Present:
Anthropology: Claudine Gravel-Miguel
Law: Supriya Routh
Biology: Leslie Rietveld
Chemistry: Katherine Davies
Community Development: Barbara West
Computer Science: Alejandro Erickson
Electrical & Computer Engineering: Ping Li
English: Leah Ellingwood
Environmental Science: Hanna Roesser
Exercise Science, Physical Health & Education: Lauren Sulz
French: Erin Fairweather
Hispanic & Italian: Estelle Kurier
History: Adam Hough
History: Nicholas Burton-Vulovic
Linguistics: Thomas Magnuson

Music: Twila Bakker
Philosophy: Mike Anthony
Physics & Astronomy: Frank Berghaus
Psychology: Tracy Desjardins
School of Earth & Ocean Science: Jon Furlong
Senate: Gordon Ruby
Visual Arts: Matthew Trahan

GSS Chair: Adrienne Canning (Philosophy)
GSS Director of Communications: Matthew Riddett (Philosophy)
GSS Director of Finance: Matthew Park (CSPT)
GSS Director of Student Affairs: Qi Ke (Business Administration)
GSS Director of Services: Nicholas Graham (Sociology)
GSS Executive Director: Stacy Chappel (ex-officio, non voting)

Regrets:
Child and Youth Care: Tara
Pacific & Asian Studies: Lynda Cameron

Political Science: Georgina Nicoll
Sociology: Camille Stengal

The meeting was called to order at 5:11pm with Canning in the chair

1. Approval of the Agenda

M/S Park/Frank
Agenda is approved as presented

M to amend RUBY
Move Senator and CUPE 4163 member update at beginning of the agenda as # 4
CARRIED

M to amend Canning
Add #16 Election to Faculty of Humanities
CARRIED

M to amend Park
Add # 17 Stipend Motion
CARRIED

CARRIED with amendments
2. Approval of the Minutes

M/S Davies/Gravel-Miguel  
Minutes Nov 30 2010 are approved

Platform – PlatForum
TBA is Tracy Desjardins (Psych)
Page 3 PACI group not groups
Riddett philosophy rep corrected

CARRIED with corrections

3. Business arising from the minutes

Canning asked reps to ask around their department about AIS, and to please include the information in your next report.

Riddett noted the Supervisory compensation committee had not yet met as there was not a volunteer from every faculty – he asked that the subject is added to agenda

Park noted the CSPT organized conference appreciated the funds – thanks! -- and invites everyone to attend

4. Exec Reports
Canning referred the members to the written reports provided.

M/S Trahan/Bakker
Executive Reports are accepted.

Riddett was asked what Twitter account updates were about.

Riddett reported the time of set up was integrating it with website updates, still working out the bugs. Address is gssdcomm@uvic.com

CARRIED

5. Senate and CUPE 4163 Reports

a) Bargaining
Ruby reported bargaining has been ongoing since October. All T.A.s and lab instructors are part of one component of one of 3 CUPE unions. In October, CUPE presented proposals, and UVIC gave CUPE their proposals. Three categories: housekeeping (i.e. fixing out of date terms, addresses), language, money. Most proposals from CUPE are about money. As of now, all the housekeeping has been completed.
Language items: power to the union or the university gets shifted in these items—but they are not related to money. The unions are caucusing because the president of CUPE took a job elsewhere, and CUPE has to re-prepare to go back to the table in February. There will be biweekly meetings upcoming for those who wish to get involved. New Component 1 president is Cristal Sargent, she is getting prepared.

b) Senate
Ruby reported he has been working on response to MacLean's infamous "Too Asian?" article to bring to Senate. Several Canadian organizations are working to raise awareness about stereotyping and encouraging universities to take action. As senator moving a motion to get UVIC to take a stand on the issue in some way. The UVSS is doing something...

Canning asked whether the motion directed at MacLean's, or the author, or the issue.

Ruby said the motion draws from the strategic plan to show there are things UVic could do to respond. Second part is to get UVic to clarify their policy about how they deal with admissions and enrolment policy.

