



ATTENDANCE

Present: Aaron Loewen, Sam Kenston, Abhi Somanagoudar, Isha Gill, Abhishek Somanagoudar, Anjana, Bill Zhao, Eddy King, Emily Tang, Nick Phin, Firth, Franziska Mey, Mercy Gakii, Grace Gletsu, Yuting Liu, Ihomehe, Jonah Berean, Julia Da Silva, Jalisa Karim, Kathleen Gill, Mahfida, Margaret, Mehmet, Maryann Rogers, Parker Lund, Patricia Unung, Reagan, Ritu Progga, Shishir, Samia, Sophia Haque, Tonje, Olivia Tsihlias, Vanderen, Vignesh Krish.

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 5:31 pm.

1.2 AGENDA ADOPTION

BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

Mover: Sam

Seconded: Daemon

Result: Carried

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

President: We want to acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional ancestral and unceded territory of the masculine people. We also want to acknowledge that this place has been a place of learning for several years, and we are privileged to be carrying out our meeting and council activities here. And we want to be conscious about our contribution to the Truth and Reconciliation here in BC in Canada. And thank you Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions.

EXPEDIENT MATTERS



1.2 HEALTH & DENTAL PLAN

Responsible: Sophia Haque

Time: 10 minutes

Description: AMS/GSS Health & Dental Plan Update

Objective: Inform

Presentation: [UBCGSS.ppt](#)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1.3 GSS COUNCIL MINUTES

BIRT the following GSS Council minutes be approved:

[December 14th, 2023](#)

Mover: Sam

Seconded: Isha

Result: Carried

1.4 COMMITTEE MINUTES

BIRT the following GSS Committee minutes be approved:

Academic & External Committee:		Human Resources Committee:	Dec 1 st , 2023
Code & Policy Committee:	Nov 24 th , 2023; Dec 15 th , 2023	AMS Caucus:	
Engagement & Elections Committee:	Dec 1 st , 2023; Dec 15 th , 2023	Graduate Council:	
Executive Committee:	Dec 6 th , 2023	Health and Dental Plan Caucus:	
Executive Oversight Committee		All-Chairs:	Dec 15 th , 2023
Governance & Accountability Committee:	Dec 4 th , 2023; Jan 8 th 2024	House Finance Committee:	Nov 7 th , 2023; Nov 21 st 2023, Dec 6 th 2023



Mover: Sam **Seconded:** Isha **Result:** Carried

2 SEATINGS

2.1 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
Graduate Council Caucus		Representative	0
AMS Caucus		Representative	0
		Member	0
Health & Dental		Representative	0

Mover: Anjana **Seconded:** Isha **Result:** Carried

2.2 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		Councillor	1
		Ordinary Member	0



Code & Policy		Councillor	0
	Zachary Gaouad	Ordinary Member	2
Engagement & Elections		Councillor	0
		Ordinary Member	5
Executive Oversight		Councillor	4
		Ordinary Member	0
Governance & Accountability	Patricia Unung	Councillor	5
		Ordinary Member	0
House Finance		Councillor	4
		Ordinary Member	2
Human Resources		Councillor	2
		Ordinary Member	0

Mover: Isha

Seconded: Nick

Result: Carried

3 MATTERS FOR DECISION

3.1 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 January 2025:

Name of Affiliate Organization	Representative
Statistics Graduate Student Association (SGSA)	Gian Carlo Diluvi
Disabled Graduate Student Association	Corin Parsons

MOVER: Parker

SECONDER: Sam

RESULT: Carried



3.2 EXECUTIVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY

Group Responsible: Executive Oversight Committee, Code & Policy Committee

Description: A motion to amend the GSS policies regarding conflict resolution between Executives.

Proposed Objective: To pass policy changes.

Time: 10 minutes

Supporting Documents: [Policy Revision Form - GSS Executive Conflict Resolution.pdf](#),
[GSSExecutiveConflictResolutionPolicy_2024-01.pdf](#)

WHEREAS there are no specified mechanisms for dealing with Executive conflicts,

WHEREAS EOC has worked with CPC and the Executives to formulate conflict resolution policy,

BIRT the changes listed in "[Policy Revision Form - GSS Executive Conflict Resolution.pdf](#)" be approved as presented.

