



**GRADUATE  
STUDENT SOCIETY**  
UBC VANCOUVER

# GSS Human Resources Manual

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of formalizing the Human Resources Handbook of the UBC Vancouver Graduate Student Society (GSS) is to provide a comprehensive reference document for all staff and management, ensuring consistency and improving understanding of GSS policies.

The revised contents of this handbook were approved by GSS Council on November 25, 2019 as required by the GSS Policy. This handbook is subject to modification as changes of intent, interpretation, as well as government legislation will occur periodically. These changes will be brought forward to Council for approval as they occur.

If you have any questions regarding this handbook, please feel free to ask your Supervisor or the General Manager for clarification.

*For those employees whose employment is governed by a collective agreement, the provisions contained in those agreements take precedence over the provisions contained in this handbook.*

# 1. DEFINITIONS

**Collective agreement** – A written contract of employment covering a group of employees who are represented by a trade union

**Council** – The GSS student governing body that represents and advocates on behalf of all UBC graduate students to the University, the Government, and the public

**Employee** – Any person in a paid or volunteer working relationship within the GSS

**ESA** – Employment Standards Act of BC

**Executive** - An elected student executive of the GSS

**GM** – General Manager for the GSS

**GSC** – Graduate Student Centre

**GSS** – The Graduate Student Society of UBC

**HR** – The GSS Human Resources Committee

**HF** – The GSS House Finance Committee

**Immediate family** – One's spouse, common law spouse, child, parent, sibling, parent-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew.

**In camera** – A closed and private session

**Supervisor** – The person who holds an employee's personnel file, and/or has authority to set work hours of subordinates

**UBC** – The University of British Columbia, Vancouver Campus

## **2. EMPLOYEE CATEGORIES**

### ***2.1 Full Time Regular***

An employee hired to work on a full-time (thirty-five [35] or more hours per week; see section 5.2) basis in a continuing position and has passed the probationary period (see section 2.4).

### ***2.2 Part Time Regular***

An employee hired to work less than thirty-five (35) hours per week on a continuing basis. Certain benefits may be paid on a *pro rata* basis.

### ***2.3 Casual***

An employee hired to work irregular hours on an intermittent basis as required for the position. Benefits may be paid on a *pro rata* basis.

### ***2.4 Probationary***

New employees are probationary for the first three (3) months of employment, although the length of time may be reduced or extended (see section 8.2).

### ***2.5 Sessional***

An employee hired, on a recurring basis, to work full-time or part-time for the academic session only.

### ***2.6 Contract or Term***

An employee who is hired for a specific period of time with defined duties and expectations. Term employees' entitlement to benefits will normally be limited in scope, and will be itemized within the wording of their agreement.

### ***2.7 Volunteer***

An individual who provides work or services for the GSS for no monetary exchange.

## **3. EMPLOYMENT EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

### ***3.1 Employment Policy***

The GSS maintains a policy of non-discrimination towards all employees and applicants for employment (see section 16). All aspects of employment with the GSS are governed by merit, competence, suitability and qualification and will not be influenced in any manner by ethnicity, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status (including circumstances related to pregnancy), physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, age or a criminal or summary conviction offence that is unrelated to the employment or intended employment of that person.

All decisions made with respect to recruitment and promotion for all positions will be made solely on the basis of individual qualifications related to bona fide occupational requirements.

### ***3.2 Health and Safety***

The GSS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our employees, working in conjunction with the B.C. Workers' Compensation Board to identify opportunities for improvement. GSS employees are encouraged to bring health and safety concerns to their Supervisor(s) or the GM so that appropriate actions can be taken.



## **4. HIRING PROCEDURES**

### ***4.1 Immediate Family***

Nepotism will not be tolerated by the GSS. The GSS reserves the right to alter the position or responsibilities of employees who marry or who are recognized to be living in a common-law relationship.

### ***4.2 General Hiring Procedures***

This procedure applies to all positions excluding full-time and new positions.

1. The GM is notified of the need to hire the position.
2. The GM will verify if the budget exists for this position. If no budget exists, refer to section 4.3 (4) for hiring procedures.
3. The GM assembles and oversees a Hiring Team, including at least one member of HR. In addition to the GM and HR representative, up to two additional members (student, staff, or executive) may be included at the discretion of the GM.
4. The job description and details are posted for at least two weeks, including at least one internet medium that is external to UBC.
5. If hiring a non-graduate student, permission must be obtained from HR.
6. The GM will select a candidate on the recommendation of the Hiring Team and will offer the position. HR will be informed with a brief report.
7. If a consensus cannot be reached by the Hiring Team, the decision of who to hire will fall to HR. HR may elect to conduct secondary interviews if needed.

### ***4.3 Hiring Procedure for Full Time and New Positions***

The following is not applicable to 4.2.

1. The GM is notified of the need to hire a full-time position or a new position to the GSS.
2. Once notified, the GM will inform HR within five (5) business days.
3. HR will decide either to initiate hiring or dispute the need for the position.
4. If the budget for the position does not currently exist, HF will be contacted to approve an allocation of funds for the position.
5. If additional funds are required, HF must obtain approval from Council.
6. HR will strike a Hiring Team for the position consisting of at least the GM (non-voting), the Department Head or most relevant Executive, and two representatives from HR (four [4] members in total).
7. The Hiring Team will determine the hiring schedule, post the position for a minimum of two weeks (must be advertised on at least one internet job advertisement medium external to UBC), review applications, invite top candidates for interviews, conduct interviews, and make a hiring recommendation to HR.
8. HR will vote to decide who to hire and will inform the GM. Following this, an offer of employment will be extended by the GM.

### ***4.4 Miscellaneous Considerations:***

- a) It is HR policy that contract renewal dates **not** be set over the winter holidays. Therefore, hiring of positions with annually reviewed contracts will not be conducted during December or the beginning of January.
- b) It is HR policy to ensure that contracts do not end one month before, or one month after, executive transition.
- c) All GSS employees must have a contract, regardless of the length of employment or

position.

