



ATTENDANCE

Present: Abhishek Somanagoudar, Alexandre Babin, Ali Khajegili, Anjana Rajendran, Daemon Cline, Erica, Dharmawan Firth MacKenzie, McEachern Franziska, Mey, Hubert, Odikamnoru Ihomehe Golda, Jalisa Karim, Jonah, Berean Duchter, Margaret, Slein, Nick Phin, Nurul, Afcher, Olivia, Tsihlias, Patricia Unung, Reagan, McKinney, Sam, Kenston, Samia Syeoti, Shishir Nurul, Simar Nagpal, Stephen Odoi, Tonje Molyneux, Vignesh Krishnamoorthy

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 5:42 pm.

1.2 AGENDA ADOPTION

BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

Mover: Tonje

Seconder: Sam

Result: Carried

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

President: We will be posting this on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people. We must acknowledge that this place has been a learning experience for several years. We have become conscious of our actions and how our activities here can promote indigenous rights. We must adhere to the truth and be open to the risk of reconciliation. We aim to enact laws and standards that support and promote indigenous culture. Thank you very much

INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES



Firth MacKenzie McEachern	Language & Literacy Ed
Anjana Rajendran	Neuroscience
Jonah Berean-Dutcher (reseated)	Physics
Porter Abbey	Geography
Hubert ODIKAMNORO	French
Sydney Hood	Chemistry
Erica Dharmawan	Psychology
Reagan Raine McKinney	Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Science
Franziska Mey (reseated)	Interdisciplinary Oncology
Patricia Edet Unung	Curriculum Studies
Margaret Slein	Zoology

Mover: Nick **Seconder:** Lily **Result:** Carried

2.2 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	Fiana Kawane	Representative	2
Graduate Council Caucus	Isha Gill, Jalisa Karim, Rakashdeep Kainth, Nicholas Phin, Tonje Molyneux, Negar Moosavi	Representative	6
AMS Caucus	Shishir Nurul, Franziska Mey, Samia Syeoti	Representative	3
	Binura Senavirathna	Member	3
Health & Dental	Franziska Mey	Representative	1



Mover: Lily **Seconder:** Reagan **Result:** Carried

2.3 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
Academic & External	Franziska Mey, Simarjeet Nagpal, Firth McEachern	Councillor	5
	Alexandre Ley Banks, Sarah Ebert, Samantha Graham	Ordinary Member	5
Code & Policy	Ali Khajegili, Nurul Shishir	Councillor	5
	Aaron Loewen, Daniel He, Courtney Hoskinson, Anshika Srivastava	Ordinary Member	5
Engagement & Elections		Councillor	5
	Xiaohan, Ramlogan, Bill Zhao, Zach Pollard, Benjamin Fyneah	Ordinary Member	5
Executive Oversight	Nicholas Phin	Councillor	5
	Aaron Lowen, Felix Cheu, Maryke Peter, Catalina Ionescu, Ali Haghverdi	Ordinary Member	5
Governance & Accountability		Councillor	5
	Sena Youn, Tim McCall, Jessica Quinton, Mondo Tan, Anshika Srivastava	Ordinary Member	5
House Finance	Olivia Tsihlias	Councillor	5



	Onyeka Odenigbo, Atul Aravindakshan	Ordinary Member	5
Human Resources	Vignesh Krishnamoorthy, Mehmet, Nurul Shishir	Councillor	5
	Linxiu Wang, Zimei He, Mahfida Tahniat, Yuting Liu	Ordinary Member	5

Mover: Tonje **Seconder:** Franziska **Result:** Carried

2.4 CHAIR SEATINGS

BIRT the following Committee Chair seatings be approved:

Committee/Caucus	Nominee
Governance & Accountability Committee	Sena Youn
Code and Policy	Aaron Loewen
Human Resources	Yuting Liu
House Finance	Atul Aravindakshan
Academic & External	Simar Nagpal
Executive Oversight	Nick Phin
Engagement & Elections	Bill Zhao
AMS Caucus	Shishir Nurul

Mover: Franziska **Seconder:** Lily **Result:** Carried

3 MATTERS FOR DECISION

3.1 CHAIR REMOVAL DUE TO PROLONGED ABSENCE POLICY

Group Responsible: Governance & Accountability Committee, Code & Policy Committee



Description: A motion to update policies regarding the removal of GSS Chairs due to prolonged absence.

