UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA GRADUATE STUDENTS' SOCIETY

GRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 27, 2011

Present:

Anthropology: Amanda Robins
Biochemistry & Microbiology: Ryan Blackler
Biology: Caylaw Naumann
Chemistry: Zohrab Ahmadi
Child & Youth Care: Scott Kouri
Community Development: Barbara West
Computer Science: Przemek Lach
Dispute Resolution: Kelly Watson
Economics: Justin Tyndall
English: Max Olesen
English: Sandra Friesen
Exercise science, Physical Health & Education: Tosha Lobsinger
German & Slavic Studies: Ryan Severn
Global Business: Doug Delange
Greek & Roman Studies: Craig Harvey
Hispanic & Italian Studies: Estelle Kurier
History in Art: Brian Pollick
History: Nicholas Burton-Vulovic
Law: Michelle Zakrison

Regrets: None

Mathematics & Statistics Chris Duffy
Music: Iain Gillis
Nursing: Pal Skar
Physics & Astronomy: Frank Berghaus
Psychology: Mario Baldassari
Public Administration (Alt): Brieanne Roberts
Public Administration: Laura Branswell
Social Dimensions of Health: Elietha Bocskai
Theatre: Kathy Bishop
GSS Chair: Julia Munk
GSS Director of Communications: Michael Anthony
GSS Director of Services: Yannin Xu
GSS Director of Student Affairs, Fulton Doyos
GSS Director of Finance: Matthew Park
GSS Executive Director: Stacy Chappell

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 pm with Julia Munk in the chair.

STANDING ITEMS

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

M/S Watson/Park

RESOLVED the meeting agenda is approved as presented.

CARRIED

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

M/S Anthony/Watson

RESOLVED Minutes of the February 15, 2011 Graduate Representative Council meeting are approved as presented.

CARRIED
[Pizza arrived.]

Munk called for a five minute recess for pizza.

INTRODUCTIONS

Munk asked for a round of introductions.

WELCOME AND ORIENTATION

Munk referred to the orientation package and asked if there were any questions.

A member asked about the success on tuition payments by installments and noted there is a fee associated with this.

Chappel said it was a partial victory, that the fee was less than the interest penalty for paying over a few months late. She said previous policy was to refuse issue of fellowship cheques Oct 1 if tuition was not paid by September 30.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Anthony noted he wanted to set up a new website, including a grad council section which will have multiple authors, and you will all have access to the blog and be able to post to it. He asked the grad council members to think about bringing a short report to the next meeting. He also said he is open to suggestions and tips!!

Dispute Resolution: Watson reported decreasing enrolment trends went from 30 to 20 students. In law school, starting a DR club for grad students, putting on law school events.

Social Determinates of Health: Boscokie noted she is co-rep with Kimberley Sharpe. The SDH program is in interdisciplinary program, and only 2 years old. She is in the first cohort, which is small, about 20 people. Things are going swimmingly. One of the challenges of the program is INTD and struggle is TA-ship is because there are no undergrads to teach!!! Some have got TA-ships with their supervisor’s departments.

Anthropology: Robins reported anthropology has a grad student rep in the dept faculty meetings. New professor was hired. Claudine Gravel-Miguel successfully defended. Department had huge increase in grad students this year. This summer there was field school, first archeology dig for UVIC, held in South Africa. Last night awesome lecture on fermented beverages.

Exercise Science, Physical Health and Education: Lobsiger reported EPHE had an enrolment increase from about 15 to 30 this year. As a result, AIS cheques went down.

Computer Science: Lach reported he attended department meeting. The department is revamping undergrad programs, going well. Lots of consultation was done in the department. Computer Science is looking to add another MA program to target people who work in the industry who want to do a concurrent MA while working.

English: Friesen reported last year ENGL and grad reps were unhappy with UVIC policy of publishing PhD thesis online. Last year that was all resolved, this summer this came up that the solution was not good enough, and PhD students would need to publish online. This policy would prevent a PhD student from getting a deal to publish their work as a novel. Chair advocated strongly on behalf of the grad students negotiated a 5 year deferral with an optional extension. Something new: the grad student colloquia. They will invite interested
other departments to come. Something bitchy: continued unrest about grad student carrels function, and undergrad use of grad library carrels.

Watson asked if there could there be a swipe to get in the space.