## ***4.5 Procedures for Offering Employment***

### **4.5.1 Offer of Employment for Employees with Valid SIN**

An employee's current employment status shall be checked before any offer is being made. Each employee must be eligible to work in Canada with a valid Social Insurance Number (SIN).

### **4.5.2 Offer of Employment for Employees without a Valid SIN**

If the employee does not have a SIN, the GSS can provide a job offer letter which can be used to apply for a SIN through Human Resources Development Canada. The job offer letter should be drafted by HR, and should be signed by two of the signing officers.

### **4.5.3 International Applicants**

If the employee is not a permanent resident of Canada, a copy of a supporting document such as Study Permit, and/or Work Permit shall be required and filed together with the other related documents (e.g. contract, statement of confidentiality).

### **4.5.4 Payroll Processing Forms**

Forms needed for payroll purposes shall be filled by the employee and submitted to the Office Manager for processing.

## ***4.6 Confidentiality Agreement***

All GSS employees and executive members shall agree to and sign a statement of privacy and confidentiality. These statements will be kept by the GM and a copy will be provided to the employee.

## **5. HOURS OF WORK**

### **5.1 Hours per Week**

The scheduled work week for full-time regular employees shall be no less than thirty-five (35) hours and no more than forty (40) hours. For part-time regular employees, scheduled hours shall be less than thirty-five (35) hours per week.

### **5.2 Lunch and Coffee Breaks**

Employees working a full day (seven [7] hours) are entitled to two (2) paid fifteen (15) minute coffee breaks. Employees are entitled to an unpaid meal break which can vary between a minimum of thirty (30) minutes and a maximum of sixty (60) minutes (see the ESA for details). It is the responsibility of the employee to work with their Manager to ensure these breaks are taken.

If working overtime (see section 5.3), the employee is entitled to a half (0.5) hour paid meal period after working two (2) hours beyond the regular seven hour shift.

### **5.3 Overtime**

Full-time staff (see section 2.1) are compensated at an annual salary and therefore are not eligible for overtime pay unless specifically approved by the General Manager. They employee may be asked to work hours outside of the regular work day may occur on occasion. Work hours in these situations will be based on a flextime arrangement (see section 5.4).

For employees eligible for overtime pay, the GSS follows the overtime provisions of the ESA. Flextime *in lieu* of overtime pay may be granted by an employee's Supervisor; however there is no obligation to utilize this option for either party.

### **5.4 Flextime**

When an alteration in work schedule is required for an employee to fulfill an essential task outside of regular office hours, the GSS will accommodate the alteration as flextime. Flextime is a scheduling arrangement that permits variations in an employee's starting and departure times, but does not change the total number of hours worked in a month. At the GSS, all flextime must be approved by the employee's direct supervisor. The GSS encourages all employees accumulating flextime to utilize flextime within twenty-four (24) hours where appropriate. All accumulated flextime must be used within the month it is accrued in order to maintain the total hours of compensated time within that month. It is the responsibility of the employee to log flextime with the Office Manager, unless it will be used within 24 hours and a supervisor has been informed. If a separate flextime agreement has been developed and approved by an employee and the GSS, that agreement will supersede these guidelines.

## **6. LEAVE/TIME OFF**

The following only applies to full-time regular employees.

### **6.1 Sick Leave**

Employees are entitled to twelve (12) sick days per year with full pay. Sick leave is available only to full-time employees who have been in employment for longer than three (3) months. The maximum carryover of sick days is six (6) per contract year, to a maximum accumulation of seventy-five (75) days. If the GM requests in writing a medical certificate within fifteen (15) days of an employee's return to work, the employee must provide one.

### **6.2 Excess Sick Leave Needed**

In the event an employee requires more sick leave than they have accrued, they may draw from the remaining entitlement for the current year. Any additional time may be covered through leave of absence (see section 6.7) or the medical benefits of the Employment Insurance Sickness Benefits. Details are available through the Supervisor or GM.

### **6.3 Family Responsibility Leave**

Family responsibility leave is presently an allowance of three (3) days on full pay per year, and if the employee does not utilize the family responsibility leave during any one (1) year, then any part of the allowance remaining at the end of the year is forfeited and is not carried over to the next year. Family responsibility leave is available only to full-time employees following probation (see sections 2.4 and 8.2). Family responsibility leave may be used when the employee's child is born, when the employee's child is sick, or upon the death of a member of the employee's immediate family. If an employee's child is sick, the employee may use their own sick leave in addition to family responsibility leave as required. An employee is entitled to take family responsibility leave as a half (0.5) day, if that is all that is required. The GM may ask for proof of the incident for which the family responsibility leave is sought, such as a medical certificate or death certificate. Employees shall be allowed paid leave of up to half (0.5) a working day for the purposes of attending weddings of immediate family under the terms of the Family Responsibility Leave provisions of their benefit package. Family responsibility leave may not be claimed for any reason other than the reasons stated above.

### **6.4 Medical and Dental Appointments**

It is requested that employees make every effort to minimize time away from work for medical or dental appointments by scheduling them during periods of time off or ensuring that the appointment is at the beginning or the end of the day. Employees may take up to four (4) hours in any one (1) month calendar period for these appointments with pay. Time in excess shall be deducted from the employee's sick leave entitlement. The GSS requires at least five (5) working days of notice of non-emergency appointments.

### **6.5 Leave of Absence**

Following one year of continuous employment, a leave of absence without pay of up to three (3) months may be granted for personal reasons provided that such leave shall not interfere with the operation of the department. The leave may be extended for a further two (2) months with the approval of the GM.

Please note that the GSS cannot guarantee the availability of an employee's specific position if they choose to take extended leave of absence. If the employee's position is no longer available, the GSS will make every effort to place the person in a comparable position upon their return to

work.

### **6.6 Jury Duty**

The GSS believes that all employees should serve their community if asked, and should not have to suffer financial hardship if they do so. Full-time regular employees called for jury duty shall be paid for the difference between the amount paid to them for jury service and the amount they would have earned had they worked for the GSS on such days. Proof of jury duty financial payment may be requested prior to the GSS imbursement.