MOVER: Nick **SECONDER:** Patricia **RESULT:** Eddy

3.3 HR MANUAL SEPARATION

Group Responsible: Code & Policy Committee, Human Resources Committee

Description: A motion to amend the GSS policies regarding the relocation of the HR Manual.

Proposed Objective: To pass policy changes.

Time: 10 minutes

Supporting Documents: [Policy Revision Form - GSS HR Manual Relocation.pdf](#), [GSSHRManual_2024-01.pdf](#)

WHEREAS the current Policy Manual is convoluted and not easily accessible to the GSS members,

WHEREAS CPC has prioritized the disassembly of the current Policy Manual,



WHEREAS the GSS HR Manual was developed as a standalone policy and is easily relocatable as a policy document,

BIRT the changes listed in "[Policy Revision Form - GSS HR Manual Relocation.pdf](#)" be approved as presented.

MOVER: Patricia **SECONDER:** Eddy **RESULT:** Carried

4 MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

4.1 DRAFT POSITION STATEMENT

Responsible: Firth McEachern and Emily Tang (Academic and External Affairs Committee Chair and VP External Relations, respectively)

Time: 10 minutes

Description: Present a draft position statement on the war in Gaza and related issues (safety, human rights, university activism, freedom of speech and peaceful assembly)

Objective: Get feedback, give council members until next meeting to recommend any changes to it before a vote to adopt it

Discussion

Julia: I'd like to think this is my first GSS meeting. So I'm like coming to this right now. And I want to thank everyone out folks who've been working on putting this together and I'm really glad we're talking about this. Um, I think like my core question So, one of the questions you've already listed here, so I'm sure this is something that like will come up and like later revisions. But I guess, reading the kind of like listing the kind of priority statements, my first like, kind of, like core question is, like, given that say, like, if like we as, like GSS. Like, hold these, like those that list of statements, like as priorities? What is the kind of like material thing that we're calling for? And like, from whom? Like, are we calling? Like, um, so like, I'm not like seeing yet kind of any wording around like a ceasefire, for example, if we're aiming it at the Canadian government, then are we like, calling for like the Canadian government to be taking the steps necessary, like diplomatically, to try to, to kind of bring about a ceasefire? Or if we're talking if we're aiming it at UBC, are we talking about like divestment? Are we talking about like, a, again, if we're aiming at the Canadian government, are we talking about my brain lost the word for a second preventing the sale and shipping of arms to the State of Israel? And personally, I've been supportive any, any or all of those things, but I'm just kind of wondering, with what what's the kind of like material call that we're making given these priorities?



Firth: Okay, I find Well, Julia, that's a really good point. And that's something that I've also struggled with, like what what material asks, Do we do we make? So right now, we say what principles we would like to be upheld? And what kind of our goals would would like long term goals would be what short term and long term goals would be, but how to get there is another question. And it gets really complicated and and messy to decide what are those? asks, what are those actions and which is one of the reasons why I felt it would be it would behoove having multiple people come together work on, brainstorm, brainstorming such actions. I would also be in support with a cessation of any kind of funding towards military actions. So yeah, I think it would help to have more, more heads in on this. And also, we're, perhaps we need to refer to people who have been in the GSS for longer, and what kind of our what is the scope of our mandate and how far we can go in terms of making those asks, as well as the policy and code Committee?

Eddy: Yes, yes, I think I want to speak Thank you very much further, I think that's a good job. That with what I saw, I think it's a pretty good one. And I think this matter is a very sensitive one, which I think we should be should, we should add a little bit of caution when dealing with data. And I for one, I think I would want to review it as well. So if it's going to be made public, or whatever, I think I'd want to nominate myself and then be able to see the document and then other female to maybe a comment or something, so I'll be available to you. So that is one. The second thing has to do with how's it going to be like, is it that this document is being presented as GSS that is petitioning the government of UBC to do something about this division in Gaza? You know, if we're gonna represent the students, I don't know if that that's I don't know, may probably might be a good idea to have the input of the students as well. I don't know I'm just thinking out loud. You know, if you're presenting the students, maybe the goddess didn't then maybe they should have a say with this one because like, we're gonna represent them and finally speaking, maybe some department may even have a heads up as to what we are doing by Good luck. So is something that I'm thinking and maybe we can also look into that and see the best way forward for us to present them if we're gonna push this agenda. Yep. So that's, that's for mine.

