The meeting was called meeting to order at 5:00 pm with Reed in the Chair.

1. Agenda, Minutes and Exec Reports (Consent Agenda)

Consent to Agenda, Minutes and Exec Reports
With item 3 struck from agenda

Noted Chappel not circulated Roberts’s Rules to the members.

Chappel is directed to circulate a summary of Robert’s Rules this month.

CARRIED

(see attached)
2. Departmental reports

**Mechanical Engineering:** Sakaki reports Grad ReMix 2 was partly sponsored by GSS and Mech Eng—250 grad students and their guests attended!

**History in Art:** Anderson reports there is a conference in January

**Philosophy:** Shiota reports there is hiring ongoing but as yet the department has not invited student be involved. There is a colloquium every Friday, many are interdisciplinary.

**Anthropology:** Perkin reports 40 students, including 2 PhD students. Anthropology is trying to hire someone to be Dept Chair—this is ongoing since last year.

**Music:** Cumming reports there are 8 new grad students. Rehearsal space is key issue. There is a temporary solution for some space.

**French:** Guay reports students are preparing colloquium for Spring.

**Curriculum and Instruction:** Hsu notes it is her first meeting. Shi reports there are 15 new grad students in the department. This term AGES held activities: two workshop—one for how to write proposal for SSHRC, how to write a proposal for CSSE conference (which is the field’s largest conference in Canada).

**Dispute Resolution:** Cartwright reports there are two Christmas parties: one with grad students only, one with faculty. Workshops are coming up. The department soccer team won a lot!

**Greek and Roman Studies:** Budd reports there are occasional speakers. Check out website!

**Law:** Qian reports the students are going through hell to finish papers, however they also made time for three birthday parties! Students in the department have a tradition to get together once per week—very good chat, beer, fun! All first years and some 2nd and 3rd signed letter regarding fellowship issues. Students also want to put on a public defence and legal writing and teaching workshop. There will be a colloquium in Fraser 152 this Friday in corporate rights and the constitution.

**Physics and Astronomy:** Baker reports the department review to compare to national standards, student rep and input was included in consult. Weekly colloquia, this week 2:30. check website.

**Computer Science:** Shekenfelder reports coffee houses are held once per month, Christmas includes faculty. New chair search on. Giving talks. Program to teach computing to citizens.
Environmental Studies: Hilperts reports the department is in a hiring process. As this is the first year with the official grad program, issues with TA allotment, and general confusion with new system, are coming up and needing to be resolved. Every other Wednesday at noon the department has “notes from the field” which feature interesting talks and pictures from fieldwork. This is hosted in Sedgewick. The department’s new website is to be up soon.

Hispanic and Italian Studies: Shewey had nothing to report.

Chemistry: Chui reports Chemistry had six new grad students for a total of 72 in September! They are now down to 70 as two graduated. The department hosts a poster session where every grad student submits a poster showing yearly progress. Regular seminar sessions by visiting faculty are continuing. As a new feature, students meet after the talk and discuss how the talk went—this is a learning opportunity for students in preparing their own talks. Chemistry has a new chair in January… who will be the old chair! One professor is retiring—the search for a replacement is on.

Psychology: Hager reports psychology is looking to hire a Neuro-psychologist. The department is currently being visited for assessment of accreditation. Hager notes she heard amazing feedback on Grad Re/mix!!! Lots of feedback asking for more! Wanting more contact to send notice about social events inter departmentally.

Chappel suggested she and Hager talk about a proposal from last year to start a social club for grad students.

Earth and Ocean Sciences: Avis reports communications in the department is frustrating as students are receiving every email notice three times—once from each secretary. He asked for suggestions from other departments on what the students could propose as an alternative method of ensuring notices are circulated. The department hosts weekly seminars Tuesdays at 3:30 and they are of interest for students in chemistry, environmental studies, geology as they are interdisciplinary.

Maters of Public Admin: Van Dyk reports there are 30 students and it is a professional program so a bit different. Students go out 2-4 times a week together socially. Access to director of the program is very good.

Child and Youth Care: Zadorozniak reports applying for fellowships is an issue in the department. Of 30 first year MA students, only three are eligible for SSHIRC due to lack of supervisor. On Oct 29, the department grad advisor held a formal meeting, (with muffins and coffee) and discussed supervisor relationships, course loads. This year almost every student chose to take 3 courses in first semester, and workload is overwhelming. The department is trying to incorporate reading across courses, avoiding repeating the same articles/similar content. Nov 16 international conference on ECE and everyone in program attended.