Ruby asked in what capacity could the GSS be influential in supporting our community on some level.

Canning opened the floor for discussion:

Riddett said there was already public and transparent admissions.

Ruby said he had done a search and found it wasn't clear. UVIC does have affirmative action policies, and it is important people understand this is not the same as what was described in the MacLean's article.

Routh said he is uneasy with the suggestion of UVIC responding ... should UVIC respond to something that is not evidence based? He said he is not happy with a race based policy idea anywhere. Doesn't like the idea of tying two things together... Why would a university need to respond to something that hasn't been supported at the university? The article is stereotyping.

Ruby said Ryerson's Senate did already respond.

Dean Devor arrived at 5:36 pm.

Canning asked that all discussion is tabled so our guest, Dean Devor could take the floor for the discussion of travel grants.

6. TRAVEL GRANTS

Canning introduced Dean Aaron Devor to the council and welcomed him to the meeting.
Devor gave some background on the Travel Grants issue. The Travel Grants program has been a joint program since its inception between the GSS and FGS. For a short while the FGS had additional funds that were not part of the base budget, and a large amount of this was put to the Travel Grant. For that period, every graduate student that applied was given a grant. This created havoc when the funds eventually were done, and we could no longer give them to everyone. The base budget had not increased for several years, but there will now be a 25% increase to the base budget to recognize the increased population of grad students. This is in the context of cuts across the budgets at UVIC.

The dean said that if FGS were able to fund everyone who wanted it this year, there would have been $300,000 spent on travel grants. Next year, it would be up to $335,000.

The Devor asked the GSS to match the FGS with a 25% increase as well. That will only bring the budget to about 1/3 of what is needed to give out grants to all applicants.

The dean suggested we aim for a criteria for applying will match the available funds. He said he is not very happy about large numbers of students who meet the criteria and are turned away. He said he would like to see applicants have a 90% success rate.

Hough said first he wanted to say thanks for the generous increase. He asked why the FGS wants to keep funding travel grants--what is the purpose of the grant from the FGS perspective.

Dean Devor said he couldn’t give a generalized answer as the decisions have been made between the GSS and the FGS. For himself personally graduate students need to be able to be exposed to other scholars, network, and get themselves known in their field. These are not always the same things. In many cases, the most important is to present work, get sophisticated feedback, and get yourself known to those in your field.

Hough pointed out that this indicated concern for the quality of research as well as the conference presenting.

Ruby noted that each department has to have a 1.5% budget cut and asked whether this applies to FGS.

The dean said yes, this is true.

Ruby said he thought this added context to the increase.

Canning said she thought the FGS and scholarships and utilities are sheltered.

The dean said only the student support budget is sheltered (i.e. fellowships).

Canning asked the dean to discuss the idea of funding only non-local travel, which is a motion brought to the meeting today.
The dean said the context is just that there isn't enough funds to cover what we all want to fund. The travel grants have never been enough to cover the full costs of travel for anyone. It is always just a contribution. We have to decide, where is the biggest need? We don't have the capacity to do a means test – and that kind of assessment would also cost money in terms of staffing. Are we going to compare MA vs PhD. Are we going to compare near vs far? Presenters vs attenders? Give less to more? Maybe one way to slice it is by the extra cost of going very far.

Riddett asked the dean what kind of picture he saw for the future of the program. Is there will at UVIC for funding the travel grants more in the future? In 5 years, will we still be in this position?

The dean said in five years there will still be more need than funding, more cost than can be covered. This is the same as faculty travel. Faculty have grants – they must present to be qualified, they get $1,000 or so.

The dean said FGS have been looking international travel and research and how it can be channelled to graduate students? We just have to recognize that. He said one avenue he explored without success yet is to see if there is corporate interest from a company involved in travel to see if there is interest in sponsoring the grant.

The dean says he doesn't see grad student enrolment increasing at the same rate as in past, but aims to increase at the rate of enrolment and hope the GSS will do the same.

