dental committee meeting

Working with the GSS advocacy team to support students having challenging times relating with their supervisors



Other activities include new councillors training, all chairs retreat, hiring of an events Manager, supporting the ESEO (Electoral and Student Engagement Officer), representing the GSS (Graduate Student Society) at the AMS (Alma Matter Society) gala.

6.1.2 Financial Officer

- Payworks up and running for applying leaves
- Dext issues: missing descriptions kindly enter the details
- Use of plooto for 2nd level approval to speed up AP payments
- Kindly submit the feedback for 2023 Budget
- Alternative vendor proposal for Koener's pub

6.1.3 VP University & Academic Affairs

- Had meeting of the Graduate Council Caucus and finalised our new Smart Goals for the year.
- Had a meeting with Chair of the G & A Committee on the Graduate Council Caucus Smart Goals and KPIs.
- Attended the monthly meeting with Ainsley and Samantha, where we discussed the Thea Koerner pub rent issue and possible way out.

6.1.4 VP External Relations

6.1.5 VP Students

- Organizing GSS end of term gala
- Organizing monthly events
- Potential collaboration with UBCO
- Collaborating with UBC REC for fitness classes
- Ongoing subsidy program for students

6.2 COMMITTEES

6.2.1 Academic & External Committee

6.2.2 Code & Policy Committee



CPC has started progress on the creation of a position statement template, worked on the HFC Manual, and discussed potential avenues for the definition of membership.

6.2.3 Engagement & Elections Committee

6.2.4 Executive Committee

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6.2.5 Executive Oversight Committee

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6.2.6 Governance & Accountability Committee

(1) G&A SMART goals, (2) feedback on committee/caucus SMART goals, (3) committee/caucus KPI check-ins

6.2.7 House Finance Committee

Finalized the following three SMART Goals for the year 2022-23:

- Protocol for checking the Current Status of Students employed by GSS
- Creation of WL position for internal accounting management
- Revaluating GSS' banking service provider with a sustainability purview
- Discussed renewal terms for Koerner's pub contract with the involved stakeholders.
- Finalized pricing for renewing GSS ballroom contract renewal. Meeting with the Sauder's team on Wednesday (March 15) to finalize the contract terms
- Approved CPIF usage of \$250,000 to be ONLY used as a contingency for the GLC project for unforeseeable expenses.
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6.2.8 Human Resources

6.2.9 AMS Caucus

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6.2.10 Graduate Council Caucus



6.3 SENATORS AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS

6.3.1 Senators:

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6.3.2 Board of Governors Representatives:

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7 NOTICES

7.1 NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING

Date: Thursday, April 20th 2023 at 5:30 pm

Location: Michael Kingsmill Forum- AMS Nest 4th floor

7.2 NOTICE OF UNSEATINGS

Linnan Zhou was unseated as Councillor of the Code & Policy Committee

8 ADJOURNMENT

BIRT there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 8:44 pm.

Mover: Muxi

Second: Violeta

Result: Carried