Firth: Yeah, that's also a good point input from other student groups would be really helpful, I think and would strengthen, strengthen opposition and also make it more representative Emily had mentioned in in the past about reaching out to student organizations, which I think is still a good idea. And I also agree with the sensitivity of the issue, which is why the wording is really important. And, and having you know, what truthfulness is really important. objectivity and compassion are important. Yeah, and then keeping to a social justice principles, rather than kind of playing the blame game. But thanks, thanks, Eddie, for your interest. And I'll put your name down Eddie and Julia. As, as people who could could assist.

Alright, good. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Anjana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to also, thank you for the presentation for the Emily and the statement that you put together, I was also kind of going to mention what was said earlier about potentially reaching out to student groups. Perhaps my comment just comes a little too late now. But I also wanted to say that this is something that has come up in other student groups, sort of meetings that I've been a part of. So I think that we definitely could reach out to different training organizations that could potentially cosign or maybe just make it known to their people that this is something that the GSS is doing and have sort of an open call maybe for people to review it. And I also wanted to review this statement myself and help with any efforts to push this forward as well.



Firth: Thank you for your interest. And also going back to related to an agenda set and also what previous speakers said in terms of our goals or our specific asks, I think it could be sort of like a multi tiered approach that at the very least, we want to raise awareness and and remind people of certain principles and the university as well as the Canadian government. And then if, you know, if, if if this the second sort of goal to achieve is actually calling for specific action. So I guess we could have either sort of shoot for multiple objectives and if we achieve one or two of them, but still a win

Emily: I'm just going to turn off my camera while I was speaking. Thank you, for everyone who has like contributed so far. And I just wanted to say that, like, once we if we all think that like signing with student count, other student unions are a good idea. In the future, once we get more like people backing us up and other student unions involved, we can also bring the issue forward to like the BC provincial government, and then they can also push for, like, calling for a ceasefire and stuff like that on a federal level as well. Because like, we definitely do have connections with the BC government as well.

Daemon: Thank you first and Emily, for bringing, highlighting this issue at this meeting. I'm very in support of us doing something about this. Because I think it's kind of our responsibility as part of the global community and were sort of in a lot of us are in a fairly privileged position here at the universities. So perhaps something that could be an easy. Concrete asked might be some sort of contribution to humanitarian aid through some sort of agency. So it's not the university necessarily doing the work, but they give, you know, a certain amount of money to somebody who is providing humanitarian aid in the conflict, like the UN Red Cross, it depends on the particular conflict and or emergency. So perhaps that's an easy starting point for a concrete ask in, in addition to asking them to uphold all of the priorities that you've stated in your document there as well. So yeah, that was all Thank you.

Julia: I'm somewhat like think everyone has like, spoken so far. I'm like, really glad we're having this discussion. I just around the kind of issue of like, wanting one, being a sensitive topic and like wanting to kind of like really carefully choose, like, the language that we use. I really understand that. And I also think we're kind of there's this like, line that were kind of like, trying to balance were like, that's true. And it's also the case that like, if we're, you know, we wouldn't be making we wouldn't be needing to make a position statement. If this was if there wasn't a position to be taken if this was like a random kind of natural disaster. So I do think like this, the priorities that we've laid out are wonderful. And they're the kind of thing that like almost any one would like, agree with. Because it's kind of like really basic important, like humanitarian principles. I would also like to say like, and this is definitely something that we will have to talk about. And like, like for the revising stages, I would like to see us maybe using some more definitive language and calling kind of a genocide, what it is, and thinks along those lines. And that's for like, for me, that's the purpose of making a position statement is to take a position on something, keeping in mind, you know, all of the, like, careful considerations that go into the further wording. But, yeah, that's a wrap up there.

Firth: Yeah, good point, Julia. It's, it's it is it is aligned between it is aligned between taking a position and making it strong enough to actually raise attention and get and be honest and get people talking about it and acting on it. And not just being wishy washy bland statement that does nothing, but at the same time, not alienating important sectors of the population or not scaring off people from action. And it's, or not being accused, whether it's right or wrong, or whether it's legitimate or illegitimate, but not immediately being accused of something that we are, that we didn't actually do, and then sort of undermining our, our intentions.