Pacific and Asian Studies: Zhou reports the main issue in the department is they have a very small room housing many students (3-4 metres square!). There are not enough chairs for everyone. Everyone struggling with thesis deadlines at the moment so there are no
department activities yet. Students did enjoy Grad Remix! Pacific and Asian Studies is trying to hire new professor and candidate panels are ongoing.

CUPE 4163: Flower reports CUPE has an active stewards council with reps from many departments. The office space issue, which affects TAs in particular, is being discussed. CUPE is interested in a joint petition with the GSS. CUPE has special meeting tomorrow night at 4 pm for all the TAs to decide how to donate surplus fund and she encouraged everyone to attend.

Georaphy: Wood reports Geography’s chair search is at the beginning phase, and there is a student representative on the committee. The grad students decided to have a practice defence for each person as there are many people defending this year. So far one practice defence is complete and it went well. The student presents their data and then there is a round of feedback from the grad students attending. They tell the student what they thought went well, possible items to add. The PhD student who was the first to do the practice defence felt it really helped him to prepare.

Sociology: Roddick reports Sociology’s monthly colloquium was reinitiated, and received a GSS department grant. Two students speak per session. Students are trying to set up a department caucus and are interested in ideas from other departments with a graduate student caucus. Job talks for short term hiring are ongoing. The department recently approved initiating the design phase of an MSc program. Roddick notes she is also a member of World University Services Canada (WUSC) which is actively recruiting grad students to support the student refugee program. She asks reps to watch for notices in the bulletin.

Visual Arts: Cake reports the department curriculum review for undergrad program is the main focus for the department right now. Grad reps may be interested to note that undergraduate visual arts curriculum is going interdisciplinary—so they are looking for other profs and grad students into their fourth year courses. In the Spring this committee is meeting every week as such graduate students program is not the focus of the faculty at the moment. Cake comments this is not necessarily a huge deal as the program is independent (studio program).

Visual arts students have a show in January based on the book 1984. Cake notes there is always a show in the visual arts department so if you need art or oddness come to visual arts dept there is always something there.

Reed thanked the members for their reports.

3. Internal Issues
   a. Committees established by AGM
      Reed reported the members call for creation of committees to look at GSS room bookings policy and IQ policy and meetings have been set for both.

      Chappel reported the first meeting of each committee is December 4 at 2pm (IQ policy) and 3pm (room bookings policy) and encouraged students interested in these policies to attend.
4. External Issues
   a. Grad rep departmental issues report

REF DOC: Summary of feedback from grad reps on key questions

Reed referred to written reports and notes space and funding are key issues raised in the report back. Funding is also a problem for many departments. Seems there are three kinds of funding problems—not enough funding for the program, barriers to external funding, and funding distribution administration (such as the fellowships). Reed asked for more information on departments where students were unable to apply for external funding.

Discussion on barriers to external funding:
Van Dyke reports Public Administration students are not able to apply as the program is not considered a research degree.

Cummings reports Musicologists are the only Music grad students eligible for SHHRC because of type of discipline. She notes students are feeling strain of funding as the maximum funding is only $6800 per year. She also notes that in Music there are no summer course offerings as professors are professional musicians and away working for summer, but grad students are paying summer tuition.

Reed asked if other departments faced similar problems in summer.

Availability of summer courses
Cake reports Visual Arts also has this issue in the summer—the profs take the summer to work on their own projects, so in the summer students are paying to do their own work on their own.

Shiota notes that in Philosophy there are no grad courses available ever.

Hager reports there are no summer classes is Psychology, students work directly with the supervisor, sometimes by email.

Zadorozniak notes students in Child and Youth Care also pay five semesters don’t know why. So have to pay $350 associated with the practicum, but not sure why??? Also if you finish your MA you still pay.

Reed notes there are many programs where there is 16 months of program and then two four month programs where you pay for no activities.

Cake reports that in Visual Arts they are reviewing the department’s summer semester structure – she suggested other departments may also be looking at this.

Shewey reports Hispanic and Italian studies offered no classes offered in summer. Supposedly working on your thesis—have contact with your professor.

Wood reports Geography has no summer classes in Physical geography. She notes students are conducting field work.
Zhou reports Pacific and Asian Studies has no summer grad classes.

Kolthammer notes it’s generally true there are no grad classes in summer… but the problem arises when there is no supervision.