Friesen said they drafted a detailed letter about the problem and some proposed solution, approving through English grad student society. Invite support through other departments.

**Theatre:** Bishop reported there was a faculty meeting on 20th. On September 9 had a student oral defense for PhD, they did well! Upcoming season starts October 13 with *Love Kills*. Come out and see the show!

**Music:** Gillis reported there was a successful launch of *Musicological Explorations* journal. Dept meeting is on access copyright focus.

**Greek & Roman Studies:** Harvey reported the department had started the Athera lecture series.

**Economics:** Tyndall reported there was a first dept meeting – the department has acknowledged a problem with communicating with supervisors – not responding to students, for example. Letter went out to students saying dept is aware of the issue and working on it.

**Community Development:** West reported she is part of the first cohort of this program, which is within Public Admin. Her cohort just had a second residency period. Second cohort started in May 2011. They were larger with 26 students, and all from other provinces and counties. Expenses to travel here for the residency are an issue. There are some distance student issues becoming more prominent, due to new programs for working professionals. Due to cutbacks the CD program is being offered only every 2 years.

**Biology:** Naumann reported there are a record number of new students: 50 total grad students, 20 total new. Haven't actually received AIS cheque yet, but the memo was this went way down for everyone.

**Physics & Astronomy:** Berghaus reported there were three successful defenses. There is a gaggle of new students, one of which is taking the ocean physics course, first to do so in 5-6 years... the problem being faculty have retired and courses no longer exist. Supervisor and advisor are working something out. Another issue ... in upcoming drama, the department is thinking of hiring a new faculty, which will cut back as much funding as would cover the TA positions.... How will we assign up all the TA-ships to cover the work. Within the next year, this will be an interesting issue.

**Chemistry:** Ahmadi reported the department hired a new chair who started July 1. Chemistry did not have a chair for over a year.

**Mathematics & Statistics:** Duffy reported the grad students, have formed a grad students society within Mathematics & Statistics, helping with events. Society runs weekly seminar, which is a place to practice giving talks prior to conferences. Issue over the summer, had students finish. The template online for thesis does not match the FGS requirements. That led to an interesting few weeks.

**Psychology:** Baldassari reported the Neuropsychology program is taking off this fall.

**History:** Burton-Vulovic reported there is a general complaint about not having enough money for student funding.

**Law:** Zackrison reported there was recently a successful MA completion. She said due to the promotion of the program she thought she could finish in one year, and had been applying for work for the term after
expected completion. She raised a concern when she found this was unrealistic, but got a negative response. Advertising the program as one year seems unrealistic and unfair when the rate of completion within one year is low. She noted she knows this is a concern in other programs such as English. She reported they have a colloquium coming up on political, social, and legal theory. She also noted concern that the Grad House is understaffed.

History in Art: Pollick reported one thing of concern to faculty and grad students – number of new grad students is half what it was two years ago (down from 14). Numbers are down in courses, which means there are not as many TAs but the teaching load is high. On the positive side, grad students are publishing Articulation online, first issue December. The journal is peer reviewed at a level appropriate to grad students. There are three articles in the first issue. He will send a link to post at the GSS. This year is the 15th annual Impetus conference, trying to reach scope beyond art history to meaning of images in other disciplines. Last year someone from environmental students gave a presentation, which was great. The conference is held in January. Sara Checkly, the alt grad council rep, is coordinating, and is about ready to go!!

Hispanic & Italian Studies: Kurier reported the department is always welcoming grad rep to meetings. There was a September 6th meeting. There was also a September 9th welcome ... but only one new grad student! Department colloquium will be held October 20th and 21st – the subject is migrants in the Spanish and Italian world. There will be a Lansdowne speaker, and grad students are invited to the outing with the Lansdowne. The department chair is very supportive of grad students. Some of the dept will be teaching as sessionals, students are very happy with this.

Global Business: Delange said the program is relatively new, with a second cohort this year. They just welcomed all exchange students—partnership between three universities (Austria, China, UVIC).

Nursing: Skar reported 59 distance students just started the program. They had to come to spend 4 days, cost of travel is an issue. This is the first time the department has a distance PhD program. This year also marks the start of a Health Information/Nursing combined MA – a first in North America. Skar noted he would like to keep in touch with English re publishing.