So it is it is a fine line. And if we're going to see sort of additional student organizations input in it, always tend it tends to be when you involve more and more people, more and more organizations, things get diluted. Anyway, so that's, that's one consideration to make. But my, my, I guess my next question is kind of procedural. And maybe the code and policy committee or the president can weigh in on this as now that we have a draft or we have determined that there is enough interest for the GSS to do something. What are the next steps? What what what do we do? What do we do from moving forward and to actually get something issued by next meeting, for example, or the following meeting? And also is if we if we are an umbrella organization with student groups underneath us? What is the what is the procedure of getting other student organizations involved? Do we need to get other students in organizations involved? Yeah, in terms of hierarchies, and things. What kind of motion do we set in set today?

Speaker: Yeah, so there's no way that we would adopt a position statements we have. So our rules behind it essentially, are you have to bring a position statement and the associated documents to Council brought so it's a position statement and a briefing note, which contains several bits of information as to when it expires, who's signing off on it, where details like other information can be found, that should be brought to council and position statements may only be adopted by a special resolution of council. So in council if we have a three or two thirds approval of a document, or an ordinary resolution at a general meeting, if you would, like. You're also supposed to provide notice at least seven days before consideration so typically, if you would like to have a position statement signed by the by the GSSs. What you can do is post it to the Society's website or send it through an email to all members of the GSS at least seven days before the council meeting or the consideration. That requirement may be waived if Council decides but the most simple Well approach would be to let everyone else know beforehand. And all you would have to do so there's actually nothing that you need to do today. What you would want to do by next council is to have the documents filled out in the briefing notes and the position statement itself, bring that copy to council. And Council is then able to talk about the document itself the wording and eventually approve it, or not let it pass by a vote at that council, or they may recommend this be moved to the ordinary resolution at a general meeting. I will say as just a side note from this is that if we do want this to be at a general meeting, typically our AGM 's are held in March. So February becomes our last chance to submit an item for a general meeting anyway. So essentially, you're looking at either bypassing it in council or at the AGM you need to get something approved by February Council. And that would just be bring the whole document in its complete form to council. Does that make sense? Or at least Yeah, clear how that works.

Firth: o but what is the difference between approving it in a regular council meeting in February and the AGM in March? So one might one possibility may be is sort of like Council resolution in February. And then if we want to take it to the general meeting in March, we could have in a second sort of statement or a kind of a general draft for the entire body for them to if maybe it's sort of a symbolic effort so that even if the council approves it in February, we could also bring in a bring it to vote again for the general meeting to see if we have broad based support. I mean, it's not an option.

Speaker: I think now, though, that is an option. You can do that, I think a way that you could phrase it, and this is more of a code and policy chair speaking than the speaker. What you could do then in that case, is when you introduce when you introduce this to February Council, not only does the be it resolved clause be that you bring it to the general meeting, because that's inherently what Council has to vote on in February is bringing that version to the AGM. But we can also add in there is that the is that the council agrees in principle with the



position statements and that's another bit resolve clause. So you don't actually have to say that we're voting on it to include it immediately. But you can say that council agrees with it, and we are sending it to the general populace for voting in if you would like to do it that way. Okay. And feel free to reach out to me afterwards if you'd like more specific wording on how these should be worded or in whatever way you decide. Okay.

4.2 CREATION OF AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC HUMANITARIAN SERVICES FOR WAR-IMPACTED GRADUATE STUDENTS

Responsible: Patricia Unung (GSS Councillor, Dep Rep from Curriculum Studies)

Time: 15 minutes

Description: Creation of Ad-Hoc Committee on Strategic Humanitarian Services for War-Impacted Graduate Students

Objective: In line with GSS Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, the committee aims to develop and execute strategic support system for graduate students from war-impacted countries. Based on the committee's review and established parameters, support could start with most impacted countries to least impacted ones.

