Present:
Nicole O’Byrne, GSS Chair
Brandy Sistili, GSS Services
Gabriel Cohen, Linguistics
Agata Stypka, Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies
Adrienne Canning, Philosophy
Melissa Ray, Child and Youth Care
Victor Lorentz, CUPE 4163
Charlotte Stange, Public Administration
Lauren Chace, Psychology
Takuto Shiota, GSS Director of Finance
Jing Qian, GSS Director of Student Affairs
Duncan McLeish, Earth and Ocean Science
Yifan Wang, Pacific and Asian Studies
Gholam-Reza Emad, Curriculum and Instruction
Thomas Chisolm, Visual Arts
Ashley Cummings, Music

Gianmarco Biasone, Political Science
James Freeman, Sociology
Molly Wickham, Indigenous Governance
Jon Chui, Chemistry
Jennifer Wong, Computer Science
Colleen Allen, German and Russian Studies
Nui Leewananthawet, Theatre
Nick Fitterer, Nursing
Emma Sharkey, Dispute Resolution
Mary Smulders, Geography
Brenden Smith, Biochemistry and Microbiology
Eleanor Carlson, Anthropology
Eric Anderson, History in Art
Sara Duncan, Environmental Studies
Catherine Cao, Economics
Lindsay Clay, Physics and Astronomy
Stacy Chappell, GSS Executive Director (non voting)

Regrets:
Kathleen Perkin
Leah Howard
Amanda Cruise

Call to order
Nicole O’Byrne called to order the regular meeting of the GSS Graduate Representative Council at 5:05pm on November 25, 2008 in Grad Centre room 108-112.

Approval of Agenda
Agenda M/S Shiota/Qian
The Agenda is approved with the following additions
- report of committee representatives is added after the Executive Board reports
- tabling policy is added to other business

CARRIED

Approval of Minutes

Minutes M/S Cumming/Wong
Minutes for the October 21, 2008 Graduate Representative Council meeting are approved as presented.

CARRIED

Standing Items

1) Executive Board Reports
   a) Chair – Nicole O’Byrne
      O’Byrne referred to written reports. She noted this Thursday at 1pm the Executive meetings with the President and Senior Administration, and will be raising the Academic Income Supplement, Draft Sustainability Policy, GSS relationship with UVIC.
   
   b) Director of Student Affairs – Jing Qian
      Qian refereed to written report
      Student Affairs Committee discussed the AIS issue and the Executive will bring it to the meeting with the President and Senior Administration
      No individual student advocacy requests this month; in April-September there were many students; Happily most satisfied with the result of their situation and there are no new issue
      January orientation will be held Jan 20 or 21
      Everyone welcome to join reception at GSS

   c) Director of Finance – Takuto Shiota
      Shiota referred to written report
      There was an issue with remittance of GSS member fees, and that was sorted out. In the past month the bulk of his work has been on AGM, audit, presentation.
      Business relationship with UVIC is an issue currently and it was raised in the Operational Relations meeting. UVIC tends to treat the GSS like a UVIC department, withholding funds as if department. There is no formal agreement on our business relationship, operational relations is meeting in January to work on developing this.

      Canning questioned application cycle of travel grants

      Shiota explained they are managed by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and are in accordance with UVic’s fiscal year

      TASK: Executive to propose option of a maximum annual amount rather than maximum number of grants as a travel grant policy.
d) Director of Services – Brandy Sistili
Sistili referred to written report
Events:
26 students at salmon run, it was smelly and awesome
Wine club is ongoing, tix on sale in Grad House
Skating tix available at the office
Video night Dec 1
Good Food Box program starting in January, will be offered once per month,
Pay at GSS. Food local source and organic option available

Sistili invited anyone interested in helping with events to the weekly meeting
10am Thursdays at the GSS.

Sistili reported she attended the full day UVIC Sustainability Policy
consultation on Saturday with 200 people to discuss sustainability action
plan. 2/3 plan advised from the initial group was taken out, notably
measurement tools.
Now only talks about greening operations
Will be raising the issue at Presidents meeting Thursday

e) Director of Communications – Joe Kolthammer
Kolthammer referred to his written report
Edited visual and written services committee
Redesign of the Source is an ongoing project, and he plans to have a formal
presentation to GRC in January. Currently looking into “interactive blog zine”
format.

At the Presidents meeting Thursday will be asking re: policy of AIS

2) Committee representative reports
O’Byrne asks representatives from any external committees to report
a) Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching – Jon Chui
Chui reported the last meeting was cancelled. Issues raised: use of
plagiarism software, whether it is a good idea.

b) Committee to Review the Dean of Social Sciences – Eleanor Carlson
Carlson reported that on Friday at noon the Dean of Social Sciences will be
making a public presentation regarding his role. Written and in person
questions about the Dean’s role and vision are welcomed. MSB 160.

TASK Chappel to provide link to website

c) Childcare Advisory Board – Melissa Ray
Meeting was held Friday
Poinsettia sale at University Center Thursday and Friday
Interested to hear from grad student families in UVIC childcare
Full day kindergarten BC Government may fund in 09 September

d) Presidents distinguished lecture confidential – Takuto Shiota
Shiota reported the committee decision is still top secret!

3) GSS Committee reports
a) Student Affairs Committee
Freemen reported Student Affairs Committee met Friday and discussed:

i) AIS survey
UVIC has no clear policy, fact finding needed
It seems to be different depending on faculty

Kolthammer: Noted he had done work on AIS and talked to students in a variety of departments.
Funds students receive vary in amount from $100 to $1000
Funds sometimes randomly disappear
Sometimes AIS is tied to TA, other times not. Sometimes tied to people not even doing academic or TA work.

Kolthammer requested AIS data from all the departments

He will seek information on the policy from the meeting with the President and Senior Administration on Thursday will ask for policy

TASK Grad Reps to send information on how AIS is distributed in their department, and issues raised by students to gssmgr@uvic.ca

ii) Office Space
Freeman asked for information from Grad Reps on office space and how it is working out with new buildings.

Sistili asked Lorentz about the space petition

Lorentz reported CUPE has some of the signatures

O’Byrne said the key is data

Kolthammer reported the GSS collected infor from 2/3 grad secretaries last year. In essence the departments with money have space.

This year, it’s all about decanting as people move to new buildings, and monitoring if there is improvement for grad students.

Our goal is to obtain decanted space, not simply more space
TASK Grad Reps to send information on grad office space in their
department post-decanting to gssmgr@uvic.ca

Canning asks who gives out keys? She reported in Philosophy-15 students share 2 desks, and there is a new office no one can access due to lack of keys.

Chappel explained each department has a person in charge of issuing key access. The Chair of the department is probably the person who authorizes access, and the department administrator will likely know where things stand.

Carlson noted this is a possible question for Dean of Social Science at his talk Friday. Reps could bring/send comments about space issues in their Social Science departments

iii) Social Events
Freeman reported the student affairs committee is interested in seeing more events. He noted the Student Affairs committee has vacancy for 4 GRC members

O’Byrne called for volunteers for the Services Committee:
Josh Freeman, Jon Chui, Agata Stypka (next term), Ellie Carlson and Colleen Allen all volunteered.

Sistili reported meetings are Thursdays at 10 am at the GSS, and all are welcome.

iv) Campaign suggestions?
Committee members invite grad reps to send suggestions for campaign ideas, they will bring to next meeting

New business
1) Reps needed
   a) Search committee for Health Information Science Director
      MOTION 01: M/S
      Nick Fitterer is elected the graduate student representative to the Search Committee for the Director of Health Information Science.
      CARRIED

   b) Senate Planning and Priorities
      O’Byrne noted this is a key committee – generates strategic direction of the university. This person is taking over from a rep who had to step down. Meetings are monthly.

      MOTION 02: M/S
Yifan Wan is elected the graduate student representative to the Senate Committee on Planning.
CARRIED

2) Transfer fees
O’Byrne reported she had heard from a student who was encouraged to proceed directly from MA to PhD and found the fee to do this had increased from $25 now $100—a 400% increase!

Motion: 03 M/S Biasone/Anderson
The GSS Graduate Representative Council directs the GSS Executive Board to ask UVIC Administration upon what basis has the fee to apply to move you're your masters directly to your doctorate been increased from $25 to $100
CARRIED

Reza: noted he needed a copy of a document twice recently. Two weeks ago it cost $6 but he went again and it cost $10

Kolthammer recommended keep directory of fees so students can monitor changes

Department Reports
Chemistry
Chui reports the new building (Bob Wright Centre) has had some major issues with inspections, some who had moved in had to move back out.
Fume hoods have controller, every time power goes out fume hoods get reset
Result is that water recirculates but not at ½ litre per minute, but 5 litre per minute - it’s blowing hoses!
UVIC has appointed an engineer to resolve

Indigenous Governance
Wickham had nothing to report for problems. She noted a new professor was hired: Angela Wilson, everyone calls her “Woz”
From Minnesota.

Sociology
Freeman reports the dept just had its big move: New grad computer lab
Don’t know who else is moving in yet.

Political Science
Biasone had nothing to report

Music
Cummings said the departmental review is this year. The Grad Rep to the committee is very involved and very good at keeping students involved and informed.
Visual Arts
Chisolm reported Chair search ongoing, and if a chair isn’t found there is a concern the department will be administered by the Faculty of Fine Arts.
Right now, Visual Arts has own building, operate separately, recently the visual arts computer lab moved to fine arts building.
Some visual arts faculty concerned about space being opened up to other departments; Visual arts has special space needs not shared with others in Fine Arts.

Curriculum and Instruction
Gholem-reza reports there is a new elevator; despite old one still working – renos are very noisy!
Change all door handles in EDCI for disabled access, but not in rest of building
They decided to bolt down all chairs so they couldn’t be moved, then some were unbolted and moved.
Seems there is no plan!

Applied for a grant: Last year declined because not working on dissertation
This year working on dissertation and declined because committee wants to give to students NOT doing dissertation

Committee has discretion to change the terms of the grant annually—frustrating when system is changing!

Pacific and Asian Studies
Wang noted he is an interdisciplinary in Pacific and Asian Studies and– Visual Arts
No update at this time.
Students are planning an event—dinner for Chinese new year

Law
Qian reports the Chair/grad advisor gone to China
Reno of library ongoing and difficult
AIS not available in law school

Chinese New Year: Chinese and Hong Kong and Taiwan students will organize MacPherson Playhouse Jan 21/22 Chinese New Year

Earth and Ocean Science
McLeish reports they just opened Bob Wright science building and SEOS faces the same problems as Chemistry. But there’s lots of office space!
Christmas Party is planned

Nursing
Fitterer reported that for departmental committees: there is 1 grad rep on curriculum development dept committee and they provide a good voice for students in the department.
63 people applied, and 19 were awarded, scholarships but they have not been received yet

Fitterer noted he is also a distance student. Recently he couldn’t log in to Blackboard for an extended time and it turned out UVIC was uploading software, so the system couldn’t be used.

Fitterer is developing and online link for distance grad students to talk.

**Computer Science**
Wong reports there was a 6% Increase in RA, AIS, TA money in the department. Department retreat December 5 will look into direction of department.

**Environmental Studies**
Duncan reports there is a new senior secretary for the department. Was rep on committee for President Distinguished Service Awards: decided but still confidential. Display in math building this month done by her group! Notes from field series of grad talks is ongoing. December 5th: UnChristmas Disco!

**Economics**
Cao reported the presentation on the financial crisis was very well attended. Seeking printer in grad student lab. Christmas party planned.

**Drummond (EDPHE)**
Reported students are interested in starting a tradition of donating a tree upon graduation—symbolically replanting after using all that paper in our work! The grad class could plant one, or students could contribute to planting trees on campus somehow.

