Present:
Neda Savic, Biochemistry & Microbiology
Kierstyn Butler, Child & Youth Care
Germán Poo-Camaño, Computer Science
Xiaoxi Du, Electrical & Computer Engineering
Chris Lim, Exercise Science, Physical Health & Education
Rhiannon Murphy, History
Andrew Agbay, Neuroscience
Madeline Holden, Pacific & Asian Studies
Cory Shankman, Physics & Astronomy

John Sheehan, Psychology
Ryan Butler, Sociology
Katrina Flanders, Chair
Amanda McLaughlin, Director of Communications
Hilary Cullen, Director of Services
Elissa Whittington, Director of Student Affairs

Present, non-voting:
GSS Office Coordinator, recorder: Matthew Park
Meeting chair: David Huxtable

Regrets received:
Regan Shrum, Art History & Visual Studies
Andrew Lemieux, Business Administration
Constance Sobsey, Biochemistry & Microbiology
Caroline Winter, English
Tanya Taggart-Hodge, Environmental Studies

Bryan Mood, Geography
Estelle Kurier, Hispanic & Italian Studies
Nicole Edgar, Linguistics
Garrett Culos, Mathematics & Statistics
Anna Tobias, Social Work

Absent:

Vacant seats:
Anthropology
Biology
Chemistry
Community Development
CUPE 4163
Curriculum & Instruction
Dispute Resolution
Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies
Environmental Studies
Health Information Science

Indigenous Education
Indigenous Governance
Nursing
Philosophy
Public Administration
Public Health & Social Policy
Studies in Policy & Practice
Theatre
Writing

STANDING ITEMS:

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 5:07pm with Huxtable in the Chair.
The chair noted quorum was not met. No motions would be considered, but reports would be received. Those present introduced themselves to the room.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Cory Shankman noted that he thinks the Executive Reports are automatically considered received as part of the agenda, and doesn't require a motion for approval.

**MINUTES**

The February 24, 2015 minutes could not be approved as the meeting was non-quorate.

**BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

None.

**MEETING BUSINESS:**

**ELECTION REPORT**

Chief Electoral Office reported on the results of the election. Alexander Kovalchuk's term begins June 15th.

**BY-LAW CHANGE UPDATE**

GSS Chair Katrina Flanders spoke briefly to the by-law change passed at the March 24 SAGM. Robert's Rules calls for a 2/3 majority, but the Society act calls for 75%, so the change could not be implemented.

The changes do not apply until they are formally registered by the Registrar of Societies.

Thanks to the Organizational Development committee for their work on this.

**REPORT ON EXECUTIVE MEETING WITH DEAN CAPSON**

GSS Chair Flanders spoke to the Executive's meeting with Dean Capson. The Dean stressed the renewal of the Supervisory Relationship Policy, which has not been updated since 2007. He intends to review the document and create a concrete policy -- is seeking grad student feedback on what works well (and doesn't) with supervisors.

Faculty of Graduate Studies Governance -- FGS currently meets once per month; Dean Capson would like to increase grad student participation: GSS Chair + one MA and one PhD student. He would also like to review participation from graduate advisors.

Funding Offer letters -- FGS is working on a standardized letter for students that explains funding, what's included, not included, how long it will renewable, etc. Madeline Holden asked if a Committee would be formed to assist with the review of the Supervisory Relationship document; Flanders responded that yes that will occur in September. Cory Shankman suggested that the GSS propose a certain number of designated grad seats on this working committee.
ANCILLARY FEES AND EARLY DEFENSE TUITION

"Completion Postponement Fee Adjustment" -- those defending and submitting their final thesis/dissertation in the first 15 days of term can **apply** to have their tuition reduced to $250 for the term. *Calendar days? Business days? From the first day of term, or first day of month?*

Poo-Camañosuggested that some departments may already be able to offer students a defence in the first two weeks of term **without any fees at all!** Is this a widely-available option of which grad students could avail themselves?

Holden suggested that students often cannot defend due to the limited availability of their committee members, and shouldn’t be assessed any defence fee for this at all.

McLaughlin noted that the Dean is very much in favour of pro-rated tuition. This is meant to be a stepping stone in the right direction. SFU has already implemented such a pro-rated tuition scheme, which is what Dean Capson is ultimately trying to get.

Shankman commented that in his opinion this fee should be purely for the ability to defend, and should not entitle members to a bus pass or health coverage.

Poo-Camañonoted that international students may have to stay in Canada additional time to receive their reimbursement, as the process can sometimes take 3-4 weeks.

Holden and Shankman both expressed concern that this "band-aid" solution may reduce the urgency and momentum of pursuing a more complete solution (i.e., pro-rated tuition).

Sheehan was sympathetic to these concerns, but cautioned GRC not to deny financial relief to those who could experience it in the pursuit of a more perfect solution.

**Straw Polls**
Should those paying a defence fee almost pay at least part of a society fee? Mostly yes.
Should defending students automatically be assessed the U-Pass fee? No.
Should the health plan be automatically assessed? Split, but mostly opposed.
Should we take this question to a referendum? Yes.

2015-16 STRATEGIC PLAN

GSS Chair Katrina Flanders introduced the Executive Board's annual plan. Key priorities include: **improving effectiveness of GRC** (primary), advocacy within the university, GSS member communications, long-term projects.

Director of Student Affairs Elissa Whittington spoke to how the board generated these priorities, including a survey of GRC members; staff annual review; information from outgoing Board members; a meeting with Dean Capson; a briefing on the history of the proposed building renovation as well as feedback from members on that issue.

New rules passed at the March AGM means that GRC reps will each sit on a committee or task force.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Holden (Pacific & Asian Studies) just completed a major review; the department seems to be disintegrating. Results of the review not yet available.
Butler (Sociology) reported a debate on the discrepancy in assigned hours between tutorial leading and TA-ing.

McLaughlin reported that Biology only has TAs, not Tutorial Instructors, but was hired (outside of CUPE) as a TI. Other grad students have been hired only to mark their respective supervisors’ exams.

Hilary Cullen (Exercise Science, Physical Health & Education) reported that TAs have been asked to fill gaps in their knowledge by attending their class not as part of their assigned hours. Application form may say that you must "voluntarily fill gaps in knowledge".

There was discussion of CUPE4163 Collective Agreement and concerns about violations in various departments.

CLOSING ITEMS

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

Meeting was non-quorate. Executive Board has already highlighted the Strategic Plan, which has been the recent focus of the Board's work.

NOTICES OF MOTION

None.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Organizational Development is coming up, but not yet set. Elissa Whittington encouraged the room to join Org Dev, even if only for the Summer, to help organise the new task forces and committees.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT TO DINNER AT THE GRAD HOUSE

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 pm.

__________________________________  ________________________________
Approved Chair                         Approved Executive Director