### **6.7 Parental Leave**

Through provisions in the ESA and the Employment Insurance Act of Canada, an employee shall be entitled to up to fifty (50) weeks leave without pay for Maternity and Paternity Leave. This includes employees who are adopting a child. Provisions in the Employment Insurance Act allow the employee to apply for EI benefits during this period. Details are available through the GSS payroll office, through a Canada Employment Insurance Office, or on-line.

The GSS requests a minimum of two (2) weeks of notice of the employee's intended date of return to work. Upon return to work, the employee shall return to their position or a comparable one with all increments and benefits to which they would have been entitled had the leave not taken place.

Benefits coverage will be maintained during the period of parental leave for those benefits where the premiums are 100% paid for by the GSS. For benefits where the employee is responsible for some or all of the premiums, the employee may elect to pay their portion and have those benefits maintained as well.

### **6.8 Voting Time**

Section 74 of the British Columbia Election Act establishes that any employee who is eligible to vote is entitled to have four (4) consecutive hours free from employment during voting hours on General Voting Day (8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Pacific Time) for the purpose of voting. If the employee's scheduled hours already provide four (4) consecutive hours free from employment, the employee is not entitled to time off for voting.

## **7. VACATION**

The following only applies to full-time regular employees. Other categories of employees are entitled to vacation pay equal to 4% of earnings or as defined in the employment agreement. The GM can provide clarification if required.

### **7.1 Paid Vacation Benefit**

Employees shall receive a vacation benefit as follows:

- Two (2) weeks (ten [10] working days) from the beginning of employment (after fulfillment of the probationary period) to three (3) years of employment;
- Three (3) weeks (fifteen [15] working days) from four (4) to six (6) years of employment;
- Four (4) weeks (twenty [20] working days) from seven (7) or more years of employment.

If there are any differences between vacation benefit in this section and the employee's written agreement/contract, the benefit in the agreement/contract shall take priority.

### **7.2 Employment Year**

For purposes of vacation benefit/entitlement, the employment year follows the calendar year from January 1 to December 31. Vacation benefit increment steps (as per 7.1 above) accrue in the calendar year the actual anniversary date of employment is reached.

### **7.3 Carrying Over**

An employee may not carry over unused vacation days from the pool of vacation days allotted by the ESA. This entitlement is as follows:

- Two (2) weeks (ten [10] working days) of vacation per year, after twelve (12) consecutive months of employment; and
- Three (3) weeks (fifteen [15] working days) of vacation per year, after five (5) consecutive years of employment.

Under the ESA, employees must take their minimum annual vacation as time off from work. Employees are therefore not allowed to waive their entitlement to the ESA vacation or be paid out for untaken vacation.

Vacation days provided by the GSS in excess of those allotted under the ESA must be used within twelve (12) months of the year they were earned or they will be forfeited.

Example 1. If an employee has worked for less than a year, they may carry over the ten vacation days provided by the GSS for up to twelve months, as these days are in excess to those provided under the ESA (zero for less than one year of employment).

Example 2. If an employee has worked over seven years at the GSS, they may carry over (for up to twelve months) the five vacation days that are in excess to the fifteen provided under the ESA.

### **7.4 Probationary Period**

Employees may not take vacation during their probationary period.

### **7.5 Separation**

Employees who resign or are terminated will be paid out for any unused vacation entitlement at their current rate of pay. Conversely, vacation days taken but not yet earned will be deducted from

the final pay.

## **7.6 Statutory Holidays**

If a statutory holiday falls within a vacation period, the employee will be paid for the statutory holiday, or be permitted to add an extra day in addition to their vacation period and the day will not be charged against the vacation entitlement. Statutory holiday provisions are further covered under the provisions of the ESA.

The GSS observes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Victoria Day
- Labour Day
- Christmas Day
- Good Friday
- Canada Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Family Day
- Easter Monday
- British Columbia Day
- Remembrance Day

Employees required to work on a Statutory Holiday will be paid at two and a half times (2.5) their regular wage for all hours worked. Alternately, the employee may choose to be paid at time and a half (1.5) and to take a day off with pay at a mutually agreed upon later date.

## **8. PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

### ***8.1 Annual Performance Review***

Employees may expect two performance reviews per annum. The schedule and format for the annual reviews will be determined by the GM after consideration of the input provided by the employee. The performance review is conducted by the GM, who then reports to HR. HR is responsible for reporting (in camera) on review processes to Council twice annually, once in February and again in August.

The GM shall seek the employee's input regarding the schedule and format of the annual reviews on the first week of the fiscal year and will inform the staff of performance issues two (2) weeks after this consultation. Salary adjustments will occur under the guidelines set in section 10.1.

### ***8.2 Probationary Review***

New employees should expect a performance review at the mid-point of their probationary period in order to have an opportunity to discuss their work experience to date, seek support or advice with respect to their work responsibilities, and feedback from their supervisor. If either party has concerns, the performance review interview allows for a formal venue to discuss and resolve the issues.

Typically, the probation period is three (3) months. The probationary period applies to all newly hired employees. A similar process is followed for those who are promoted or transferred to a new position (training period; see section 8.3). Circumstances might justify an extension or waiver of the probationary period, but this must be approved by the Hiring Team (see section 4.2 & 4.3) for that position.

### ***8.3 Training Period***

When an employee is promoted or their position is reclassified to a higher level, there will be a training period equivalent to the employee probationary period. At the midpoint of the training period, the employee's performance will be evaluated by the GM who will either confirm the employee in the new position, or if the performance is unsatisfactory they may be returned to their previous position or one of equal classification.



## **9. PROBLEM RESOLUTION**

### ***9.1 Unsatisfactory Performance***

The GSS aims to have an open working environment. It is recognized that from time to time there may be dissatisfaction or perceived inequities in the workplace and all employees are encouraged to discuss these with their Supervisor. Unresolved situations should be brought to the attention of the GM.

It is expected that all employees will perform their duties in a manner that meets the professional expectations of the GSS and their Supervisor, as outlined in their contract. If their performance is not satisfactory, the reasons for the dissatisfaction will be discussed.

If the performance problem continues or a significant incident occurs, the employee may be subject to corrective discipline. The disciplinary process may include any combination of verbal or written warnings, with serious offenses handled through probation, suspension, or termination of employment.

### ***9.2 Discipline***

Discipline is a responsibility of the GM and will be carried out at his/her discretion.

### ***9.3 Separation***

Termination of any permanent employee is a serious step and must have the approval of the GM and HR. If the GM and HR approve the termination (passed by majority of the committee), it must be brought to Council for an in camera discussion. Prior communications of this step will be limited to the President of the GSS due to the sensitive nature of the situation.

#### **9.3.1 Exit Interview**

In order to assist the GSS in the process of continuous improvement of our working environment, employees who voluntarily leave the GSS may be asked to fill out an exit interview form to be submitted to their Supervisor or Manager.

#### **9.3.2 Final Payment**

Prior to receiving their final cheque, the employee must return all company property including but not limited to keys, parking passes, and pay any monies owed to the GSS.

#### **9.3.4 GSS Property**

All records, files, data, resource material, supplies or equipment made by or acquired by an employee within the scope of their employment with GSS shall be and remain the property of the GSS and may not be removed without the permission of the GM. Employees will return all equipment, including keys, to the GSS upon termination of their employment.

#### **9.3.5 Terminations**

Termination of employment may result if there is a failure on the part of the employee to improve their performance, there is an understanding that the employee is not capable of improvement, or if there is a serious breach of commonly accepted ethical behaviour or law. Termination may also occur when there is a position redundancy or a decrease in revenue. Notice and severance conditions will vary with each situation, but broadly fall under one of the following categories:

- No notice or severance

- For employees who are terminated for Just Cause, no severance will be considered.
- Reasonable notice
  - For employees who have been terminated for lack of work or for reasons other than Just Cause, the GSS will provide reasonable notice and severance pay. The amount will vary depending on these circumstances but will always be equal to or above the entitled amount prescribed by the ESA.
- Collective Agreement

For employees covered under the terms of a Collective Agreement, notice and/or severance will be in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement.

## 10. SALARIES

It is the intent of the GSS that all employees receive equitable compensation. Every effort will be made to ensure that position responsibilities are recognized in comparison with other positions within the GSS while also competitive with industry standards for similar positions in similar organizations. Employees will receive their pay on a semi-monthly basis (7<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of each month, for the pay periods of 1<sup>st</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>, respectively) either through direct deposit or by cheque. If the pay date occurs on a weekend or holiday, the pay will be issued ahead of the pay date except for the last pay period of the calendar year (Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>), when the pay date is Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> (there is no payment on Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> of the next year).

### 10.1 Process for Salary Increases (Full Time Employees)

1. HF budgets for a maximum 3% increase in salary per position each year. When finances are constrained, the salary increase for any given year may be set to 0%
2. At the anniversary of employment, and following the performance review procedure (as described in Section 8), the GM may propose a salary increase to HR. All salary increases must be approved by HR. The salary increase will reflect the outcome of the performance review of the employee, within budgetary restrictions.
3. Any salary increase will abide by the salary terms defined in the contract for each position.

### 10.2 Process for Determining Salary (All Part-Time Employees)

Salaries for all part-time employees will be set based on the tasks performed, as described by the following Tier system:

Tier	Description	Example Positions
1	Involves routine tasks of limited complexity, with any necessary training provided on-the-job; the employee is only required to exercise limited judgement and make infrequent low impact decisions.	Event Production Assistant (EPA)
2	Involves office or library support tasks such as entering data, keeping records, or assisting with creating reports.	-
3	Involves performing routine tasks of moderate complexity which fall within well-defined guidelines but typically require previous experience, exercising initiative, and some judgment, such as performing literature searches, student service and outreach activities, or assisting in marketing or website maintenance.	Online Communication Assistant, Peer Support Specialist, Advocacy Coordinator.
4	Involves duties that require extensive knowledge of a discipline, such as statistical analysis, writing reports and interviewing, or coordinating communications strategies. Can exercise judgment and make decisions with little guidance.	Policy Assistant, Digital Communications Coordinator, Survey Coordinator

HR shall revise the base hourly wages for each tier every month of August in consultation with HF and considering the rates of the Work Learn program. To maintain internal equity of compensation in the organization, wages for positions within each tier should be equal. The new rates shall become effective September 1<sup>st</sup>.

The base hourly wage is subject to bonuses as determined by HR.

## **11. TRAVEL EXPENSES**

Employees may incur and be reimbursed for justifiable travel expenses while involved in GSS business. Expense claims require the original receipts and must be submitted within sixty (60) days of the occurrence of the expense. The use of credit card statements should be avoided except as a supplement to the original receipt. The intention is that no employee should pay out of pocket through the normal course of conducting business on behalf of the GSS. Every effort should be made by the employee not to incur undue expenses on the GSS.

### ***11.1 Car Mileage***

Mileage claims should be submitted as an expense and approved by the General Manager. Employees are expected to car pool when possible. Employees should record the mileage from the regular workplace to the destination, unless their residence is closer. Employees who use their own vehicle for approved GSS business will be reimbursed per kilometer travelled at the current rate. The current rate may be obtained from the GSS Administration Office.

When trips are made from to and from the destination during the day, 100% of the mileage should be claimed. When trips are made on the way to the GSS or on the way home from the GSS, to a destination that causes the person to go out of their way, only the mileage of the detour should be claimed. When the destination for the day that is the equivalent of going to the office or less, no claim should be made.

### ***11.2 Out of Town Air Fares and Accommodation***

If an employee must fly out of town and/or requires accommodation out of town for the purpose of GSS business, bookings and arrangements will be handled at the discretion of the GSS Executives.

