University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Graduate Representative Council

MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 26, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 pm with KIM in the Chair, making the acknowledgement that the GSS convenes on the traditional Coast Salish territories of the Lekwungen speaking peoples.

Present:

Anthropology: Luke Kerman and Maya Cowan
Biochemistry & Microbiology: Teesha Baker
Biology: Lucianne Marshall and Malcolm Cowan
Civil Engineering: Pejman Azarsa
Computer Science: Seth Greylyn
Economics: Tien-Yun Arielle Shih
Environmental Studies: Tanya Tran
Exercise Science, Physical & Health Ed: Stephen Luehr
Germanic and Slavic Studies: Tessa Coutu
Greek and Roman Studies: Lee Anderson
History: Carla Osborne
Mathematics and Statistics: Joseph Horan
Neuroscience: Chad Williams
Philosophy: Gennady McCracken

Political Science: Ryan Bræ and Stephanie Grulhke
Psychology: Myles Maillet
Social Work: Madeleine Harber
Visual Arts: Marina DiMaio
Writing: Janet Munsil

Chair: Susan Kim
Director of Communications: Danny Martin
Director of Finance: Olga Gould
Director of Student Affairs: Gillian Dornan (arrived 5:20)
Director of Services: Jessica Wyatt

Executive Director: Stacy Chappell
Office Coordinator, Governance: Karen Potts

Regrets:

Physics and Astronomy: Maan Hani
Social Dimensions of Health: Lindsay Shaw

Absent:

Biochemistry & Microbiology: Emily Koide, Karen Lithgow
French: Emma Kwasnica and Regina Grishko

STANDING ITEMS

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion: RESOLVED to approve the agenda with the addition of reports from Ad Hoc and External committees.

M/S as per Executive Board

CARRIED
APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion: RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the July 25, 2017 Grad Council meeting as amended with minor corrections.

M/S: MARTIN/LUEHR

CARRIED

Discussion: Comments on past minutes were sent to CHAPPEL. Reminder that minutes are public and the importance to have appropriate, strategic content and easy to read formatting.

Amendment Motion: RESOLVED to amend July 25th minutes with minor corrections.

M/S: HORAN/WYATT

CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

MEETING BUSINESS

PRESENTATION & ORIENTATION

CHAPPEL provided an orientation 2017-18 GRC members. The full presentation is available for review on the GRC Connect site GRC September 26 2017 Meeting Agenda and Orientation.

The presentation includes information on:

- Governance Roles, Duties and Expectations – specifically GSS Executive Board versus Graduate Representative Council
- Purposes of the GSS
- History of the GSS work and major contributions to UVic and graduate student life
- Overview of what GSS provides to members
- Fiduciary duties of being a Board Director
- Legal context for GSS including the BC Society’s Act, University Act, Liquor Act, Insurance Act etc.
- GSS Organizational Structure – decision making authority and reporting structure including the relationships of committees and staff
- Key points on what makes a good graduate student representative, including knowing your role and duties, and suggestions for further learning to facilitate your engagement.

The full complement of the GRC for 2017-18 is 55 voting members: 49 from academic units, 5 from the Executive, 1 for CUPE 4163, 1 for INTD. There is one vote per department. Everyone will use the one department voting card to vote (as opposed to a show of hands) as sometimes the rep and alternate rep both attend and share the vote. The Executive Director is an ex-officio member of the GRC (non-voting).
REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

Review of Summer Progress: KIM provided an update of work undertaken over the past summer, 2017.

- Appreciation was expressed to MARTIN and former Director of Student Affairs for the CARSA video.
- The new website is almost ready for launch.
- Restaurant on schedule and budget for re-opening for January 2018.
- Successful referendum (thanks to ANISMAN, Electoral Officer) for a health and dental premium increase. Suggestions have been received for more information to be provided at AGM and SAGM regarding health, dental plans, trends. Bylaw and Policy Committee will also be doing investigation and research into health plan related policies.
- Appreciation to WYATT for many successful Welcome and Orientation events.
- Promotion for Welcome BBQ – everyone encouraged to attend. Request to promote the event in each home department.
- Appreciation to DORNAN for work on International Students Tuition advocacy, Mental Health resource work.
- Appreciation to GOULD for work on finance over the summer, notably the construction budget planning.
- Work underway to create opportunities for GRC reps to access various university trainings that are offered across campus.

Strategic Plan: Kim introduced the draft GSS Strategic Plan, developed by the Executive, for 2017-18 with the pillars of:

1. Wellbeing and community, including mental wellness;
2. Advocacy – including exploring have a staff role designated for advocacy, the university as employer;
3. Visibility – increase the awareness of the GSS work, services and contributions on campus;
4. Policy – working to create a long term plan for the sustainability and health of the GSS, and trainings for GRC members.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Events: WYATT reported on summer events (Bocce and Ice Cream, Symphony Splash) and September Welcome Weekend (3 days of activities), a second Bocce event, Cider and Distillery tour, and upcoming Welcome BBQ. Committee is now planning for remaining fall 2017 events, some repeated events as well as new activities. Events Committee also responsible for Wednesday Coffee.

Bylaw and Policy: KIM reported that the Bylaw Committee met once in the summer. The Committee has lost a champion member due to graduation. Upcoming will be health and dental plan policy review.

Communications: MARTIN reported on the work that has been done on the GSS brand and website.

Finance: GOULD reported that discussions have been underway with staff and Executive as to how to grow the GSS financial health and sustainability. GOULD requested the GRC members promote the services of the GSS so that people know the value for their fees.
**Student Affairs:** DORNAN discussed priorities for the upcoming year, specifically the potential to develop an Advocacy designated position within the GSS, a plan to lobby the BC Government to ensure the Graduate scholarship plan is enacted, and working with UVic on policies related to part-time graduate students, sexualized violence on campus etc.

**Stipend Review:** HORAN explained that this Committee reviews the correlation between the work completed by individual GSS Executive Board Members, and the stipends paid. The stipend is based on the hourly wage paid to TAs, approximately $25/hour.

**Ad Hoc Library Funding:** ESO reported that this Ad Hoc Committee developed out of the concern over a consortium of five multinational corporations monopolizing academic publishing particularly in the humanities and social sciences. CHAPPEL will circulate a link to the Committee’s full report. ESO outlined the Committee recommendations contained in this report, including:

- that the GSS express solidarity and support for librarians and libraries, who, when doing their work well, are invisible,
- advocacy for increased base budget funding to libraries; as well as
- a shared repository for academic journals shared amongst academic university libraries.

Appreciation was expressed to David ESO, Lee ANDERSON, Astara LIGHT for work on this committee.

**Make Transit Work Coalition:** OSBORNE reported attending a first meeting, and the need to highlight the unique interests of graduate students. There is support for following through on last year’s rep’s recommendation to do a digital survey. Concern was expressed regarding Transit’s proposed cutbacks to ‘summer service levels’ to UVic and Camosun from Dec. 4 until Jan classes begin.

**Appeals:** WYATT explained the role of the Appeals Committee.

**Faculty of Humanities Council:** OSBORNE explained the role of the Council and gave an update of key issues including losing graduate student spaces for administration and classes, the changes being made to enrollment and registration requirements to increase GPA credit.

**Senate:** No report.

**Faculty of Graduate Studies Council:** No meeting until October.

**Elections and Electoral Appeals:** No report.

**COMMITTEE AND POSITION APPOINTMENTS**

Standing committees of GRC:

The standing committees of the GRC were outlined. All GRC reps, as they are confirmed by their departments are sent the list of Committees and asked to indicate their first, second choices. Each GRC member must sit on at least one committee.
Motion: RESOLVED to appoint GRC members to the committees of Grad Council as follows:
- Appeals – Baker, Luehr
- Bylaw & Policy – McCracken, Broe
- Communication – Greylyn, Munsil, Marshall
- Events – Azarsa, Tran, Horan, Baker, Luehr
- Finance – Shih, Anderson, Osborne
- Student Affairs – Williams, Hani, Maillet, Osborne, Gruhlke, Mal. Cowan, Coutu, Eso,
- Stipend Review Committee – DiMaio, Horan, Maya Cowan
- Electoral Officer - Anisman
- Electoral Appeals Committee – Horan, Gruhlke, Maya Cowan

M/S: WYATT/GRUHLKE
CARRIED

It was noted that those serving on the Stipend Review Committee, Electoral Officer and Electoral Appeal Committee cannot run for the Executive Board during this term of GRC.

Discussion: Members were asked if there were concerns about conflict of interest where reps who are married are appointed to the same committee (no stated restrictions, conflict of interest policies would apply), and if non-department rep graduate students could sit on Committees and/or the Electoral Officer (yes, no restrictions).

Motion: Resolved to refer the Executive reports to the Stipend Review Committee
M/S: TRAN/DORNAN
CARRIED with HORAN abstaining.

UVIC Committees

Nominations were for vacant positions were taken, and will be referred to the Executive for ratification.
- VPFO Campus Planning – Oct 26th is first scheduled meeting – Tran
- Academic Accommodation & Accessibility for Students with a Disability – Munsil
- Vikes Athletics and Recreation – rep needed
- Vikes Nation Steering Committee – rep needed
- Child Care Services - Parent Advisory Board – rep needed
- Book Store Advisory Committee – rep needed

- Alliance of BC Students lobby days, October 15-18, 2017 – rep needed
SENATORS AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS REPRESENTATIVE – REPORTS

ESO reported that he has attended his first Board of Governors meeting as the first designated Graduate Student representative. Previously there were two student seats, but neither was designated specifically for graduate students. An example current issue being discussed are the international tuition fees. ESO noted that although holding a seat reserved for a graduate student representative, all BOG members are expected to make decisions in the best interest of the university as a whole.

There was no report from Senate.

ADVOCACY GOING FORWARD

KIM encouraged all GRC members to attend - on October 5th, 9 – 11 am, a town hall discussion where UVic is specifically hoping to elicit graduate student input into the next UVic strategic plan.

CLOSING ITEMS

IMPORTANT DATES

Health and dental plan opt in/opt out deadline – September 30th.
Next meeting – October 10th, 5pm (food at 4:30 pm) Grad Centre Board Room
GSS AGM - Oct 24th, 5 pm (food and sign in at 4:30 pm) H5D A230

NOTICES OF MOTION

Recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee on Libraries will be considered at the next meeting.
Please send additional items to KIM at least 10 days in advance ahead of next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting.
M/S BAKER/OSBOURNE
CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 6:57pm.
Approved, Chair

Approved, Executive Director

KLP/sc