Proposed Objective: To discuss and approve policy amendments.

Time: 10 minutes

Supporting Documents: [Policy Revision Form - Chair Removal Policy.docx](#)

WHEREAS there have been historically difficulties getting some Committees to increase activity due to absent Chairs,

WHEREAS the current policies regarding Chair removal are unspecific and do not have criteria listed for removal,

BIRT the policy changes listed in "Policy Revision Form - Chair Removal Policy.docx" be approved.

MOVER: G&A Committee **SECONDER:** Nick **RESULT:** All in favour

3.2 SIGNING OF STUDENT UNION JOINT LETTER FOR BANK DIVESTMENT

Responsible: Michelle Marcus and Jaden Phillips, representing Climate Justice UBC and Change Course

Description: Presentation and motion to vote to sign onto the [National Student Union Letter: Calling on the Big 5 Banks to Divest from Fossil Fuels](#). Nine student unions have already signed the letter, including Simon Fraser Student Society, University of Victoria Students' Society and University of Toronto Students' Union. This is a follow-up to Michelle and Jaden's [presentation](#) to GSS council on Thursday, February 16th, 2023. The presentation outlined the Big 5 Banks' contribution to the climate crisis and violence against Indigenous peoples; how the campaign aligns with the GSS Strategic Plan goals and objectives; and the alternatives to the big banks, in particular local credit unions.

Objective: For the GSS to vote to sign onto the [National Student Union Letter: Calling on the Big 5 Banks to Divest from Fossil Fuels](#).

Time: 10 minute presentation, 10 minute questions and discussion

Supporting Documents:
[Presentation, Student Union Joint Letter](#)

WHEREAS RBC, TD, Scotiabank, BMO, and CIBC — Canada's "Big 5" Banks — have financed over \$1.12 trillion CAD in fossil fuel projects since 2016.

WHEREAS These fossil fuel projects contribute to extreme weather events, including wildfires in BC, which affect students' mental and physical wellbeing including experience of climate anxiety.



WHEREAS The International Energy Agency and United Nations have said that there can be no new fossil fuel infrastructure if the world is to stay within a 1.5 degree temperature increase and avoid irreversible climate change.

WHEREAS The Big 5 Banks are financing the Coastal Gaslink Pipeline and Trans Mountain Pipeline, which do not have consent from and are actively opposed by Indigenous nations, including the Wet'suwet'en, and the Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh respectively.

WHEREAS The Graduate Student Society Strategic Plan 2022-2026 includes Climate Action and Sustainability as a key priority and includes commitments to ethical and green investments.

BIRT The Graduate Student Society of UBC Vancouver sign onto the *National Student Union Letter: Calling on the Big 5 Banks to Divest from Fossil Fuels*.

MOVER: Tonje

SECONDER: Nick

RESULT: All in favour

DISCUSSION

Stephen: Just since quite a large portion of this motion and the presentation that was given was about indigenous people and indigenous rights. I'm curious why indigenous organizations have been involved in this movement or signed on to this

Michelle: this initiative? Yeah, that's a great, great question. So this the bank divestment campaign as a whole was very much led by indigenous people, the wet su attend nation in particular has been very involved, they have gone to save have direct communication with the banks, like they've sent letters to the banks and they've gone to like RBC, its AGM for example, RBC treated them very poorly. And like, basically like canceled the meeting and moved to online on the last minute notice. But they have this is yeah, like the leaders of the Nisha have been very much involved. And they save called for the the international community to support them and sign on. So a member of our organization has like correctly been in touch with that nation, and then there's also been some contact with Bluetooth nation and indigenous climate action is also a group that is involved in in this coalition of organizations that are working on this campaign.

Firth: the two pipelines that you mentioned, do you know approximately how many indigenous groups are affected by that process?

