PRESENT:

Chair: Susan Kim
Director of Communications: Quirin Hohendorf
Director of Finance: Olga Gould
Director of Services: Jessica Wyatt
Director of Student Affairs: Gillian Dornan
Carla Osborne, History
Markus Sommerfeld, Mechanical Engineering
Joseph Horan, Mathematics and Statistics
David Eso, English
Courtney Baldwin, Educational Leadership (ONLINE)
Mitchell Haslehurst, Mathematics
Elissa Whittington, Political Science
Lindsay Shaw, Social Determinants of Health
Marina DiMaio, Visual Arts
Janet Munsil, Writing
Maan Hani, Physics and Astronomy
Tanya Tran, Environmental Studies
Ryan Broe, Political Science
Aazim Lakhani, Computer Science
Pei-Ling Wang, Geography
Maya Cowan, Anthropology
Luke Kernan, Anthropology
Arielle Shih, Economics
Phil Henderson, Political Science
Danny Martin, English
Mahsa Mahtab, Engineering
Arash Isapour, Theatre Studies
Gillian Fraser, ES
Claire D’Manique, ES
Maan Hani, Physics and Astronomy
Jerold Flexer, PAAS
Kevin Palmer-Wilson, ENG
Theodor Christianse, ENG
Heng-Lai Wei, ENG
Noa Hacohen, ECE
Krystal Dash, MPA
Keun Kim, Linguistics
Ben Liu, Statistics
Curtis Evans, SEOS
Bjorn Frohich, Biochemistry
Babak Manouchenhrinia, ECE
Chad Williams, Neuroscience
Gennady McCracken, Philosophy
Logan Francis, Physics and Astronomy

44 Voting members were in attendance. Quorum of 25 voting members was met.

CALL TO ORDER and LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The meeting was called to order at 5:17 pm with KIM in the Chair, making the acknowledgement that the GSS convenes on the traditional Coast Salish territories of the Lekwungen speaking peoples.
MEETING BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

*Motion: RESOLVED to approve the agenda.*

*M/S HANI/HORAN CARRIED*

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

*Motion: RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the October 24, 2017 AGM as presented with minor corrections.*

*M/S EXECUTIVE BOARD/ M. COWAN CARRIED*

REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

KIM opened the SAGM with an overview of contextual issues currently affecting graduate students.

- Enrolments & Strategic Enrolment Management – UVic receiving high numbers of applications especially due to Brexit and American politics, but not translating into enrolment.
- BC graduate scholarship promised – BC is the last province without grad provincial scholarships.
- Graduate student funding model – new funding model being rolled out across UVic to increase transparency regarding internal funding. Humanities issues will be discussed in near future.
- International graduate tuition hikes – UVic Board of Governors voted to increase undergrad tuition fees for international students by 20%, as well as for MGB, and MBA international students.
- University of Victoria Students’ Society – new partnership developing.
- Academic Advising & International Student Services – will be a new mandatory temporary medical insurance program being rolled out.
- Equity and Human Rights Office – reaching out to GSS to expand relationships.
- Chilly climates – GSS staff and executive involved in supporting students in one department that has been particularly difficult for graduate students.
- Expansion of STEM fields – UVic receiving a lot of new money for expansion of data science, engineering programs and will have impact on graduate students, especially in those departments.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. CHAIR

KIM spoke to the evolution of the GSS long-term strategic plan. There will be an integrated transition for incoming Executive Board. Recruitment is ongoing for graduate students to be involved in UVic’s Strategic Plan, and other UVic committee representation.
B. DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

HOHENDORF reported on the work done by the previous Director of Communication, Danny MARTIN, and his own work since January. Achievements include:

- New branding and tone;
- Grad House Restaurant and new Side Project Coffee media launch;
- Social media strategy implementation; and,
- New website launch, including a new restaurant reservation booking.

C. DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

GOULD presented the main focus of the work of this year’s Finance Committee, which was the Grad House renovation including:

- Renovation financing and repayments scheduling;
- Meetings with architects and UVic Facilities; and,
- Revision of contracts, including health and dental plans, food and beverage contracts, etc.

D. DIRECTOR OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

DORNAN spoke to the work of Student Affairs this past year, including:

- Multiple, complex, and ongoing student advocacy and support cases;
- Ombudsperson Committee – now working on search for new Ombudsperson;
- UVic Mental Health Steering Committee – work to develop more resources; and,
- Long-term research and proposal work – launching graduate student survey in upcoming weeks.