Riddett asked if it was reasonable to expect there would be no cuts in the future.

The dean said he could never promise the future, but hopes his increased support would help.

Davies asked the dean's thoughts on students going without presenting or giving a poster?

The dean said he would like to be able to fund everyone, and thinks there is great value. He would put a poster in the same category as an oral presentation. But we can't cover everything, but thinks presenting is a higher importance. We priorities presenting with faculty too.

Erickson, wondered if the dean made a distinction between presenting and workshops where students work together on a project. It is a chance to work closely in a group with people in your field.

The dean said this was discussed with the Executive of the GSS. He said if you were an organizer that would be as centrally involved in organized, that is equivalent with presenting. If you are attending it is more like research, and that would be dependent on whether research continued to be eligible.

Ruby asked whether there is 5% next year?

The dean said it is expected to be 1.5% per year.

Ruby asked what the dean wanted to see to see more leverage for graduate students to get funding.
The dean said we are doing it right now. He is the person who allocates the budget. The more that goes into travel grants the less goes into other things. The other place is giving input into the strategic plan. Make sure you take the time to give input and use the opportunities in the strategic plan process. Those consultations are just start up, and the plan does prioritize.

Burton-Vulovic asked if merit might be a criteria?

The dean said that the ability to do that would require an administrative system to determine the merit across all the disciplines. This would create a complicated system, and the administrative cost would not justify the removal of fees from those going to students.

Regarding first time, the idea would be that students get one per degree OR priority to those who had not had any before, but with limits funding it is unlikely anyone would get a second degree.

Bakker asked what the dean hoped to gain by cutting the waiting list.

The dean said he hoped to gain a higher satisfaction level. People would know where they stood. He wants to set the criteria to ensure there is no wait list.

Riddett said the GSS sees the value of maintaining the wait list to help assess need for the funds. A deadline for applying might be possible too.

The dean said no one on the wait list got funded. In principle it is a good idea, but there isn't any benefit when people simply don't get it.

Riddett what about the value of knowing the need? How could we get the data?

The dean said he has data of the years where everyone got the grant who applied – and we can use the numbers to project the future need.

Davies asked if we can't we just count who is rejected.

Bakker wondered about designing the criteria to make sure there is no wait list. She said people will hear they don't get funds if they are on the wait list, if they understand they are unlikely to get the funds, then keeping a wait list has no harm.

The dean said we still have people that are upset that they didn't get grants. If word gets out you will never get it, that is discouraging.

Erickson said we want to have continual fresh data. Those people who don't meet the criteria will still need travel funds. We will still need to know who didn't get the funds – they won't have a place to apply. Then two years from now when we want to appeal for further funds, there will be no basis to claim need.
The dean suggested the GSS do a survey each year and ask those questions. Your survey would give better data than a list of people who are turned away. He said, I don't want the job of administering something that makes a lot of people unhappy.

Ke said if we set up the criteria to keep the list short, how do we ensure there will be no wait list.

The dean said we will never get it exactly right. There will always be some disappointed people. At this point it is based on guess work. The wait list now is not as long as it was, partly because word has gotten out that not everyone will get one every year. We'll try to take lessons and keep improving it.

Canning noted that some numbers we can see help us predict how things are sorted if we cut certain categories.

Chappel asked about where the funds would come from – all within the same pool of funds as AIS and fellowships, and there are cuts to all budgets, so where will the additional travel grants come from?

The dean confirmed they would come from the same pool, but what would be affected by increasing the travel grants was not yet determined

Park asked where the windfall came from originally.

The dean said the fellowship budget came from the cycle of how the fellowship budget – previous policy had fellowship cut off when people completed their studies, so the fellowship came back and was recouped, and it was re-channeled into travel grants. We do for the same reason change the way we fund the fellowship budget so we no longer have the same funds travelling back on a one time basis.

Trahan said one of the few changes proposed is to limit to those who are presenting, or in active participation. He said he is sceptical whether that reflects what we want the travel grants to be about. Representing is a superficial way of judging how active or engaged a participant is. In the fine arts we don't always travel conferences—we often have research trips, going to a gallery showing. How we decided what constitutes active participation?

Hough seconded this idea... if it is just for conferences – some departments will be discriminated against because of the nature of our fields. Sometimes research, sometimes fieldwork, is the reason we need to travel.

The dean says research has always been funded at a lower dollar figure than conferences. One suggestion is keeping presenting and research, maintaining the differential funding for presenting and research.

Trahan said why isn't attending a conference equivalent to research?
Fairweather said there should be support from the department,

The dean said music performing is equivalent. Workshop would be more research, attending gallery too.

Graham said, in regards to the wait list – what happens to funds when first time applicants don't take the money. Would the funds roll into the next month?

The dean said it would stay in the Travel Grants fund, not be shifted to another category.

A member objected to describing the new funds from FGS as a 25% increase, when the fund is actually getting 50% decrease within the context of a 1% budget cut.

The dean said the base budget funding will be replenished every year. Soft money spend it once its gone. Policies of fellowships allowed that soft money, but now little will be generated from that, and if there is soft money this year it would go to the scholarships, not another part of the fund.

The member asked what kind of trend happened that allowed that soft funding policy.

The dean said the amount from the soft funds was quite high, but he changed the policy to keep it in graduate student scholarships. Can't guarantee what will happen under the new minister of Sciences and Universities.

Canning said that a lot of what the dean had said was about managing expectations. Why is it worse to sit on a waiting list, rather than to have their rights peeled back. Why be happier to have what they were once eligible for taken away?

The dean said he is talking about psychology ... people are happier if they get what they expect. Sometimes happier, sometimes less unhappy. If the FGS is delivering on promises, people are going to feel good. If FGS is failing on promises, there is a lot of ill will. Unfortunately there are fiscal realities. Most grad students have a good understanding that there are things we can't afford. Money is tight.

Berghaus asked about the proposed non-local requirement. He said that while this is okay from his perspective (in Physics) for other departments this is not the case.

The dean says it comes to the same rationale, have to cut somewhere.

Berghaus said it seems like it is inducing a bias.

The dean said $150 might cover 100% of your on island travel. Why does local travel get such a high % paid?

Berghaus said he is in agreement with the 100% piece, but lets give little money to local trips.
The dean suggested $50

Ruby said he is not into banking and accounting, want to clarify. What is the university weighing? Could the university borrow money to give to the TG, but would look risky?

The dean said UVIC doesn’t borrow, but runs the university within the budget available.

Ellington noted the dean had said in past students fellowships were cut off when they completed their degree, and the remaining amounts were rolled into the travel grants. She asked the dean to please explain the changes to the fellowship funding that decreased the funds available – why make the change to keep the fellowship once their exam was done.

The dean said some students finished their defence in November. Some would have been done, some would have revisions. Was it more fair to keep it in some cases, some cases they were cut off. Students would ask, are you going to refund my tuition for that portion?

The dean said the other change is the unit/dept funding – they get a total amount and a way to spend it. Provided a lot more flexibility about how to put those pieces together. They didn't always have a good match bout how to spend the funds. Sometimes they had something left.. now it is all getting out to the students in the units, and it is all getting spent. Don’t expect to see any soft money left over.

Canning thanked the dean for coming for the discussion.

Dean Devor left at 6:34 pm

7. Travel Grants policy changes

Canning suggested continuing to the Travel Grants motions while the discussion was fresh.

Fairweather asked whether the motion from the AGM has gone forward. Canning said they should be accepting applications based on conference presentation, must PROVE you have spoken to claim at the presenter level.

Erickson asked whether this gave people a way to jump queue?

Canning said the problem was that people who were presenting applied, they were always too late for the chance to get funds.

Chappel it makes the deadline the same for all groups.

Graham said the first time priority also neutralizes it because people likely won't get a second grant.

Hough said the "first time" policy proposal is problem when you have 1 year MA and 5 yr PhD students—it's not fair!
Berghaus said since we just had a lengthy discussion about the motions, perhaps we could ask if there are changes to Exec's recommendations.

Ellingwood asked if you are going to apply before being accepted to speak will the money be set aside waiting.

Canning said yes you apply before, claim after the conference, must bring paperwork to FGS within 30 days of attending the conference.

Ellingwood asked what if someone doesn't go.

Canning said they wouldn't be able to receive the funds and they could go to someone else.

Canning said the GSS Executive Board did discuss different lengths of time, shortening the notice required to prove you are speaking, problems of submitting receipts because some students travel after the conference before returning.

Ellingwood said they have to submit conference presentation proof by the date of the conference.

Canning said her personal opinion is that this is burdensome on the student.

Rietveld said that after she got back the money was available. She said she would have been extra mad if I had NOT gone and then had it come through on the wait list. She said she never got the money because had submitted elsewhere and been funded.

Canning said there is now a suggestion to set a deadline to apply of the 1st of the month.

Rietveld said this is not helpful for booking flights.

Park said that the money bumps down to those who are committed enough to go anyway, which is hard for those with less money.

a) TRAVEL GRANTS MOTION 1 - removing wait list

M/S Magnusson/Frank
RESOLVED the travel grants policy is amended to remove wait-listing process.

Canning noted the Executive recommended rejecting this proposal because the wait-list allows us to have accurate information about the number of grants requested and sometimes results in students receiving a grant due to another student cancelling.

Berghaus said if the criteria is changed, not a good measure. We will need another measure. Don't want to measure how well we are weeding people out.
Riddett said the idea the GSS would get better data own survey is true.

Davies agreed with the idea we are better with own data. Better to know we will get it.

Trahan thought the question is really that of removing the potential to have a grant. The only people whose life is easier with this policy is the dean's! What happens to the people who were close to the situation?

Graham said probably going to a conference, slim chance, rather of having no chance, is good. Going expecting not to getting and then the funds coming though ... he would be happy to have the potential.

Magnusson said it doesn't benefit just Dean Devor. The value of certainty is important. If you are certain, you are able to make other plans. You may have to withdraw. Somewhere there is another person who may get a spot because you drop out.

Berghaus said as a further counter point it was mentioned that money got freed up would go to to the next month.

Canning, so there are 10 grants, 11 apply, should the eleventh person not have the opportunity? Then one of the ten drops and the 12th person shows up to apply and gets a grant! A wait list would be more fair in that situation.

Hough said if we get rid of wait list, I am applying every month.

Bakker said do you have to apply for the month you are going.

Trahan said he could do research every month!

Erickson suggested perhaps we should have a three person wait list... that way you are on the list because there is a chance you will get the funds.

Routh said this is interrelated it depends on the other motions. Wait list applies depending on whether we change other things and how these policies are working.

Routh moved to TABLE the motion until after the other travel grants motions TABLED

Park said there may be advantages of asking for different months.

b) TRAVEL GRANTS MOTION 2 - funding presenters only
Canning read the motion as presented in the agenda:
MOTION 2: BIRT travel grants policy be amended to limit the grants to graduate students giving
presentations only

She noted discussion thus far suggested a different motion might be more appropriate.

M/S Davies/Erickson
RESOLVED travel grants policy amended to limit the grants to students giving presentations and research only, where “presentations” includes participation, research, leading workshops, performances, i.e. presentations as relevant for each department, or activities where your name is on the program; and where "research" includes archives work, field work, attending workshops, or equivalent as relevant to the students' discipline.

Trahan asked whether onus could be put on the departments to ensure what is important for the student.

Berghaus suggested the wording makes it exclusive, rather than prioritized.

Canning we could circulate messaging about not wasting the grants.

Hough said that there was $30,000 used for attending. So this would free up attending funds.

West asked what the relationship of criteria would be.

Chappel this would mean those not “presenting” but doing research would be included.