### ***11.3 Out of Town Meals***

Up to \$60 (CAD), or \$60 (USD) in the States, per day may be claimed for meal expenses. Receipts should be submitted with the expense sheet, and must agree with the date and time of departure and return. If meals are included in event/travel plans, reimbursement for meals may not be allowed. Liquor is not an allowable expense.

### ***11.4 Tipping***

Tipping is appropriate where it is customary. Tipping expenses more than 18% will not be covered by the GSS.

### ***11.5 Out of Town Long Distance Calls***

Employees are expected to use a phone card.

### ***11.6 Out of Town Ground Transportation***

Employees are expected to utilize the most economical method of ground transportation. If a rental car is the most appropriate option, employees should use the following guidelines:

- Minimize cost by researching rates of available rental companies and car models
- The rental should include unlimited mileage (the GSS does not pay for rental car mileage)

### ***11.7 Parking Fees***

When attending meetings on behalf of the GSS, or staying at hotels with pay parking, parking fees will be reimbursed by the GSS up to \$15 per day. Employees are expected to research and utilize the most economical parking available. Valet parking services are not permitted.

### ***11.8 Traffic Fines***

GSS does not endorse speeding, illegal parking, or other traffic infractions. Any tickets, violations or fines received during the course of GSS business are solely the responsibility of the employee.

### ***11.9 Conferences***

Conference budgets should be approved by the GSS Executive, with prior consultation of the GM.

## 12. COURSE FEE SUBSIDY

The GSS encourages its employees to pursue additional training or higher levels of education that will enhance their ability to perform their current jobs and/or prepare them for positions of greater responsibility.

### **Full-time employees:**

Upon successful completion of an approved course, the GSS will reimburse the employee for up to 100% of the cost of tuition, course related texts, and examination fees (receipts required). It will be outlined in individual contracts as to the total amount an employee can claim per period. The total amount will be defined by HF. Please note that reimbursement does not apply to equipment, student fees, thesis filing fees, publication costs, supplemental courses/examinations, and graduation fees. The tuition subsidy is provided in recognition of the fact that additional training will benefit both the employee and the GSS; therefore, if the employee resigns within one (1) year of completion of the subsidized course, they must reimburse the GSS for part of the tuition subsidy. The amount of the reimbursement will depend on when the employee resigns within the year after completion of the course. For example, if the employee resigns eight (8) months (or two thirds of a year) after completion of the course, they must reimburse the GSS for one third (1/3) of the cost. If the employee resigns three months (or one quarter of a year) after completion of the course, they must reimburse the GSS for three quarters (3/4) of the cost.

### **Part-time and Work Learn employees:**

Work Learn students and part-time staff members who have worked for GSS after April 2022 are eligible to apply for the Professional Development Fund. The amount of funding available to an employee is dependent on their employee contract length and will be converted correspondingly, and each individual can get up to \$200 within a fiscal year. Please note that reimbursement does not apply to equipment, student fees, thesis filing fees, publication costs, supplemental courses/examinations, and graduation fees. The amount of funding available will be based on a percentage of accumulated work months. The funding available each fiscal year cannot carry over to future years.

### **Application process:**

Employees who meet the eligibility criteria may apply for the Professional Development Fund by submitting an application to their direct supervisor or General Manager. The application should include the details of the professional development activity engaged which should be related to the person's position. The direct supervisor or General manager should review the application and provide a recommendation to the HR Committee for approval. The HR Committee will review the application and provide a final decision within two weeks of receipt. Written approval must be given by the HR on the recommendation of the direct supervisor or GM prior to registration and the course fee receipts must be submitted within three (3) months of completion to qualify for the subsidy.

## **13. MISCELLANEOUS**

### ***13.1 Confidentiality***

All business and personnel matters of the GSS shall be held in confidence by all employees. All GSS personnel and Executives need to sign a Confidentiality Agreement. The GSS is committed to the confidentiality of personal information in compliance with the B.C. Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA).

### ***13.2 Employee Records***

All personnel records are confidential and will be handled in a secure manner. Employees have the right to review their personal file within a reasonable period of their request. Information from an employee's personal file will not be provided to any third party unless prior written approval is received from the employee. Personal information will only be used for the purposes of the employment relationship and any other use will not be permitted without expressed prior consent of the employee.

### ***13.3 Office Security***

Although the building is secured, the premises are also open to the public for extended hours and the GSS cannot be held responsible for the security of employees' personal belongings. Employees are encouraged to keep personal effects in a locked secure location.

### ***13.4 Picket Lines***

There will be no retribution for employees who fail to report to work because they will not cross a picket line, however the employee must advise the GM of their decision. Note that this time will be considered leave without pay, but the employee may charge this time against their vacation entitlement if they so choose.

### ***13.5 Media***

#### **13.5.1 General Protocol**

The GSS President is the spokesperson for the GSS. The President represents the Society and is responsible for accurate and consistent messaging. The GSS President is the only person who will speak to the media unless the President designates a VP to act as the spokesperson on a specific issue.

The Communications and Marketing Director works with the President and is responsible for all media inquiries, interview requests, coordination of interview times and locations, supervising the media while on site, as well as follow-up with the media once an interview has been granted. Every media request shall be vetted through the GSS President and the Communications and Marketing Director.

If an employee is contacted by the media, the employee should inform the media that the GSS President is the spokesperson for the Society. The employee should ask for the reporter's deadline and interview questions, then forward the information to the GSS President ([president@gss.ubc.ca](mailto:president@gss.ubc.ca)) as well as the Communications and Marketing Director ([communications@gss.ubc.ca](mailto:communications@gss.ubc.ca)). Note: there is no such thing as an "off-the-record" conversation. Once you speak to a reporter, you are being interviewed.

## **13.6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

All employees are expected to avoid situations that would result in, or give the appearance of, a conflict between their personal interests and the interests of the GSS. A conflict exists where personal gain could be affected by virtue of the employee's knowledge or position. Employees should disclose details of potential conflict situations to their Supervisor or the GM.

Employees must not seek or use privileged/confidential GSS information for any purpose that is not related to work responsibilities.

