Present:

Sara Duncan, Environmental Studies
Brenden Smith, Biochemistry & Microbiology
Mary Smulders, Geography
James Freeman, Sociology
Leah Howard, Math & Statistics
Josh Johnston, History
Yifan Wang, Pacific & Asian Studies
Thomas Chisholm, Visual Arts
Lauren Chance, Psychology
Emma Sharkey, Dispute Resolution
Yan Cao, Economics
Angie Morris, German & Slavic Studies
Adrienne Canning, Philosophy
Gianmarco Biasone, Political Science
Nick Montgomery, Political Science
Megan Kirk, Exercise Science & Physical Education
Gabriel Cohen, Linguistics
Allan Stewart, Physics & Astronomy
Lauren Collier-Crawford, French
Jennifer Flower, Social Work
Melissa Ray, Child & Youth Care
Kathleen Perkin, Anthropology
Elly Carlson, Anthropology
Ashley Cumming, Music
Jonathan Chui, Chemistry
Nick Fitterer, Nursing
Nicole O’Byren, GSS Chair
Takuto Shiota, Director of Finance
Brandy Sistili, Director of Services
Jing Qian, Director of Student Affairs

Regrets:

Reza Gholam

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm

I. Approval of Agenda

M/S Johnston/Collier-Crawford

Approved with presentation from the mart let moved to item 3.

CARRIED
II. **Approval of Minutes**  

M/S Shiota/Qian

Minutes for the Grad Rep Council January 16, 2009 meeting approved with minor corrections.  

CARRIED

III. **Martlet**

Tim Lindsay (Managing editor of Martlet, the weekly student run UVIC paper)

Mandate of Martlet is place to learn, report on issues relative to campus, social change. He welcomed grad students to be part of Martlet, noted that undergraduate students pay a fee to fund the martlet, but the grads are getting a free ride. Right now the Martlet is encouraging involvement by grad students rather than pursuing a fee, and he noted some grad students do work on the newspaper. The print run is 8000 copies, and the paper has a long history at UVIC. Currently they are starting a video program which runs as radio on CFUV as well.

If grad students pay fee would be $3 per semester Reduce reliance on ads (print and distribution costs are high).

Lindsay was asked the difference between Source and Martlet.

Source is GSS communication tool of the executive, so it promotes the voice of the GSS. Martlet is separate and independent, reporting on the student societies, not appointed by UVSS.

Johnston asked if the Martlet would create department for grad student issues if the GSS joined, perhaps with a grad issues editor/content.

Lindsay said there is a possibility for a section insert, which the GSS could produce and pay to have inserted.

Johnston noted the GSS could use the Source for that.

O’Byrne pointed out we can do that, which is the voice of GSS, not independent news about grad students.

O’Byrne thanked Lindsay and closed discussion.

O’Byrne asked if there was interest in discussing the ideas raised in a committee

Canning, Fitterer, Lindsay, Johnston and O’Byrne to meet and discuss options.

IV. **Executive Reports**

1) **Chair:** O’Byrne made a pitch re: running for GSS Exec, circulated the by-laws – and referred to bylaw 9 which includes roles, ref rules, etc. O’Byrne referred to her memo to BC Minister of Advanced Education Coell and gave a report on the meeting O’Byrne, Shiota, and Qian had with the Minister. Board of Governors representation and designated seats were discussed. Nicole writing follow-up brief as requested by the Minister. There is hope some changes can be made as a housekeeping measure as the change we seek is practice at UBC and UNBC already.

O’Byrne further reported she met with the chair of the
Met chair Board of Governors yesterday, raised representation issue.

O’Byrne was asked if this would be an additional designated seat or splitting the 2 current seats between GSS and UVSS.

O’Byrne thought the likely outcome was to have 2 seats--1 GSS, 1 UVSS--rather than additional student seats.

O’Byrne reported that regarding representation at a department level she made a presentation to the Graduate Executive Council (of the Faculty of Graduate Studies) and will bring back a motion to next GEC meeting. The goal is for the Faculty of Graduate Studies to send best practices to departments. O’Byrne referred to the summary of graduate representation in departments prepared by the Dean.

Sistili asked if there are these departments not on list. She noted some were missing from HSD.

