UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA GRADUATE STUDENTS’ SOCIETY

GRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 24TH, 2009  5 – 7 PM
BOARD ROOMS 108 & 112
GEORGE AND IDA HALPERN GRADUATE STUDENTS’ CENTRE

Present:
Aaron Maxwell, Physics and Astronomy  Matthew Park, Political Science
Adam Hough, History  Megan Press, Visual Arts
Adrian Schroeter, Computer Science  Mike Large, Law
Agata Stypka, GSS Director of Student Affairs  Nastasja Scholz, Earth and Ocean Sciences
Amy Cox, GSS Director of Communications  Nick Graham (?), CUPE 4163 Rep
Annalise Smith, Music  Nick VanOrden, English
Claudine Gravel Miguel, Anthropology  Rebecca Taylor, Social Work – Indigenous Specialization
Eli Nix, Biochemistry and Microbiology  Rena Mann, Math & Stats
Francis Presscott, Public Admin  Sara Duncan, Environmental Studies
Grace Lee, Economics  Stephanie Cram, Sociology
Hawley Beavunams, Geography  Tak Shiota, GSS Director of Finance
Kalin McClusky, Studies in Policy and Practice  Taylor Marie Young, Linguistics
Kimberly Ruta, Pacific and Asian Studies  Valerie Caldeira, Psychology
Leina Pauls, English  Veronica Bhandar, Germanic Studies
Magdalyn Asimakis, History in Art  Yifan Wang, GSS Director of Student Affairs
Matt Riddett, Philosophy

Regrets:
none

The meeting was called to order at 5:05pm with Canning in the Chair

STANDING ITEMS

1. Approval of Agenda

M/S
Agenda is approved with the addition of the item “Ad Hoc Committee to Investigate Equity in Resources for Grad Students – call for members” prior to Reports from Committees
CARRIED

2. Approval of Minutes
M/S Schroeter/Park
Minutes for Sept. 29 2009 are approved with corrections.
CARRIED

3. **Business arising from the minutes**

Canning reported the letter writing campaign concerning athletics fees convinced the Board of Governors at their Nov. 24 meeting to postpone making a decision on the fee until they are sure it is within the tuition increase limits.

Canning reported that childcare was addressed at the Nov. 24 Board of Governors meeting, who decided not to go ahead “at this time” with privatization, perhaps because of the large amount of correspondence they received concerning the issue.

Canning will ensure the GSS is included in ongoing consultations on these issues.

Riddet noted the Board of Governors kept referring to the external review of childcare.

**M/S Riddet / Schroeter**

The GSS will obtain a copy of the External Review of Childcare from the University, using a freedom of information request if necessary.

CARRIED

4. **Executive Reports**

The executive delivered their reports, referring to written reports.

**M/S Caldeia / Schroeter**

The September 29th 2009 Executive Reports are Approved.

CARRIED

M/S Riddet / Schroeter

The November 24th 2009 Executive Reports are Approved.

CARRIED

5. **Ad Hoc Committee to Investigate Equity in Resources for Grad Students — Call for Membership**

Pauls introduced the committee and informally outlined its terms: the ad hoc committee will investigate and report on the equitable distribution of resources for grad students in the university, considering needs, space, equipment, and accessibility. Pauls would like 2 reps from every department to attend one meeting, to complete an assessment, and to review the assessment and report; a smaller volunteer group would prepare the report for grad council.

6. **Reports from Committee Representatives**
1. **Faculty of Humanities Committee Rep [humrep]**

[humrep] reported that the meeting was cancelled; [humrep] has raised the issue of office space outside of the meeting.

2. **Ruckus Committee McClusky & Large**

Large reported hearing details of the BOG (in)-decision. [?] Chappel has engaged a lawyer concerning the matter.

7. **Committee Appointments:**

   i. **Faculty of Social Sciences Awards and Recognition Committee**
   
   ii. **Faculty of Social Sciences Equity and Diversity Committee**

   M/S McClusky / Calderia

   Nick Montgomery (Political Science) is appointed to the Faculty of Social Sciences Equity and Diversity Committee.

   CARRIED

8. **Departmental Reports**

   **Philosophy - Matt Riddett**

   Nothing new to report, but ongoing concerns regarding the availability of resources for grad students in the department.

   **Sociology – Stephany Cram**

   Things are quiet.