### **13.6.1 Gifts and Other Complimentary Items**

Employees shall not accept any gift or hospitality of material value (i.e. services free of charge) offered to them by suppliers, manufacturers, agents or any other party by virtue of the employee's position within the GSS. Employees may exchange token gifts as part of business protocol, or the normal exchange of gifts between friends. Gifts may be accepted on behalf of the GSS if those gifts are to be used as a prize where all employees (including the one accepting the gift) would be eligible to win.

When gifts or gratuities outside those permissible are received, the employee must declare such to their Supervisor or the GM at the earliest opportunity. The Supervisor or the GM will determine the appropriate response, which could mean return or other disposition of the gift. If there is any ambiguity, refer the situation to the GM.

### **13.6.2 Outside Employment**

Employees may enter another employment relationship (paid or unpaid) and/or manage a business provided that:

- a. It does not interfere with their duties as a GSS employee;
- b. It does not bring the GSS into disrepute;
- c. The employee does not derive an advantage from their GSS employment;
- d. It is not conducted or performed in a way that appears to be an official act or to represent GSS policy or opinion;
- e. It does not involve the use of GSS premises, services, equipment, information, or supplies to which they have access by virtue of their GSS employment;

*Note: Employees shall notify their Supervisor or the GM of other employment to ensure that there is neither apparent nor perceived conflict of interest as a result of outside employment.*



## **14. PERSONAL CONDUCT**

The GSS expects all employees to display good judgment, diplomacy, and courtesy when interacting with co-workers, students, suppliers, and the public. We trust that employees will govern themselves accordingly with respect to personal presentation.

### **14.1 Service Standards**

The GSS is committed to providing excellent service to all those we serve and interact with. This is the responsibility of all GSS employees. GSS employees are expected to be professional, approachable, and friendly in all communications with UBC students, faculty, staff, guests, and other GSS employees.

### **14.2 Absence and Lateness Reporting**

In consideration of their fellow employees and the GSS, it is the employee's responsibility to contact their manager and any relevant colleagues as soon as possible if they are unable to report to work or if they will be late.

### **14.3 Severe Weather**

The GSC will remain open and maintain regular business hours during severe weather, even if classes are cancelled, unless there is a power outage or the University declares the entire campus closed (see 14.4). If it is impossible for an employee to make it in to work, they may utilize a vacation day, flextime, personal leave, or leave without pay, *in lieu* of working; however they must notify their Supervisor or GM by telephone or email.

In cases where severe weather starts during the day and their department remains open, employees may request to leave early. Permission to leave is at the GM's discretion. The time may be charged against flextime, vacation, personal leave, or leave without pay.

### **14.4 Power Outages and Closed Campus**

In the event of a power outage or if the University declares the entire campus closed, the GSC will not be opened and employees are not expected to come to work. As soon as management is aware of such a condition, an email will be sent out to all employees. The timing of these messages is dependent on when the information is received. Employees may charge the time against flextime, vacation, personal leave, or leave without pay.

### **14.5 Telephone Use**

Personal telephone calls shall be limited to break times only and should not be accepted or placed during paid working hours.

### **14.6 Smoking Policy**

Smoking is not permitted in the GSC or within 6 meters of entrances, doors, open windows or air intakes. All cigarettes should be properly disposed of.

## **15. RESPONSIBLE USE OF COMPUTERS**

When using GSS computers, all GSS employees are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with UBC's policy for appropriate use.

### ***15.2 Computer Software***

There shall not be unauthorized duplication or downloading of copyrighted software. All software installed on the GSS's computers must be approved by the Systems Administrator.

No personal use software, including personally developed programming, is to be installed on any GSS computer without the knowledge and approval of the Systems Administrator.

Employees, appointees, and elected officials shall not knowingly install, download, or forward a virus, spyware, malware or malicious code for any purpose.

Other prohibited activities include but are not limited to:

- a) Logging into an e-mail address that the person is not expressly authorized to access;
- b) Falsifying header information or user identification information, or otherwise impersonating another user;
- c) Using the GSS e-mail system to create or distribute any disruptive or offensive material, including illegal, abusive, indecent, defamatory, obscene or menacing materials;
- d) Using the GSS e-mail system in breach of confidence, copyright or privacy rights;
- e) Initiating or forwarding chain letters, pyramid schemes, hoaxes, joke emails, unsolicited mail, or emails containing malicious code.

Note: Virus warning emails should be approved by the Systems Administrator before sending.

### ***15.3 Computer Hardware***

The acquisition of any computer hardware must be processed through the GSS Systems Administrator to ensure compatibility with our system. Equipment not owned by the GSS is not to be installed on the network without the express permission of the Society's IT Department.

Any remote access to GSS IT resources must be approved by the GSS Systems Administrator.

### ***15.4 Electronic Communication***

Employees and elected officials shall exercise caution in the wording and content of their e-mail messages because such messages can have the same effect and permanence as messages on paper. Employees and elected officials shall make every effort to ensure that their own personal reputations and the reputation of the GSS are not compromised through careless or inappropriate statements.

Although permitted by law, the GSS shall not monitor the e-mail or files of employees or elected officials without their knowledge, except in very unusual circumstances including, but are not limited to: suspected criminal activity, excessive attachment size or server space, virus infection,

*etc.*

Any incoming or outgoing e-mail message which is suspected of containing a virus or malicious attachment, over-size attachment or which could be detrimental to the system in some fashion may be isolated for inspection. The message will be released by the Systems Administrator to the intended recipient only after it is determined to be risk free to both the GSS's computer system and related external systems. To minimize the exposure of the computer system to viruses and to protect the integrity and stability of the system, employees, appointees, and elected officials shall exercise caution when opening attachments from unknown or unexpected sources.

# 16. DISCRIMINATION AND HARRASSMENT

## 16.1 Introduction

- I. Discrimination means unfair or differential treatment of an individual or group, whether intentional or unintentional, on the basis of one or more prohibited grounds. These grounds include but are not limited to those contained in the B.C. Human Rights Code and are: race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, religion, union membership, union activities, political activities, age, conviction of a criminal or summary conviction offence that is unrelated to the employment or the intended employment of that person.
  