TASK O’Byrne will ask how this is done.

**Germanic and Slavic Studies**
Allen reported the department had just moved and is adjusting to the new space. One downside is grads are not as close to undergrads anymore, are meeting to think about recouping the previous atmosphere mixing grads and undergrads. Christmas party is planned.

**Dispute Resolution**
Sharkey reported the department had moved into public admin. A key concern is maintaining the unique identity of the program. It came to attention week ago meetings are going on without student knowledge to discuss overhaul of Dispute Resolution Program, including changing start date, cycle of work to make like MPA (alternating co-op and study terms). There has
been no consultation with students. The grad secretary is on leave during this and also couldn’t consult.

Stange noted the Public Administration students didn’t have knowledge of meeting either.

**TASK: DR and MPA reps to contact Nicole O’Byrne to discuss further options. gsschair@uvic.ca**

**History in Art**
Anderson reported the History in Art grad students are busy hiring mercenaries to take over visual arts building!

Anderson AIS has almost dried up in History in Art. Grad students are planning a student run conference in January.

Anderson noted that every time he runs into the head of the History in Art department he bugs her about grad representation in department meetings and encourages voluntary compliance. Right now students don’t know when meetings are

Allen asked O’Byrne to provide a generic letter annually in September

O’Byrne reported this could be done, most places do have representation, but right now there is no agreement on what standard grad student representation in departments would be.

**Physics and Astronomy**
Clay reported the department recently implemented new policy on grad student representation including 3 reps, one for each discipline, in department meetings. This is helpful as needs of the disciplines are not always the same. Students are planning a retreat.

**Psychology**
Chace reported that nearly every student is affected by the change in transfer fees as many students move directly to a PhD in the program. Students are told they are getting extra space in CORNETT

**Public Administration**
Stange reported space is still the key concern. 38 students share 1 room, 2 old desks, a computer with no keyboard

Review committee for the Dean is ongoing. Stange reports she is the rep of MA and PhD students on the committee

She noted Dispute resolution does not have a rep and she will raise this as a concern on the committee.

**Anthropology**
Carlson reports everything is going ok. In regards to the move, no one seems to know what’s up. New chair is speaking tomorrow 10am Cornett 128. The event is a series of mini presentation re: publishing (will be 4 sessions) and worth attending. Should be good – open to everyone.

**CUPE 4163**
Lorentz reports CUPE 4163 had its SGM in October and elected a new executive. Bargaining begins in ½ year. Seeking bargaining committee volunteers. Meeting with cohort TA in SFU and UBC to coordinate strategy.

**Political Science**
Lorentz added to the Political Science report there is a Department review starting October. Grad students have input but have concerns about the 1 year MA program.

**Child and Youth Care**
Ray reports all is good

**Biochemistry and Microbiology**
Smith reports space is the ongoing issue. Nothing new to report.

**Geography**
Smulders reports curriculum review undergrad and grad is ongoing. On Dec 1 day retreat will be held. Friday 2:30 weekly colloquium – free food, open to all!
Social events include Christmas party, apple bake off, Ski trip February

**Philosophy**
Canning reports the chair search is ongoing
Office space – still waiting for information.
One prof had baby; 2 pros (the parents parents) off on leave
There was confusion where a course was incorrectly set up as a 3 unit course, everyone was forced to reenroll in a new 1.5 unit course.
Department is having a Christmas party

**Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies**
Stypka reports a new newsletter is coming out, and it is especially good for department communication.
Event was postponed, but there will be a wine and cheese in February

**Linguistics**
Cohen reports office space is the big issue
Research forum next week– 6 faculty and grad students give short presentation on what they are researching. Held Tuesday.

**French**
Cruise (submitted via email) reported:
The French dept is having a student colloquium coming up in the spring that they are in the midst of planning and the dept Christmas party is going to be on December 5th. French has 3 more students starting graduate studies next semester and our TA positions for next semester have been given out and everyone seems to be pleased.

I am also on the Dean committee for the faculty of arts, we have agreed to meet on the morning of December 3rd, but that’s all that has happened so far.