O’Byrne reported the Ethical Governance series is ongoing, with the next session featuring Vic Murray, Tomorrow at 4pm here. This talk is especially interesting if running for executive. In two weeks the speaker will be Susan Turner on non-partisanship.

O’Byrne reported CUPE 3903 has been forced back to work in Ontario. She stated the government should be compelling University to go back to table.

2) **Director of Student Affairs:** Qian referred to written reports. He noted he attended the Ombudsperson advisory Council meeting. She outlined the top concerns raised by graduate students, which can serve as a guide for next year.

3) **Director of Finance:** Shiota reported he chaired the finance committee meeting, met with the Executive Director, and attended the meeting with Minister Coell.

4) **Director of Services:** Sistili reported the Service committee met Friday, but was unable to attend due to presentations by candidates for AVP students, and she thanked the committee members for their work. She reported she attended meetings between AVP students and the student society’s, and there are four candidates. Following the meetings she reported she met with Jonny Morris who is the GSS representative on the search committee. She chaired the Health and Dental appeals Committee. She noted the Society is in a good position with the health and dental plan.

Sistili also noted she was concerned about tension in the meetings and felt the GRC should be a refuge for its members, not an adversarial place. She asked that if members have criticisms to make about the work of others, please make comment to the chair, avoid speaking against person you disagree with and instead speak to the issue. She noted there had been motions made that weren’t seconded and then not dealt with in the last meeting. She encouraged members to speak up and make sure the chair can hear you/see you, as it is hard to chair such a large meeting.

O’Byrne reported that the Director of Communications has resigned effective immediately. She asked the room to decide whether to fill the position or wait until the March elections.

Members agreed to leave the position vacant until the election.

Sistili noted Kolthammer is willing to discuss his resignation with anyone who contacts him.

V. **Department Reps**
Environmental Studies  Duncan reported students discussed the new sports centre and are not supportive of the idea.
Biochemistry/Microbiology  Smith reported the department now has enough office space (yay)
Geography  Smulders reported there is a new new chair, curriculum has changed
Sociology  Freeman has nothing to report
Math & Statistics  Howard reports there was a Robbie Burns hike, and the Grad conference is 1st Saturday in March
History  Johnston reported there are new offices with swinging chairs that are a big hit. Idea of a fee increase for the GSS is a split issue in the department.
Pacific & Asian Studies  Wang reported celebration of Chinese New Year was a successful event
Visual Arts  Chisholm had nothing to report
Psychology  Chance reported transfer fees issue was followed up, there has been no rationale provided that makes sense. She met with GSS Student Affairs Committee, wrote letter counting reasons given. Is a particular issue in departments like Anthropology where students are expected to proceed directly to a PhD as part of admission.

M/S  O’Byrne/Biasone
GRC opposed to increase in fees associated with transfer form MA to a PhD program.

Motion to Amend  M/ Sharkey
add “with no consultation”

amendment FAILED

Motion to Amend  M/Canning
Strike “increase” and replace with “unreasonable increase”

Amendment FAILED

CARRIED

Anthropology:  Carlson said the grad journal had first meeting
Perkin reported the grad reps received the department meeting minutes sent to them for the first time.
Dispute Resolution  Sharkey had nothing to report.
Economics  Cao reported there are new computers and the reading room renovation is finished.
Political Science  Biasone reported new chair hiring is ongoing, and so far students in the department are on board for 5-10$ fee increase for GSS.
Montgomery added there is one applicant for the new chair position. Students priorities for a new chair will oppose large class sizes, encourage face-to-face meetings and be interested in dialogue. Montgomery added it is becoming obvious issues being worked on at GSS, like representation, are really relevant.
Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies:  Stypka reported workshops are planned for February
Philosophy  Canning reported the chair search is ongoing; students are planning an event using Departmental Grant funds. On the student representation issue the grad advisor wants to postpone decisions, advised against pushing for representation.
German & Slavic Studies  Morris introduced herself and said she is filling in for Colleen this meeting.
Students met before Christmas for information discussion, gave wish list to grad advisor who presented to faculty meeting.
Exercise Science & Physical Education  Kirk had nothing new to report
Linguistics  Cohen had nothing new to report.
Physics & Astronomy:  Stewart had nothing new to report.
French: Collier-Crawford reported students had fought and won recognition that TAs for lower level tutorials should move up from $13/hr to $22/hour. Students are planning a colloquium.