- II. Harassment is defined as any physical, visual or verbal conduct, whether intended or unintended, that is either unsolicited or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, which denies individual dignity and/or respect based upon any of the prohibited grounds enumerated above. It is any behaviour by any person in the workplace that is directed at, or is offensive to, an employee or endangers an employee, undermines the performance of that job, or threatens the economic livelihood of the employee. Unwanted or unwelcome in this context means any action which the harasser knows or ought reasonably to know is not desired by the victim of the harassment. It may be one incident or a series of incidents depending upon the context. It can happen on or off campus and during working and meeting hours or not.
  - a. Harassment may also include comments or conduct which create a hostile, intimidating or offensive environment; it may be directed at specific individuals or groups.
  - b. Workplace harassment includes personal and sexual harassment.
  - c. Examples of harassment include but are not limited to:
    - i. Threats, made or perceived, based on any of the prohibited grounds enumerated in this policy;
    - ii. Written or verbal communication, or gestures of a derogatory nature (e.g. name-calling, slurs, taunting pictures or posters, graffiti) that relate to any of the prohibited grounds enumerated in this policy;
    - iii. Application of stereotypes or generalization based on any of the prohibited grounds enumerated in this policy.
  
- I. Sexual Harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct, which is sexual in nature, that may detrimentally affect the work environment or lead to adverse job-related consequences for the victim of the harassment. The determination as to what constitutes sexual harassment is to be viewed from the perspective of the complainant and not the intention of the alleged harasser. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:
  - Remarks, jokes, innuendoes, or other comments regarding someone's body, appearance, physical or sexual characteristics or clothing, leering, ogling or other gestures;
  - Displaying sexually offensive or derogatory pictures, cartoons or other material;
  - Persistent unwelcome invitations or requests
  - Unwelcome questions or sharing of information regarding a person's sexuality, sexual activity or sexual orientation;
  - Conduct or comments intended to or having the effect of, creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance;

- When submission to such conduct is made (either explicitly or implicitly) a term or condition of an individual's employment or status at the GSS;
  - When submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting that individual.
- II. Personal Harassment is harassment, workplace bullying or discrimination based upon personal characteristics or circumstances that are unrelated to a person's ability to do the job.

## ***16.2 Confidentiality***

All parties involved in a harassment complaint must maintain confidentiality of all information relating to the complaint.

- I. All information regarding a complaint is to be treated in confidence. Information that must be shared will only be disclosed on a need to know basis.
- II. Any allegation or complaint of discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment will be considered personal information supplied in confidence pursuant to the relevant section of the Personal Protection and Privacy Act. The Act entitles a complainant to confidentiality of both their name and the substance of the complaint. The name of the complainant or the circumstances of the complaint will not be disclosed to any person except where disclosure is necessary for the purpose of investigating the complaint.
- III. The substance of investigative reports and the substance of meetings held by those in authority to a decision on what to do about a complaint, regardless of whether it is substantiated, will be protected from disclosure to third parties in accordance with the Act.

## ***16.3 Prevention and procedure for dealing with complaints***

The GSS and its committees, ad hoc committees and task forces provide both informal and formal means for submitting and responding to harassment complaints. Informal complaints are considered to be as serious as formal complaints.

This policy outlines a procedure for dealing with complaints. Certain officers and employees of the Society are named in this process, however it is recognized that those named people could be involved in a complaint, or unavailable. Should they be involved in the complaint, or be unavailable, the complainant shall bring their concern to next person in the chain of command.

For example, should the General Manager be involved in the complaint, the complainant shall take their concern to the President. Should the GSS President or a Committee Chair be involved in the complaint, the complainant shall take their concern to another executive member and the Executive Oversight Committee.

### **16.3.1 Prevention and Informal Resolution**

The GM, Supervisors, or GSS Executives are expected to intervene when there are situations involving potential discrimination or harassment and to deal with inappropriate actions of their employees and/or members.

If possible, employees or members should attempt to resolve the conflict between themselves. If the conflict is not resolved, the complaint may be advanced to the next step.

### **16.3.2 Mediation**

With the assistance of HR, the complainant shall have the option to participate in voluntary mediation, up to the point that a formal complaint is initiated.

### **16.3.3 Informal Complaints**

The Supervisor and/or GM shall make reasonable efforts to resolve the conflict in a manner that satisfies all parties within two (2) working days. If the conflict is not resolved satisfactorily at this stage, the complainant may make a written complaint, initiate a formal complaint, or seek mediation, at the complainant's option.

#### **I. Committees**

(a) The members in conflict will make an informal complaint to the Committee Chair or member Executive, (or HR), who will make reasonable efforts to resolve the conflict in a manner that satisfies all parties within two (2) working days. If the conflict is not resolved satisfactorily at this stage, the complainant may make a written complaint, initiate a formal complaint, or seek mediation, at the complainant's option.

#### **II. Employees**

(b) The employees in conflict may make an informal complaint to their immediate Supervisor or the GM.

### **16.3.4 Written Complaints**

#### **I. Committees**

(a) Each party shall provide the President with a written summary of the conflict, along with desired outcomes within two (2) working days of the initiation of a written complaint by the complainant. The President or designate shall, within two (2) working days of receiving the complaint, issue a written decision to bring an end to the conflict. If either party is not satisfied with the President or designate at that point, then either party can advance their complaint to the formal process.

#### **II. Employees**

(b) Each party shall provide the GM with a written summary of the conflict, along with desired outcomes within two (2) working days of the initiation of a written complaint by the complainant. The GM shall, within two (2) working days of receiving the complaint, issue a written decision to bring an end to the conflict. If either party is not satisfied with the GM's decision at that point, then the employee(s) can advance their complaint to the formal process.

### **16.3.5 Formal Complaints**

#### **I. Committees**

A Committee member who believes they have a complaint about discrimination and/or harassment under any prohibited ground enumerated in this policy may launch a formal complaint. The member can request that an investigation be initiated by submitting a formal letter to the President or other person designated.