Jaden: Which I'm, I'm not sure if the specific numbers but the point with this says that the the nation the wetsuit nation, like for the coastal gaslink, pipelines, deep the pipeline, they have a jurisdiction over their territory, it's recognized not only in their own law, but by the the BC Supreme Court has formally recognized that like they are the the the people with jurisdiction over that territory, and they are opposing this. This project on their land, they've had, you know, RCMP come and violently remove them from their land with like, snipers and dogs and like, attack dogs. And they've, you know, these people have faced a lot of violence, the handler, stampede. So yeah, we see this as like a clear example of colonial violence that the government is trying to like



the VP external to make a position statement, just a bit like you have something passed today. And we get like a sense of where the council stands on this, even if it's not formally signing on.

Speaker: So what I'm gathering from this as you would like to make you can, at this point, we're talking about the amendment itself and not voting on the amendment, you would like to amend this to say, you can actually do this where you could say the resolve that GSS Council agrees basically within the whatever words you want to say you can say you agree with the letter. And that be it further resolved. Council refers this motion to the VP external to draft position statement and you can either put a date on that November Council specifically say at that, just that you do have clear support here, and just a formality next meeting.

Sam: Yes, that's what I'm going to say.

Margaret: If you were going to give the same presentation to other students societies at UBC. And if you had already done that, what your success was and or I guess this is kind of pointless now because we just agreed to approve everything single, but if that's what the other group said then I was curious.

Michelle: yeah, that's a great question. So, we have had numerous discussions with the AMS about this. Unfortunately, the AFS has a lot of relationships with RBC, you folks probably know about the RBC branch downstairs and then last, they also have like sponsorship and advertising relationships with RBC and they, they bank with RBC, they do have a much more complicated banking system then from when we understand the GSEs they're much larger and they might have like, hundreds of club accounts. So and yeah, the least what they effectively signed a 12 here at RBC branch downstairs. This is all very unfortunate because the because RBC is the is not only the top fossil fuel funder in Canada, but it is now the top fossil fuel funder in the world. So we're still trying to push them to end their sponsorship relationships with RBC. Unfortunately, the current AMS executive does not see climate, as as much of a priority as we would like. However, we think if we can get more groups like the GSS, on board with this, and if we continue with our advocacy and demonstrate to them that like climate is an issue that students care about, that we hope we can make some headway with that, but yeah, the answer is that they they're at this point, they haven't been willing to end any of those, those relationships, so they are not signing on to the statement.

Speaker: Thank you for that. Just we do want to clarify, we haven't actually voted yet on the amendment to agree in principle. We will be doing that shortly on that, folks. Our next member on our speaker's list

Abhishek: his question regarding by so many students, that've been signing it? Can you give us like, what actions they have taken

Michelle: That's an excellent question. So you have Keystone units taken the most stuff they have voted to basically event they're at peace with RBC. So the ones that lease expires in a couple of years, RBC will have to leave building they've they're moving their bank account as well RBC and they passed a policy did not take any sponsorships with RBC, University of Ottawa Student Union has moved their banking from I forget which bank they moved out of. But they moved it to the Georgetown which is credit union, and about central bank and Ontario. And there, they've also been supporting student organizers with resources with like firing and just like educating the student body about alternative banking options, and how to move to a credit union. The York University students union has also moved their money out of being bank and into a credit union and to alternate credit union and Ontario. So yeah, those are like the top examples. And then there's several students



where conversation with their like actively working on UNdeC sponsorships or moving their bank accounts, they just haven't made it public yet.

Abhishek: Yeah, I would like to add on to this initiative as well. As part of GSS banking with Scotia Bank, we do have investments in green initiative funds. So it's entirely not that we are banking on the fossil fuel. But also we have our investments in the inefficient use of the investments on only a few of the investment.

Daemon: I think they should all be kind of mind for all of us right now. Could you comment on why your motion sort of is going after the banks as opposed to the government policies that are allowing companies to subvert indigenous sovereignty?

Michelle: That is an excellent question. Unfortunately, I think this question came up last time I was here but Yeah, unfortunately, the king Canadian government. Really, at the end of the day, when it comes to issues like this, they listen to corporations. They're, you know, I have been working with climate movement for like, eight years now. There's people who've been doing this for decades advocated to the government, we've tried really hard to get them to have policy that, you know, limits emissions and respects indigenous rights, all this stuff, but they don't listen, because they Yeah, the politicians are, are, yeah, the corporation's lobbying them so hard, and they just don't listen to those perspectives. So the kind of the theory of change of the divestment movement is that if we target these corporations, and we educate the public, that these corporations are directly harming, you know, climate, indigenous rights, you know, they're also profit gouging and these banks are for profit, so they like ripping off consumers as well, like credit unions, which are much more democratic. We educate the public, then we can kind of take away their social sounds from these companies. So that The government or politicians will feel like they can't just like listen to those companies as much, or else like the public will kind of call them call them out for it.