Discussion

Speaker: So maybe I can speak first as the as the CPC chair. So creation of an ad hoc committee requires only a few different things. What must be kind of brought to council would be the mandate of a proposed ad hoc committee. So essentially, what they are, what is their goal? And what are they being created to do? The duration within approximate end dates. This can be something that like you can set the date for every year, or it has to be renewed every AGM, something like that. Or you can create a longer term date, if you feel like there's a more specific one that you would like to put out there. And the member composition, I know you touched on the member composition already. So you've already thought about that. But typically, we open it up to having specifically what seats are allocated to who how big the committee is. Along those lines, and finally, a proposed recruitment because not all members are going to be current members of the GSF, or of council or committees, you may want specific members from certain student groups or people who are potentially in this case, people who are impacted or impacted graduate students to sit on this committee as and to provide their voice. So something like that would be something to be considered. So those are the kinds of core tenants that you need to actually propose. The best way to go about this is to take those ideas and bring them to the governance and accountability committee. Previously, governance and accountability has. They have approved ad hoc committees previously on a template that has everything filled out with what you need. Most recently, the indigenous relations relations ad hoc committee, or indigenous engagement ad hoc committee was a ad hoc committee that was formed through the GNA. And before that, we had the Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee, which was also started from governance and accountability. So they probably would have the tools and resources necessary to know what to do to bring it to council and pass without any issues. Which is convenient considering that you also just signed up for them and hopefully everything works out in that regard as well. Yeah, that's all I have to contribute for this.

Patricia: So by the time here, I am able to prepare the portfolio is it is it feasible for the a governance and accountability committee to pass the creation of the committee before it comes to the council? They didn't get



that point right. All will when once they are done, council will have to approve further for the committee considered to work.

Aaron: Council at the end of the day has to approve it. But once council has approved it by a simple majority that And then essentially you just have to it exists as soon as council approves it. Thank you.

5 MATTERS TO NOTE

Time reserved for questions regarding updates below.

5.1 EXECUTIVES

5.1.1 President:

Praise reports

- All 3-5 years childcare facilities under UBC are now \$10/day. Thanks to the advocacy work of successive GSS leadership teams especially the immediate past leaders
- The GLC is fully functional. It's opened to all Grad students from 9 am to 9 pm. Please share the news with all your friends and fellow Grad students

Highlight of Updates

- The President and the Executives are working with the Provost and Enrolment office to find a sustainable solution to the GFSA and HSA. Several high-level meetings are ongoing to find ways the university can fund the GFSA/HSA in the long term.
- The President and the Executives are working with the new Dean of G+PS to secure funding for phase 2 of the GLC
- The President and Executives are working with the ABCS to advocate for affordable housing units on university campuses as well as a cap on tuition hike especially for international students.
- The President and Executives are working with the provost and finance office to finalize the University budget for the fiscal year 24/25.

5.1.2 Financial Officer



5.1.3 VP University & Academic Affairs

5.1.4 VP External Relations

5.1.5 VP Students

5.2 COMMITTEES

5.2.1 Academic & External Committee

5.2.2 Code & Policy Committee

CPC has worked on relocating several policies, creating policies regarding a consent agenda, and working on a Executive duties review.

5.2.3 Engagement & Elections Committee

Between June and December 2023, we hosted 6 events within 7 months, each with a good turnout. The goal for the first quarter of 2024 is to transition our focus to election affairs. Hoping to get more direct committee member engagement in election affairs by them joining the elections committee.

5.2.4 Executive Committee

Praise reports

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5.2.5 Executive Oversight Committee

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5.2.6 Governance & Accountability Committee

Working on our SMART goals and preparing a presentation for Feb council
Will be doing KPIs in Feb/March, survey going out to chairs and members (new)

5.2.7 House Finance Committee

GLC Food vendor has been finalized and the contract terms are being discussed with them. HFC recommends a revenue-sharing model with the food vendor. Final recommendations will be submitted to Council for review. HFC is working on potential banking alternatives to align with goals of sustainability and being mindful of our environmental impacts.

Working in conjunction with CPC to create an updated HFC policy manual.

5.2.8 Human Resources

1. WL Student Awards
2. Termination of Accounting Clerk
3. GSS Work Performance Review November 2023
4. GSS Work Protocols

5.2.9 AMS Caucus

5.2.10 Graduate Council Caucus



5.3 SENATORS AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS

5.3.1 Senators:

-

5.3.2 Board of Governors Representatives:

-

6 NOTICES

6.1 NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING

Date: Thursday, Feb 22nd 2024 at 5:30 pm

Location: Michael Kingsmill Forum

6.2 NOTICE OF UNSEATINGS

Anshika Srivastava was unseated from the Code and Policy Committee as an ordinary member.

Courtney Hoskinson was unseated from the Code and Policy Committee as an ordinary member.

Anshika Srivastava was unseated from the Governance & Accountability Committee as an ordinary member.

7 ADJOURNMENT

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

Mover:

Seconder:

Result: