From: Ming Lei Chair
To: Graduate Representative Council
Date: November 21, 2013

October 13, 2013 -- November 21, 2013

INTRODUCTION

As GSS Chair, I act as the official spokesperson for the society. I am the primary liaison between the Society and the University administration, University Senate, the Board of Governors, Faculty and Graduate Studies, Graduate Executive Committee and external political bodies. Internally, I chair the Executive Council and the Graduate representative Council and am responsible for coordinating the activities of both.

Sitting on the Grad Fee Reduction Appeals Committee (GradFRAC) to help graduate students get reasonable approve for their fee appeals.

Sitting on the Chaplaincy Advisory Committee to support multi-faith services in order to make UVic campus more diversity and equity.

Sitting on Faculty of Graduate Studies to discuss issues arising, such as: new graduate program proposals, new or revised graduate policies and/or procedures among many other issues.

Sitting on Graduate Executive Committee to advises and assists the dean in the policy and decision making processes and makes motions on appropriate matters for consideration at Faculty of Graduate Studies meetings.

Sitting on the GSS and UVic operational relations committees to maintain strong and cooperative working with relationships with Graduate Studies.

Sitting on the GSS and UVic Executive boards committees to communicate regarding significant activities with senior UVic administration.
Attending every Wednesday coffees to talk with graduate students and learn what is happening and problems to them in order to make better service for students.

ORGNIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Discussion:

The purpose of the committee is to review GSS policy and to ensure it is up to date, and in keeping with current policies. This year, updates need to be made to reflect:

- Employment policy updates (notably making sure references to union and management benefits are clear, and creating policy on excluded non-management staff).

- Update any committee terms of reference that come under review by the committee looking at the GSS representation structure, the board has identified: the Finance Committee, Food and Beverage, Committee and Organizational Development Committee as committees that will probably need review. Currently, Stacy, David and Brain are the people sitting on this committee.

Actions

Issues already identified for the committee to work on:
1. Food and Beverage employees – change and refer to collective agreement
2. Create an Excluded employees benefit policy

Issues that may also arise:
Governance items, as a result of review of GSS governance and representation structure. Chappel noted the policy had not been updated to reflect the unionization of restaurant staff, nor was there policy to cover excluded staff. David suggested looking at previous administrative staff policy as a guide for excluded employee policy.

Time:

4 hours

INTRENATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT

Discussion:

International graduate students are an increasing population at the university, and the GSS wishes to ensure our services are well designed for their needs. This was initially an event advertised solely to international graduate students, but upon request from many international students was made an open event to encourage international students to meet Canadian students at the beginning of their degree. As we know, International students are in particular need of help when they first arrive, and GSS services need to be designed with international students in mind, UVIC services for international students need to be designed with graduate students in mind.
Actions:

a) Make a proposal to increase the number of activities for students, like salmon watch of gold stream, hike and so on. Because some students who do not have a car, but they really want to go around visit outside of Victoria, so we can help them by designing such activities.

b) Have a pancake international student, supplying a delicious breakfast, and make students have a free conversation.

Time:

4 hours

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COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS AND FACULTY TO HELP GSS MEMBERS
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Discussion:

The GSS is a student driven organization that depends on the support and participation of its members for success. We identified that graduate students are creatures of habit and if we are going to incorporate the GSS into fabric of the UVic graduate students’ experience, then we need to establish early relationship with our members, to make everyone realize GSS is home for all graduate students.

Actions:

1, I almost attend free coffee every Wednesday morning between 9:00 to 10:30 am, keeping talking with members from different departments and countries to learn what is new problems haunting them, and what we can do for them. Also, do my best make a close relationship with graduate students.

2, Try to meeting with Dean of Engineer, we want to look for some opportunities which can help engineer students, especially on co-op and fulltime jobs chance, research cooperation with Industry Company.

3, I had a meeting with AVP Jim, we had a discussion on enlarging quiet space for students, which is very urgent proposal for students. And now we had put it into UVic-GSS Executive board meeting agenda, planned to talk with President on how to do it.

Time:

Every week 1.5 hours on Wednesday coffee, meeting with Jim (1 hour), meeting with Dean of Engineer(0.5 hour)

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MEETINGS ATTENDED
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GSS MEETINGS

Since Oct 13,
I keep chairing the GSS Executive board meetings and never regretted each meeting. I also regularly meet with Stacy on agenda of incoming GSS Executive board meetings every two weeks. Recent I chaired GSS organizational development committee with Stacy, David, which happened on Nov 15 and Nov 19 separately. From these meetings, I learned a lot from Stacy and David, especially on how to make GSS policy completely perfect and more effective on solve the troublesome problems.

**EXTERNAL MEETINGS**

Since Oct 13,

I continue to represent the GSS on the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Graduate Executive Committee which is regularly meeting. It is normally chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The meeting times are separately Oct 23, Oct 24 and Nov 21.

I am sitting on GradFRAC, which is chaired by Bert who is direct of Graduate Admission and Records, and the meetings happened on Nov 20.

I represent the GSS to sit on Research Advisory Committee to talk about some issues on research, which happened on Oct 23.

I have monthly meetings with Jim Duson who is AVP student affairs, talking about what is happening on GSS, or share some suggestions for him to improve student services, which happened Oct 18.

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**CONCLUSION**

Since Oct 13, I continue to work for GSS and every member of GSS as GSS Chair, doing my best to finish my responsibility and duty which is given by GSS. Yet chairing Graduate Representative Council (GRC) meeting is still a challenging work for me, and last GRC meeting I did not work well, sincerely thanks for Cory’ help and every representative’s understanding. And I will continue to work hard to realize my dream, make GSS become every member’s home, and certainly I will keep learning from everyone, no matter you are from Canada, or other countries, your countries’ special culture and custom, tradition, national spirit is still attractive and amazing for me.

As a member of GSS Executive board, I am really thankful for Stacy chapel, who as the executive director ensures the smooth operation of the society, and she is still a very nice teacher for we new members of GSS Executive board, especially for me. Also thanks Brain, as finance director who is knowledgeable and experienced, comprehensive, making every our decision more better, and thanks Colleen, who is principal lady, insisting on her our responsibility and religion working for students who elected her to become a executive board member. For Jason, who is energetic and lively, did a lot of work for international student support, and Katrina, a beautiful and gentle lady, did so much work for student service, thanks a lot, Jason and Katrina. We are from different counties, different families, with different personality, working on different positions together to make our executive board team like perfect chessboard.

There are many silently working and unknown staff, but whose work is critical for GSS regular operations, Brandy who manages the restaurant, Mary who is coordinator of the health and dental
plan, Matt who is office coordinator, also including restaurant staff, and volunteers. Thanks very much for your important jobs.

GSS is not only a society for students, is a pretty platform for people who have much passion, who want to do some work for students, who want to do some contribution for our campus.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GRC meeting</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>GSS Executive board meeting /4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday coffee</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>GSS Wednesday coffee /3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting with AVP student affairs Jim /0.5</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSS international student pancake breakfast /1.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Executive board meeting / 2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>FGS meeting / 1.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Organization development committee meeting /4</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSS Exec Board meeting /2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Grad FRAC meeting/0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSS AGM meeting/2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>FGC meeting /2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications /based on average of 30 minutes per day/ 9.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
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Total: 24.5 31.5

22% international 17% graduate students 3037 graduate students 3:1 phd: master