Public Administration: Branswell reported cohorts are the first to be reduced (from 50 to 30) for this year’s on campus group. A distance student rep was also elected to grad council as an alternate.

Child & Youth Care: Kouri reported the department launched a open source journal International Journal or Child, Youth and Family Studies. Queen Alexandria interracial families day this weekend. Thanks for pizza!

Biochemistry & Microbiology: Blackler reported the department has eight new grad students this year. They had a meet and greet with grads and faculty, which went well. Last year there was a PhD completion (yay!). Two weeks ago, department faculty meeting was held, a student representative attended, and there were no major issues. Department is trying to hire someone in the Proteomics centre. All international hires had to turn down position due to immigration difficulties.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Munk referred to the written reports. She asked if there were questions

Zarkison noted the reports contain lots of acronyms! Also she was unsure what the executive members did due to some entries lacking details – like “interviews”.

Friesen agreed – a one pager update of the issues would be great!
Chappel noted there is a policy asking that reports be a point form list but a presentation of key issues could also be added.

Anthony said as Director of Communications he is responsible for all print and online media, and editor in chief. Used to have the unacknowledged source but this year the goal is to shift to a political blog and an interdisciplinary peer review journal. He noted the meeting will be talking about the strategic plan later. He noted that if departments have events like upcoming colloquia, please let him know so he can help promote. gssdcomm@uvic.ca is his email.

Berghaus asked what has come of work on website?

Anthony said he has hired a firm who are redesigning the website. He has been through three proofs to date. The project didn’t make a September launch, looking for a launch in the next few weeks. He noted he also managed to get 1000 1GB flash drives. Will synch our events calendar with iCal or google. Will have them for distribution in October.

Munk reported she chairs grad council and executive meetings. She sits on a number of different university committees, such as FGS, Senate Committee for Appeals, represent GSS to external groups. In the past six months have gone to a lot of UVIC committee meetings, following FGS working with the dean developing clear procedures for travel grants, working on academic accommodations policies for grad students, supporting other exec with orientations.

A member asked about Travel grants – has the craziness changed much??

Munk said there was not too much change, still need to apply early! We are working with the Dean of Graduate Studies to clarify procedures, but it is a struggle.

Park reported as Director of Finance he was involved in restructuring office staffing. Chappel is job sharing with Operations and Services Manager, Brandy Sistili – she is responsible for front of house and administration in the restaurant, and overseeing some office services. Park also chairs Food and Beverage Committee meetings, and acts as executive liaison for the finance committee with the bookkeeper. To date he is changing some of the reporting mechanisms, trying to initiate some new reporting that is helpful for ongoing information for people new to group. He started making some short term investments, working around cash flow. The audit is also completed, and the society is in the black (but not too far in the black). Collective bargaining ongoing with restaurant and he and Sistili are the management reps on this committee. Park noted he sits on the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee – new policies are coming down, mostly from office student affairs.

Dogus reported that as Student Affairs she is responsible for advocacy for students, helping students with problems. So far have had two students. She also organized department orientations. She sits on five university and GSS committees. A key project right now is establishing a GSS advocacy office – have two volunteers right now.

Xu reported that as Director of Services she is coordinating social events for grad students. Have had brewery tour, cidery tour, welcome bbq, canoeing trip to date. She also works to get donated door prizes from external businesses, did very well on donations this year! Students are stating a grad students outdoors group. Xu will circulate a call for volunteers. -- next October 6 international grad student welcome breakfast, which is free for all grad students.

M/S Berghaus/West
RESOLVED Executive Reports are approved.

CARRIED

INTERNAL BUSINESS

STRATEGIC PLAN

Munk reported she spent a lot of the summer drafting the plan, and redrafting after her laptop was stolen.

Gong may or may not be the most important priority.... this is not in priority order.

Anthony suggested any feedback on improving this plan, please keep telling us. This is generally what we will do unless we are pushed by urgent matter to another issue.

Skar said he is interested in the GRC structure issue.

A member asked if the housing on campus refers to the issue of not being able to sublet when on co-op.

Park clarified that this housing issue was about increasing grad student housing.

Chappel noted that issues like that of housing for co-op students would be something that could be added as an issue.