Social Work: Flower reported a social was held for students, and it encouraged the first years to meet and talk with the 2nd and 3rd years.

Child & Youth Care: Ray reported students are planning social, also with a focus on encouraging dialogue between cohorts. The department is looking toward professionalization through BC College. Students want to know what is happening with the referendum on Athletics fees.

Sistili reported the last he heard is UVic running referendum from the Board of Governors in September regarding a fee increase for Athletics.

Committees

a) President’s appointment meeting: Shiota reported the president normally has a maximum of two terms, but Turpin is being considered for a 3rd as the BoG has deemed these are “not normal” circumstances. Their reasoning is the financial climate and that 12 other universities looking for president. Current issue is deciding the job description. There is currently no specific mention of graduate students, so he is seeking to have that included. If anyone has further ideas, please send them to Tak by Thursday.

b) Vice President Research Search Committee: O’Byrne will be attending another meeting Friday.

c) Services: Sistili referred to her Executive report.

d) Finance: Chappel circulated year to date financial statements for December 2008 and briefly summarized key issues. She encouraged members to contact her with questions, or bring questions to the next meeting as members hadn’t had a chance to review the statements prior to the meeting.

VI. Fee Increase

O’Byrne referred to written reports.

REF DOC: 2009-01-21 fee increase referenda options

O’Byrne sought a straw poll on the two referendum question options. She noted if one was heavily favoured we would work with that option, if opinion was divided, there would be debate on the options, then work on the question chosen after that.

O’Byrne read the options provided in the briefing aloud:

OPTION A – one part question
Are you in favour of increasing the GSS core membership fee by a maximum of $5? Final fee would be determined by membership budget approval at the March GSS General Meeting.

Yes or No

OPTION B – two part question
Question 1:
Are you in favour of a GSS core membership fee increase in order to avoid cuts to services offered by the GSS?

Yes or No

Question 2:
If the referendum to increase the GSS core membership fee passes, which of the following options do you prefer:

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$2.50 per term increase to maintain current service levels
$5.00 per term increase to improve service levels

Straw poll:
OPTION A: 18
OPTION B: 10

O’Byrne ruled opinion was evenly enough divided GRC should debate both options.

Sistili suggested a plebiscite might be an option.

Canning stated she prefers option B because it has choices.

Chace noted it will be important for further information to be distributed.

Sharkey said she preferred option B because people don’t look for further info to get the general idea of which option.

Chui noted he preferred to keep the “whereas” list from the Student Affairs Committee motion presented January 16.

It was suggested to combine Option A with the explanation of the possibility services would be cut.

O’Byrne stated the wording must be approved by the Executive.

O’Byrne temporarily suspended the Graduate Representative Council Meeting and convened a meeting of the Executive Board.

O’Byrne asked the Executive Exec vote on the wording:

MOVED
Are you in favour of increasing the GSS core membership fee by a maximum of $5 in order to avoid cuts to services currently being offered by the GSS, where the final fee would be determined by membership budget approval at the March GSS General Meeting?

- Yes or No

Executive Motion carried

O’Byrne reconvened the Graduate Representative Council meeting.

M/S Freeman/Johnston
A referendum of the membership will be held on March 4, 5, and 6, 2009 with the following question:
Are you in favour of increasing the GSS core membership fee by a maximum of $5 in order to avoid cuts to services currently being offered by the GSS, where the final fee would be determined by membership budget approval at the March GSS General Meeting?

- Yes or No
CARRIED

TASK: Chappel will send notice to all members and will send more info/details re: ref to grad reps.

VII. Electoral Officer
M/S O’Byrne/Sistili
Andrea Porritt is elected the 2009 GSS Electoral Officer.
CARRIED

O’Byrne encouraged members to run for Executive Board.

VIII. Other Business
Sistili announced the VIPIRG AGM is coming up and said all grad students are members of VIPIRG.

M/S Sistili/Chui
The GSS thanks Joe Kolthamer for all his hard work as Director of Communications and wishes him good luck.
CARRIED

IX. Adjournment

O’Byrne adjourned the meeting at 6:50 pm.

Stripes: 8 Polka-dots: 9 Both: 5 Other: 6

Most creative award to Freeman for: “Stroka Dots”

sc/BK/SC

Approved, Chair
Approved, Executive Director