The President or designate, a GSS Executive and HR must be briefed in writing and shall determine whether the allegations on which the complaint is based would fall within the definition of discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment as set out in this policy within seven (7) working days of the receipt of the complainant's formal written submission. If any of the above named are involved in the complaint, their place will be taken by another person by mutual consent of the complainant and the President.

If the President or designate, a GSS Executive and HR find that the allegations would not constitute a violation of this policy, they may decide not to investigate and will inform the complainant of this decision in writing within seven (7) working days of the receipt of the complainant's formal written submission.

The President or designate, a GSS Executive and HR will notify the respondent of the complaint and of the request for an investigation and provide the respondent with a detailed account of the allegations in writing within seven (7) working days of the receipt of the complainant's formal written submission. An individual accused of discrimination or harassment will be entitled to respond in writing to the complaint within seven (7) working days of receiving it and may wish to offer their perspectives regarding the allegations and/or present a proposal for resolution.

The President or designate, a GSS Executive and HR will investigate the complaint and take such steps as may be required to resolve the matter. Following investigation, the complainant and respondent(s) will be advised of the outcome in writing within five (5) working days.

The formal written complaint, respondent's submission, and investigation process, including final notification of the parties in writing shall take no longer than nineteen (19) working days.

No documentation of unsubstantiated discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment will be maintained in GSS files. Proven allegations of discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment, including disciplinary action taken, shall be documented shall be kept by the President.

#### **II. Employees and Volunteers**

An employee who believes that they have a complaint about discrimination and/or harassment under this policy may lodge a formal complaint. The employee can request, to their Supervisor (or other appropriate person) by submitting a formal written submission, that an investigation be initiated.

The Supervisor, GM and/or HR must be briefed in writing and will determine whether the allegations on which the complaint is based would fall within the definition of

discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment as set out in this policy within seven (7) working days of the receipt of the complainant's formal written submission.

If any of the above named are involved in the complaint, their place will be taken by another person, by mutual consent of the complainant and the President.

If, in the opinion of the Supervisor, the President, and the HR Committee, the allegations would not constitute a violation of this policy, they may decide not to investigate and will inform the complainant of this decision in writing within seven (7) working days of the receipt of the complainant's formal written submission.

The Supervisor, the President and HR will notify the respondent of the complaint and of the request for an investigation and provide the respondent with a detailed account of the allegations in writing within seven (7) working days of the receipt of the complainant's formal written submission.

An individual accused of discrimination or harassment will be entitled to respond in writing to the complaint within seven (7) working days of receiving it and may wish to offer their perspectives regarding the allegations and/or present a proposal for resolution.

The President and HR will investigate the complaint and take such steps as may be required to resolve the matter. Following investigation, the complainant and respondent(s) will be advised of the outcome in writing within five (5) working days.

The formal written complaint, respondent's submission, and investigation process, including final notification of the parties in writing shall take no longer than nineteen (19) working days.

No documentation of unsubstantiated discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment will be maintained in individual personnel files. Proven allegations of discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment, including disciplinary action taken, shall be documented and form part of the employee's permanent record, and copies of confirmed complaints shall be kept in the employee's personnel file.

### **III. Appeal**

Employees may appeal to a mediator or an arbitrator.



## **16.4 Penalties and Discipline**

### **I. Committees**

If a Committee member is found to have engaged in harassment under this policy, they may be subject to penalties as determined by the GSS President, the Committee chair, and HR.

### **II. Employees**

If an employee is found guilty of harassment, the following disciplinary actions may be taken as appropriate:

- a. verbal warning,
- b. written warning,
- c. suspension with pay,
- d. suspension without pay for up to ten (10) working days, and/or
- e. termination.

Educational opportunities are offered to employees who are found guilty of harassment.

#### **16.4.1 No Retaliation**

Any interference with the conduct of an investigation, or retaliation against a complainant, respondent or witness, may itself result in penalties and/or disciplinary action, including expulsion from membership to the GSS, or other penalties.

Complaints which are made in bad faith and are vexatious in nature will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the GSS and may result in penalties as described above, including expulsion from the GSS membership, or other penalties as described above.

## **16.5 Education and prevention**

In order to help educate employees and Committee members about their rights and responsibilities with regard to this policy, the GSS will distribute a copy to each Committee and employee within the first month of their employment or involvement with the GSS as part of their orientation. A reference copy will be available during regular business hours at the GSS Administration Office.

The GSS supports and encourages any further initiatives which seek to actively educate and create awareness around the benefits of an environment which is free from discrimination and harassment. All GSS Executive members, Councillors, and staff are responsible for providing an environment free from discrimination and harassment as follows:

- 1) Set a good example by not participating in or ignoring discrimination and harassment.
- 2) Approach employees if discrimination or harassment is suspected. Symptoms of harassment or discrimination may include: reduced productivity, changes in behaviour, rumours, increased sick leave, increased resignations or sudden changes in performance evaluations.
- 3) Discuss the situation with the alleged harasser. This ensures that the person knows the behaviour is offensive and is warned that inappropriate workplace behaviour is unacceptable at the GSS.
- 4) Keep a personal record (date, time, attendees, discussion points) by documenting any discussions involving an occurrence of harassment.
- 5) Seek advice and assistance from a Supervisor, the GM, the President, or HR.
- 6) A complaint is considered resolved when both parties sign documentation which details the outcome and their satisfaction with this outcome.

Nothing in this policy compels anyone to make a complaint, nor does it replace any other legal rights an employee may have, including those protected under the BC Human Rights Code.

GRADUATE  
STUDENT SOCIETY –  
UBC VANCOUVER

PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

Please sign and date this form as acknowledgment that you have read and understand the Personnel Policies and Procedures of the GSS. This form must be signed and returned to your Manager prior to commencing employment with the GSS and will be retained in your personnel file.

I \_\_\_\_\_ (print) acknowledge that I have read and understand the GSS Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook. I agree to abide by the policies outlined.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