Bocskei offered support for food security committee

Munk reported the campaign is looking at community kitchen project along with the restaurant, but that is still in the air. Grad students are not paying into the UVSS food bank, and the UVSS is looking to cut grad students off from using the food back. Munk had some concerns about information collection, and thought might be able to provide a better service.

Oleson and Zakrison said they are also interested in helping the food security campaign.

Munk suggested that since people were volunteering we could strike committees for each issue and then the committee could meet and start working, then report back in the November meeting.

Advocate Program: Duffy and Zakrison volunteered.

Structural separation from the UVSS:

Naumann said that as someone who went from being a UVSS member to the GSS she would like to stay connected to UVSS. Others might not have the tie, but she wondered if this could be factored in.

Munk said one of the issues is that we are sending funding over to the UVSS, we don’t have control over. We are currently pretty separate, but we are not in control of our own members.

Anthony noted he also did his udergrad here, looking more accountability. We would still fund the clubs, but they would make a pitch to grad council about how they would use the funds to support grad students. To make use our funds are going to graduate students.

Nursing – how many distance students are there in FGS... need to get the numbers!! They may not benefit from groups run by the UVSS.
Volunteers for Structural Separation from the UVSS committee: Roberts, Skar

**Housing**

Volunteers: Friesen, Baldassari

**Graduate Student Representation on the Board of Governors**

Munk reported the GSS is seeking to get dedicated seat on BOG. would love to run a campaign to get people elected!! Any computer expertise for computing is welcome!

Volunteers: Roberts said she might be able to help.

**Funding and Graduate Student Support:**

Volunteers: Gillis

Park noted everyone rep could ask around about funding ... what is going on in their department.

SUPPORTING DEPARTMENTAL COUNCILS:

Munk – we are trying to understand whether there are student organizations within your department, and what relationships would you have with department councils.

Chappel introduced Starke who is attending as a guest from Computer Science, where they are just setting up a department council. Members with councils functioning well may wish to touch base regarding structure and options.

Anthony said we are seeking information about departmental representation, distributed web vote to elect representatives

Chappel described option for department societies, said some groups may be working well and like to be autonomous. Some advantages to having groups come under the GSS would be sharing directors insurance for events, having support when the society went dormant, and having a means to store records. There could also be web-based elections for department society elections, and representation to Faculty Councils.

Friesen said in English they have solid group, but have major issues being taken seriously by the faculty. She said she really likes this idea because it can be formalized. Could this lend each of our departmental societies more legitimacy?

Anthony said currently this is a fact finding mission, please let us know about your structure.

Kurier said web vote model may not work for her department.

Park: noted the cohort issue ... lots of students may not mingle with other department, may miss out on events of the department and representation.

**DISTANCE STUDENTS**

West referred to the written submission from the Community Development 2011 cohort. They had several suggestions of how the GSS could help students like them more, such as short term bus passes, assistance with low cost accommodation. GSS fees are an issue for distance students, too, since they aren't always using on campus services.
TASK: Chappel to get distance student enrolment numbers from FGS.

A member noted there may be students who are not officially distance education students, but who are in the writing stage and living out of town.

Chappel said such students can register as distance and would not be charged athletics, bus pass, or GSS health and dental fees.

Committee members: Dogus (Chair), Roberts, Skar, West

RECOGNITION OF DEPARTMENTS FOR REPRESENTATION ON THE GRC

Chappel noted the GSS is looking to strike a committee about how this body is structured and connects with departments and now programs.

Anthony referred to page 29 of the agenda. The GSS realized recently some of our reps are not actually from departments but from programs or schools... this is an issue in consistency with the bylaws and also an issue because we also issue department funding. The GSS would like to strike a committee to set up a way to set new representatives ... would like every graduate students to have representation and contact to a rep.

Committee members: Anthony (chair), Berghaus, Roberts, Duffy, Bocskei

EXTERNAL REQUEST

REPRESENTATIVE TO THE APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE FOR THE DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES

M/S Dogus/Park

RESOLVED Brian Pollick is the GSS graduate council rep to the Appointment Committee for the Dean of Graduate Studies

CARRIED

CLOSING ITEMS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chappel noted nominations are open for a Faculty of Graduate Studies student rep to Senate.

NOTICES OF MOTION

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

[Meeting adjourned at 7:04pm]

Approved, Chair

Approved, Executive Director
sc/SC