Van Dyk noted GRC should not assume the grad program cost would change if a shift was made in summer tuition. He notes if it costs $8,000 total it is better for the student generally to have the amount spread throughout the program… No matter what happens total tuition burden won’t be lowered.

Reed asked about the situation for one year programs.

Guay said she will check and report back on number of semesters paid for in French.

It was suggested courses in the summer could provide flexibility for students.

Reed asked whether there was opposition to the GSS advocating to ensure summer courses.

Budd noted there were enough programs where insisting on summer courses wouldn’t work as there are practica and fieldwork, so some of those people may balk at the idea.

Wood asked why students the same fees while in the field.

Kolthammer noted that generally an MA requires 5 semesters residence.

Shewey noted should would appreciated the flexibility of summer classes, especially as students who are not taking the thesis option are taking more courses, so having the session available would be better.

Roddick asked whether other programs have reading courses you can take with a professor and notes this works well in Sociology.

Reed reports he took a reading course but had no professor to read with!

Qian reported Law have required four classes in first two terms. In summer students are not allowed to take classes—it meant to be time for your thesis. Qian notes his strong belief fees should be lower during this time. Students are allowed to extend grad study maximum for four years, yet tuition is all the same. There is not much flexibility in this program.

Chui asked whether this is a Law department rule upon enrolment.

Qian reported it is a department policy.

Chui reported Chemistry does not have this rule.
Reed is directed to take this information to the GSS Exec and will seek promotion of on course offerings in the summer where relevant and supervisor residency requirements.

**b. Supervisory Committee size change**

  i. **What's happening? Report back from Faculty of Grad Studies mtg Nov 22.**

Reed reported he was unable to attend Nov 22’s Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) meeting, but had attended the Graduate Executive Committee meeting a few days earlier where the wording was put forward to FGS. He noted it seemed the proposal came out of nowhere after a meeting of the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies (CAGS). He has heard it suggested the proposal is similar to other universities. Dean Devor brought a proposal to GEC to reduce doctoral committee from 4 to 3 members and MA committee with thesis from 3 to 2 people with a 3 person examination. This takes effect for next calendar year. Anyone currently a student can stick by the rules of the calendar when they enrolled. All incoming students have a shrunken committee size.

It was asked whether future students are allowed to have larger committees.

Reed noted the change was to the minimum, but it is up to the department to recommend larger and FGS approves the committee.

Zadorozniak reported a few Child and Youth Care students wrote letters but could not be at the meeting. She asked who implements the policy and at what level.

Reed reported changes are to minimums, so departments may keep sizes larger. He notes his concern that down the line there will be pressure to reduce sizes to “increase supervisory capacity”

Shenkenfelder reported he attended the FGS meeting. He reported there was a change to MA and PhD Supervisory committee sizes and PhD defence changes were tabled, not even debated this calendar year. The proposal to change the PhD defence drew enormous discussion, and Shenkenfelder reports his impression was there is a fair amount of concern at the department level. He notes the proposal still has to pass the Senate Calendar Committee and Senate to be ratified.

Reed asked the members for direction to the executive on next steps on the examination committee size. Reed noted the idea was really contentious because in a five member committee where two members are external to the project, if an external and one other person want to fail a thesis the best you can get is an adjournment so there is a real risk of people failing.

Shenkenfelder noted that one point raised in the FGS meeting was there are departments where there is discord and there could be problems for students because of this discord.

Hilperts notes that one concern down the line having a two person committee could affect quality of advisement especially for interdisciplinary departments.
Kolthammer stated one concern is that down the line the Dean of Graduate Studies will have the power to force departments to spread supervision more thinly.

**MOTION 2007-11-27 GRC: 02  M Kolthammer/**
The GSS Executive is directed to oppose changes to supervisory committee sizes and draft language on the issue.

**FAILED (no seconder)**

Cartwright reported changes were met with a sigh of relief as our faculty would be better able to provide supervisory committees for students.

Shenkenfelder noted the university’s agenda is to increase enrolment and this is in line with that proposal.

Budd suggested the solution be to increase the number of supervisors.

Cake noted more people on the committee is better because more perspectives are helpful to the student.

Chappel noted supervisor problems are sometimes alleviated by support from other members of the committee.

Reed reports Dean Devor also asked for support for a proposal on mandatory assignment of supervisor, which could lead to problem of student working with supervisor with whom they may disagree. In a committee of two this is also closing avenues for students to resolve disputes.

Roddick notes Sociology’s use of adjunct faculty makes it hard to include the right number of professors in this proposal.