   **Political Science - Matt Park**

   There was a tussle over printing. CSPT students (Political Science is one of the host departments) are paying 5 fee installments for a 1 year program, and do not have a formal representative to the GSS. They have also formed a student society. As part of the departmental review, Political Science committed to guaranteeing continued TA funding in the 2nd year. There is a lack of transparency in the department regarding authority over CSPT.

   **Anthropology – Claudine Gravel Miguel**

   The department is still renovating.

   **Environmental Studies – Sara Duncan**

   There is a search committee being formed to appoint a new director, they are seeking a graduate representative.

   **School of Earth and Ocean Sciences – Natasja Scholz**

   Nothing to report

   **Microbiology and Biochemistry – Eli Nix**
Students are asking about the GSS Dental Plan, and are curious why the undergrad plan is better whether we could join their plan.

Chappel said the GSS and UVSS plans had at one time been together, but the UVSS removed the grad students, likely because as an older population with more families, we cost more. She noted the GSS had switched brokerage and provider in the past few years which had improved prices and service.

Lately students are defending theses containing previously published papers where the journal publisher has given the right to publish them in a thesis or dissertation.

**English – Leina Pauls**

Nothing to report, and notes seismic upgrading seems to have been indefinitely postponed on Clearihue.

**History – Adam Hough**

The Qualicum auction raised $5000 to send students to the Qualicum History conference.

**Geography – Hawley Beavunams**

This week is Geography awareness week. It was celebrated by Geocaching and a door decorating contest! Seven graduate students attended meetings with the external review committee. The department is having a holiday social next week.

**Visual Arts – Meghan Press**

The exhibition at the Deluge art gallery of grad student work opened Oct. 30th, and was very successful.

**Mathematics and Statistics – Rena Mann**

Graduate students in the department are going to elementary schools to deliver the Math Mania program.

**Studies in Policy and Practice – Kalin McClusky**

One of the faculty may be going on leave or leaving the department shortly, which may prevent required courses from being delivered. Students have been holding informal potlucks. Grad students are working on a poster session to provide more presentation experience. All of the graduate students in the Faculty of Human and Social Development share office space.

**Law – Mike Large**

The law library has been reopened, and now has dedicated space for grad students, including private offices for PhD students.

Law students are interested in funding, and how funding is delivered at UVic. According to the UVic website, over 100 awards and bursaries are available, which law students generally don’t get. The awards are generally marks driven, and law marks are not competitive across disciplines. There is concern that when one department pushes for more funding, others get less; what is a fair arrangement?

**Indigenous Social Work – Rebecca Taylor**

Most students in the program work full time and have family responsibilities.

A writing retreat is planned with 1st year students.

[program / dept. / students] went through accreditation.
There are 15-20 graduate students in the program.

**Economics – Grace Lee**

Proposed to [...] that every student get a print card or printing allowance.

Alumni pub night provided good social networking, and the department will be hosting a seasonal party next week.

**Pacific and Asian Studies – Kimberly Ruta**

Nothing to report.

**Mechanical Engineering – Conrad Fox**

MEGA – Mechanical Engineering Graduate Association has been formed. The department is also having a celebratory party.

**Physics – Aaron Maxwell**

Nothing to report.

**CUPE 4163 – Nick Graham (?)**

Nothing to report.

**Germanic and Slavic Studies – Veronica Bhandar**

Space continues to be an issue, and grad students are interested in what will happen as office space becomes available in the building.

Four new MA students have been welcomed into the department by their grad student colleagues, dept. not helpful in fostering community.

**Music – Annalise Smith**

Music hosted the PACIFNW Graduate Music Conference [RUCC] Published 10th volume Musicological Explorations, Welcomed 7 new students in musicology alone. Space is an issue. TA hours are also an issue, and are meeting with CUPE to resolve.

**Linguistics – Taylor Marie Young**

Nothing to report.

**History in Art – Magdalyn Asimakis**

This year graduate students elected a representative to sit on hiring committee, improved from last year where the faculty picked the student. Not much assistance to students for getting started in graduate work, but department head will be running workshop on publishing and writing.

**Psychology – Valerie Caldeira**

Basement flooded, and now are renovating. Grad students returned to office last week. The removal of the IKONPS printer is still an issue.

**Computer Science – Adrian Schroeter**
Happy!

Public Administration – MPA – Ashleigh Weeden

Nothing to report.