Jaden: I was going to add also that like, because there's such massive corporations, they have lots of sweet throughout the country and in political circles as well, and sponsoring all sorts of events like government events, and like non government events, including on campuses, therefore, like, targeting banks, they're kind of like, in some way, a root cause because of the root source of finance to these problematic, problematic climate wrecking projects, and therefore, like, targeting them directly. It's one avenue that like ultimate advocates are going for it because like governments and politics often take long time to, to, like, get things done and to change things.

Shishir: Yes, so correct me if I am wrong, as far as I know, is that if any corporate bank goes bankrupt, and governments try to bail us out, now, if GSS open any account with any credit learning, so if they go bankrupt, how, what the situation will look like?

Michelle: Yeah, that's a great question. So credit unions also have deposit insurance. So it's the same as the banks that they're, they're just as safe as the banks in that regard.

Sam: I just want to call the question because of time, if we can vote on this.

Speaker: So now we are voting on the amended option

BIRT the GSS Council endorses this statement in principle



BIRT Council refers this motion to the VP external to draft the position statement in accordance with the GSS guidelines for submission to November Council

MOVER: Ali

SECONDER: Nick

RESULT:All
in favour

4 MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

4.1 FINANCIAL PRESENTATION

Responsible: Financial Officer Abhishek Somanagoudar

Description: Presentation about GSS finances

Objective: To update councillors on the GSS 2022-2023 Finances

Time: 15 minutes

Supporting Documents: [Presentation](#)

5 MATTERS TO NOTE

Time reserved for questions regarding updates below.

5.1 EXECUTIVES

5.1.1 President:

5.1.2 Financial Officer

5.1.3 VP University & Academic Affairs



5.1.4 VP External Relations

5.1.5 VP Students

Participating in GLC grand lounge planning and programming.

Collaborating with team to identify relevant events/programs as part of GLC operation.

Planning towards council retreat.

5.2 COMMITTEES

5.2.1 Academic & External Committee

Launched Student Satisfaction Survey 2023, Draft of new AcEx structure and Terms of Reference

5.2.2 Code & Policy Committee

CPC has been working on updating AcEx Terms of Reference and policies for the removal of inactive/absent Chairs.

5.2.3 Engagement & Elections Committee

5.2.4 Executive Committee

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5.2.5 Executive Oversight Committee



5.2.6 Governance & Accountability Committee

Drafting new SMART goals, reviewing KPIs, finalizing Chairship Removal Policy

5.2.7 House Finance Committee

- 1) Financial Officer has started onboarding with new accounting firm (Bickert) and terminating agreement with current firm (Enkel)
- 2) GFSA payments have resumed
- 3) Conducted expense journal entry review for May-July 2023. Net expenditure is within budget. Relevant information about expenses was shared with executives & GSS staff.
- 4) Working on selecting a food vendor for GLC building. To date only one application has been received and the HFC is working on involving more stakeholders.
- 5) Expenses for appliances and other items for for GLC building and GSS events were reviewed and approved. The majority of expenses will be billed to the Capital Projects Improvement Fund.
- 6) Payment plan for legal fees pertaining to review of rental agreement was approved
- 7) Health and Dental plan has been shifted to a fully funded model. Additional amendments have been forwarded to CPC for review.

5.2.8 Human Resources

5.2.9 AMS Caucus

- AMS caucus is currently in consultation with AMS president and GSS president regarding the impact grant funds and smart goals respectively.

5.2.10 Graduate Council Caucus

5.3 SENATORS AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS

5.3.1 Senators:



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5.3.2 Board of Governors Representatives:

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6 NOTICES

6.1 NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING

Date: Thursday, Nov 16th 2023 at 5:30 pm

Location: MK Forum

6.2 NOTICE OF UNSEATINGS

7 ADJOURNMENT

BIRT there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 6:48 pm.

Mover: Lily

Seconder: Tonje

Result: Carried