Reed noted that if a student is assigned a supervisor, they are then responsible to find a new supervisor if necessary and this removes the onus from the department.

Zadorozniak notes that currently students put together proposal, participate in conference calls, and have a sense whether there is someone of interest to you in the department.

**MOTION 2007-11-27 GRC: 03  M/S Budd/Zadorozniak**
The GSS Executive is directed to draft language opposing changes to size of supervisor committees.

Guay noted this issue differs by department. In French it is good. But for others two is what they need.

Budd motivated on the motion, stating the key issue is reduction of the minimum. For those departments who don't want smaller committees, there is concern this policy has a potential to be abused in the future, could force smaller supervisor committees.
Van Dyk spoke against motion and noted the university allowing smaller minimum would help smaller programs. He stated it is fear mongering to say there will be “force” from FGS in future.

Zadorozniak proposed accounting for specific cases in a letter.

Wood spoke in favour of the motion, stating it is an issue of administrative concern vs. quality. Wood noted she likes her large committee because she feels she is getting many perspectives and testing how her research will be received. It is beneficial for research quality.

Shewey asked for clarification on why other members oppose the motion.

Cartwright spoke against the motion noting she is currently looking outside the school for a committee.

Shewey noted that every department should not drop to that level through a policy change.

Kolthammer stated it was important to ensure the decisions about policy are not motivated by business concerns. He stated it is the job of the GSS to demand as much as we can get for grad students.

Zadorozniak asked whether a Masters student applying to do a PhD would have a less valued application due to the size of their committee being small.

Collins stated she doesn’t think the GSS should oppose something that will help the Dispute Resolution students. She suggested stating our cautions in a letter.

Wood noted that in Geography getting committee members who are not at UVIC is not a real barrier—they can easily obtain adjunct status.

Kolthammer called question.

15 in favour 6 opposed

CARRIED

Flower suggests create language that allows department opt outs.

Van Dyk suggested this would still allow smaller minimum.

Budd suggested this is different than saying we accept the proposal whole heartedly.

Chappel suggested the GSS should advocate proper resource for Dispute Resolution, not accepting a lower standard for everyone.

It was suggested that if departments have ability to opt out and reduce the committee size there will be pressure to have lower committee sizes as it saves money.
Roddick asked the executive to circulate a draft so reps can ask students in their departments what they think.

The Executive is directed to circulate the draft letter on committee size policy changes to grad reps for discussion in departments before submitting it.

c. Senate approved diplomas and certificates at grad level

REF DOC: Director of Services Report to Grad Council about Senate Committee on Planning meeting on November 7

Reed referred to written submission from Sistili. He noted establishing diploma programs may distract from degree students and resources needed for degree programs. He noted diploma programs can be lucrative. He noted Senate does take academic standards seriously.

Van Dyk reported he sat on an oversight committee at his previous institution and diploma program funded ½ other programs.

Hilperts reported in Environmental Studies the program brings in a different population to the academy and she had contact with professionals through this program. She noted it was very beneficial to the students generally and she liked seeing the wall of academia more permeable.

d. Upcoming events announcements

Upcoming events
Chappel reminded members of the meeting on the ACCELERATE BC funding program and Family video night

Flower reminded members about the CUPE 4163 meeting regarding funding.

e. Fellowships update

The meeting went in camera

MOTION 2007-11-27 GRC: 04 M/S Hilperts/Cake
The GSS Executive is directed to:
draft a letter in support of student campaign on fellowship issues; and
issue a media release stating GSS support for the campaign; and
alert relevant administration prior to media release; and
include seeking a written agreement concerning the future administration as a key demand

Flower asked about media budget.

Chappel noted there is a general campaign budget, but not much for media advertising and generally the GSS seeks free media through news coverage.

CARRIED
f. Has your department been impacted by space move delays?
Reed asked whether departments had space delays as had been reported.

No department reps had been affected.

Geography had heard there was a delay but now its back to February.

g. CUPE Petition on Space
Flower reported CUPE would like to work with the GSS on a joint office space campaign.

Members were friendly to the proposal.

5. Other Business
Kolthammer reports that GSS has decided to move on seeking renovations and expansion options for GSS building.

Kolthammer reports that an architect RFP has been accepted and meetings with the architect are beginning soon.

6. Notices of Motion
Reed thanked Sakaki and the other Grad Remix organizers for their excellent work.

Reed thanked Shiota and Qian for their fellowship petitions.

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 pm.

SC/sc

2007-11-27 GRC minutes