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NEW BUSINESS

9. **Closures for retrofitting and research interruption**

Canning reported that the VP Research was concerned because there is no timeline for the retrofitting and departments are unprepared for the interruption. She asked representatives to report if the seismic upgrading is affecting your department; if so, will grad students be provided alternative space, and will the move delay grad student research?

Discussion ensued, general agreement was that details including dates of renovation are not known, nor have plans to accommodate students, departmental offices, and research equipment been advertised.

Canning asked grad reps to inform the GSS Executive and GRC as new information become available.

10. **Childcare Campaign Update**

Chappel reported she attended the BOG meeting that morning and the BoG Chair introduced the childcare issue by stating the BOG had received a large volume of correspondence, including correspondence from outside experts and groups interested in childcare.

The BOG passed a motion accepting a report on the issue (which can be viewed here: [http://www.uvic.ca:8080/shared/shared_meetings/Nov22.pdf](http://www.uvic.ca:8080/shared/shared_meetings/Nov22.pdf)) and approved a motion stating the university wouldn’t proceed with the proposal to contract to a private child care provider “at this time” and then referred the issue back to the administration to deal with as part of their normal buget process.

VP Academic and Provost, Jamie Cassels spoke to the issue saying that the BOG has acknowledged the importance of childcare for work-life balance, and productivity. They will continue to invest in the structure, including the roof and playground and referred to the External Review of the Childcare’s recommendation to integrate the childcare with the research, learning and teaching objectives in relevant fields.

He stated the goal was a “reasonable, feasible and do-able” way to help parents.

He noted the expansion of childcare through a part time option in Centre 6 and support for home care program in family housing.

Gayle Gorrill, VP Finance stated the childcare would be part of the three year budget cycle. She noted there is not a lot of incremental investment revenue to use for childcare.

BOG member Eric Saeger said he was concerned he wasn’t hearing a timetable to report back. He was uncomfortable about leaving it to a normal three year budget cycle. He hoped consultation will be prompt and timely.

Cassells said he “did not hear a request from the BOG for timelines, nor did I hear a timeline from the BOG”. He also sated we need a time to “allow consultation and cool off”.

BOG member Barb Whittington stated she was concerned the BOG would now have no involvement with the issue, but will instead look at it in three years. She said she believes childcare is part of the strategic plan and therefore part of the business of the BOG.

The Chair stated the budget is reviewed annually at the BOG and BOG members would be able to raise questions about the issue at that time.

11. **Athletics/Fee Cap Issue**

   The GSS has submitted several letters to Director of Student Affairs, Mr. Jim Dunsdon and to the Chair of the Board of Governors, Mr. Ray Protti. In addition, we retained our lawyer to review the Tuition Fee Limit Policy and its applicability to the proposed $55 Athletics Fee and the already implemented (in September 2009) $350 Counseling program fee for EPLS students.

   The GSS submissions can be found here:


   At the Board of Governors meeting, receipt of this correspondence was acknowledged by the Chair. The Chair then asked President Turpin to comment and he said there was no decision on the Athletics fee at this time, and that “All fees will be done in a way consistent with the policy.”

   The report titled Renewal of Athletics, Recreation and School of Exercise Science, Physical Education and Health Facilities was accepted for information. The full document can be read here:


   Importantly, the report lists Athletics and Recreation Services as a funder of the project (for the first time to my knowledge) and states

   “Next Steps:

   Work will continue over the next couple of months to further assess project funding risk and thereby confirm that the above noted funding sources are appropriate. Consultation will also occur with the Province relative to the proposed new fee and the implications of the current Tuition Policy. Once this work is complete, it is the intent of Administration to bring the project back to the Board for further approval. It is currently anticipated that this approval will be sought at the January 2010 Board meeting.”

12. **Health Plan Renewal Consultation**

   Canning asked that reps continue to collect and forward comments and concerns about the plan to the GSS Executive.

13. **Amy Goodman Ticket Raffle**

   Francis Prescott won the ticket to see the Amy Goodman talk. Thanks CFUV!

**CLOSING ITEMS**

14. **Other Business**

   i. **Next Meeting**
The next GRC meeting is scheduled for January 26th, 2010 at 5:00 pm. Same location.

Meeting adjourned.

pr/SC

Minutes approved by:

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Adrienne Canning, Chair

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Stacy Chappel, Executive Director