1. **TA Strike at York University**

Lorentz reported York TAs had successful strike action in 2000-01. He advocated the GSS support and fight for job security; Noted currently TAs have to reapply every year. At York, TAs are fight to retain benefits at 2005 levels and have wages indexed to tuition and inflation.

O’Byrne noted TAs York aalaries better than ours, they have the same structure as us, same CUPE union. If they settle on good terms, we can follow their example. Last York TA strike took 77 days. So far this time, York TAs on strike have had online threats, physical intimidation. Law profs at York are on sympathy strike

Lorentz everyone will bargain again 2010 if they win this contract.

**Motion 04: M/S Lorentz/O’Byrne**

GSS supports York University teaching assistants in their strike action.

**Discussion:**

Lorentz noted any arbitrator in a UVIC case will look at median of agreements

O’Byrne said more moral support will speed strike being resolved

Carlson asked what support would mean

O’Byrne said the motion would be a statement of moral support for the strikers.

Shiota asked if the undergrad student union and GSS support strike.

O’Byrne reported both student unions have supported the strike and CAUT is starting to move in support as well.

Chui asked how long the strike had been going.

O’Byrne reported since Nov. 6 classes cancelled due to the strike

**CARRIED**
Senate Elections

Qian described experience of running for the Law Senate seat, then being disqualified as a candidate because he is not an undergraduate. He reported he fought this interpretation of the policy with O’Byrne and got it changed. Right now there is no graduate student representative on the Board of Governors and only one representative on Senate. Now have 6 more reps in Senate!

Qian encouraged graduate students to run for Senate.

Chappel reported the Executive board had decided to offer neutral support to any graduate student candidates in the form of promotion support at the same level as a graduate student running for GSS Executive board. This includes posting campaign statements on the GSS website, circulation of notice linking to campaign information to GSS bulletin, and encouraging awareness of graduate students running for Senate.

Referendum

O’Byrne reported the GSS is in good standing, but there is no contingency for any Legal issues, or challenges support student. It is advisable for a non profit of this size to have a 10% contingency in its budget. In past used building fund as a guarantee, but has spent the majority of the fund for the renovation.

Money to revamp the Unacknowledged Source and communications is also a priority.

O’Byrne noted there has been no increase in base fee in about a decade. She asked Chappel to describe strains on budget.

Chappel reported key issues are the lack of a contingency, which makes it difficult to be flexible with staffing, campaigns, or taking any risks. She noted in past the GSS had funding legal assistance for students with extremely difficult and important appeals, and this had been possible due to a contingency. Increased costs of building maintenance, audits had caused increase strain in budget.

Shiota noted there is very little remaining in budget that is not already fixed.

O’Byrne noted leaving the CFS saved every student $7.50 per term; she is looking at 3.50/4.00 increase in membership fees.

Canning asked if there would be a breakdown of what the increase was for.

O’Byrne noted that although there would be reasons for increasing the fee, the use of the fees change over time and the referendum wouldn’t tie future executives.

Biasone asked why a referendum is necessary.
O'Byrne explained that other than a CPI increase, all fee increases require a referendum.

Kolthammer proposed a fee breakdown and referendum presentation be made to the January Grad Council meeting.

Anderson opposed the idea of honoraria for grad reps.

**M/S Kolthammer/Qian**

Idea of a referendum is referred to Student Affairs Committee.

**CARRIED**

Shiota will attend Student Affairs Committee meeting and will bring budget and financial information.

**Parking**

O'Byrne asked Anderson for a report on the parking issue raised in his department.

Anderson reported the issue was settled

**Philosophy Department Representation**

Members were invited to sign the letter to the Philosophy department letter on their way out

**Events**

Members were reminded to take event posters and post in their departments.

**Adjournment**

O'Byrne adjourned the meeting at 7:08.

Minutes submitted by: Stacy Chappel

Minutes approved by:

______________________  _____________________
Nicole O'Byrne, Chair  Stacy Chappel, Executive Director