West asked whether this matched the dean's definitions.

Trahan asked if there was a lower “attending” level, such as:
- Presenting (name on a program – presenting, leading a workshop, playing, performing) for $500
- Researching (archives, dig, participation in a workshop) for $150
- Conference attendance for a lower amount

Bakker suggested there are workshops and conferences, and in music there is also presentations of compositions.

Routh suggested if we bring back the presentations we are arguing in circles. We are not trying to asse the merits, we are trying to find an administrative solution. Even a presenter may not be super active in the conference – we don't know the merit of each person.

Trahan said he would like to put the onus on the department, not restrict a possibility. The possibility has merit in itself.

Berghaus said the way it is worded right now you can only apply. What happens if I am doing
research? There isn't necessarily an organized event.

Riddett asked how critical is it we vote on it today.

QUESTION was called.

CARRIED
Trahan noted his opposition.

c) TRAVEL GRANTS MOTION 3 - changing deadlines

MOTION M/S Canning/Park
RESOLVED travel grants policy be amended to establish application cut off deadlines for each month. Students would need to apply by March 1 in order to receive funding in March.
CARRIED

d) TRAVEL GRANTS MOTION 4 - increasing GSS contribution

M/S Berghaus/Trahan
RESOLVED The Grad Council recommends raising the GSS contribution to travel grants to $37,500 annually.

Park was asked if this was possible for the GSS to afford. Park asked Chappel about the latest estimates.

Chappel said the enrolment this year was higher than the budget projections, and this year the GSS had upped the contribution on a one time basis, so it would likely be possible to continue if the budget remained similar to this year.

M Amend Erickson
To amend the motion to strike "to 27,500 annually" and replace with "25% - 30% subject to budget approval".
Amendment CARRIED

Park suggested he bring a budget presentation to the February 15 Grad Council.

CARRIED as amended

e) TRAVEL GRANTS MOTION 5

Canning explained that this comes from the idea of using max UVIC claims to cap food expenses... so you know in advance the amount you can spend.

M/S Graham/Gravel-Miguel
RESOLVED travel grants policy be amended to ensure forms include budgeting tools for students, showing maximum possible to claim as per UVic policy.

Trahan why is food included in the funding.

Canning said it was just because it is an expense, and people had to eat out.

Magnussen asked why is it important to make a budget – the grant not going to cover all your costs anyway ...isn't it just enough to show the receipts?

Canning said sometimes people use less than the capped amount. You may have food provided.

Trahan said your flight may be covered.

Magnussen said some conferences they want all the receipts...would be nice to have the ability to choose which receipts go where.

Frank asked if it was necessary to submit receipts for food. He said it is not normal to submit receipts. Normally there is a per diem amount.

Trahan asked what tools this refers to.

Canning it is just trying to make the tools available.

M amend
To ensure forms refer to the relevant policy on maximums for travel expenses at UVIC.

Amendment CARRIED

CARRIED

f) TRAVEL GRANTS MOTION 6 - non-local travel only.

Canning noted the GSS recommending against this. Vancouver island, Seattle, Vancouver. Would restrict research in this area.

Erickson suggested we discuss this idea.

Quorum was checked.

It was noted the meeting had lost quorum.

Berghaus volunteered for electoral officer.
**TASK**: Chappel was directed to circulate a vote to elect Berghaus to the electoral officer to the GRC email list. Chappel was directed to to circulate call for election appeals committee volunteers.

Riddett sought volunteers for supervisory relationship ad-hoc committee. He noted the committee had not met yet, have done some research, seeking a few more people, trying to get someone from every faculty so there is representation of the types of relationships.

Canning thanked the grad reps for their patience.

**Canning TABLED remaining items to the February 15, 2011 Grad Council.**

**TASK** Chappel was directed to send the GRC and email calling for department reports for circulation

8. **Events**
   Notices of upcoming events were circulated.

Adjourned at 7:52pm

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Approved, Chair

Adrian Canning

Approved, Executive Director

Mary Chappel