E. DIRECTOR OF SERVICES/EVENTS

WYATT reported on the work of the past year, including:

- Success in fostering of family-friendly communities and events;
- Streamlining of events planning processes, including streamlining contacts with vendors;
- Stronger social media presence, in collaboration with Events Coordinator; and
- Struggling with inconsistent volunteer availability.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES OF THE SOCIETY

A. BYLAW AND POLICY COMMITTEE

KIM reported on the work of the past year including:

- Proposed bylaw changes – upcoming in the meeting’s agenda;
- Declaration of Intent document – making transparent expectations of behaviour and commitment from volunteers, councillors, and executive; and,
- Discussion on a standing Graduate Representative Council seats for equity-seeking groups.

B. COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
HOHENDORF reported on Committee’s work of the past year, including:

- Implementing the social media strategy, and
- Discussion on how to rejuvenate or change the GSS student planner.

C. FINANCE COMMITTEE

GOULD reported on the Committee’s highlights, including:

- Redesigned budget for 2018-2019, with:
  - Increased departmental grants budget;
  - Researched restaurant projections; and,
  - Loan repayment options for consideration.
- Recommended improvements to general operations.

D. STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DORNAN reported on:

- The graduate student survey that will be released shortly; and
- The development of an advocacy proposal, in collaboration with UVSS, which has soft University support. It would provide invaluable support to students. Currently most GSS support for members in crises has come from Director of Student Affairs and/or Executive Director.

E. EVENTS COMMITTEE

WYATT presented on the GSS Events this past year, including many family friendly events this year such as Board game nights, skating, Symphony Splash, Pkols hikes, etc.

Events have been more difficult to organize because of the renovation and loss of the Grad House space. Wednesday Coffee returned to weekly schedule in February. Trivia has now returned. Successful pub crawls have been had in downtown Victoria.

April events are still coming up, including: End of term breakfast, Scavenger hunt, and Category 12 brewery tour.

F. STIPEND REVIEW COMMITTEE

HORAN spoke to the written report of the Stipend Review Committee, circulated. The Committee was able to meet regularly this year. The Committee reviewed Executive Reports monthly, and made recommendations for three Directors to receive additional top-ups due to large amount of extra work contributed. HORAN emphasized that even though past Executive members have chosen to contribute extra time, this should not be expected or set a precedent for future Executive.
BUDGET

GOULD presented the proposed 2018-19 budget to the membership.

Overall Goals for all GSS Budgets include:

- Transparency: Easy to understand; relates easily to monthly statements and audits.
- Accuracy: Provides a reliable and valid way of presenting financial plans.
- Decision-making and sustainability: The budget helps the Executive Board determine whether the Society is financially sustainable.
- Evaluation: The budget helps the Executive assess whether management are reaching assigned financial goals.
- Consistency: Easily replicated year over year, and provide accurate comparisons.
- Efficiency: Limits procedures and transactions to those that improve usefulness of the budget.
- Uses accepted standards: Follows standard procedures for not-for-profit budgeting.

GSS Membership Fees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEE</th>
<th>2016-17</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating fee †</td>
<td>$40.87</td>
<td>$41.65</td>
<td>$42.52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital fee †</td>
<td>$9.27</td>
<td>$9.47</td>
<td>$9.65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Childcare fee</td>
<td>$1.02</td>
<td>$1.02</td>
<td>$1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Group Fee</td>
<td>$8.50</td>
<td>$8.50</td>
<td>$8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Travel Grant fee †</td>
<td>$4.25</td>
<td>$4.33</td>
<td>$4.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance Travel Grant fee †</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>$1.02</td>
<td>$1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus food bank * †</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>$1.02</td>
<td>$1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University 101 * †</td>
<td>$0.50</td>
<td>$0.51</td>
<td>$0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFUV * †</td>
<td>$0.50</td>
<td>$0.51</td>
<td>$0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$66.91</td>
<td>$68.01</td>
<td>$69.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

† These fees are increased annually by BC CPI (2.1% this year).
* These fees are not charged if students are off campus.
Note: all fees are reduced 50% if students are registered in co-op.

Current Risk Areas for the GSS:

- Grad House and Side Project are new operations with only one month of data to extrapolate from.
- Health and Dental Plan is in the renewal process and has to account for increasing costs.
- Renovation loan is on a 7 year repayment plan, but working to have it paid in 5 years.

Assumptions behind Budget Forecast:

- Member revenue is based on a 1% drop in enrolment.
- Membership fees increase by BC CPI for 2017 (2.1%).
- Health and dental fund budget assumes a referendum to increase fees passes, and these increased premiums are paid out to the insurer accordingly. Administration costs for the GSS remain constant for the plan, regardless of the referendum.
Food operations revenue continue based on February 2018 sales.
Restaurant staffing expense is projected based on past experience (historically staffing costs have been 45% of sales). Staff must be taken care of even in slower revenue times.
Operating surplus acts as cushion against risk of new food operation.

**Budget Summary:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Operating</th>
<th>Health and Dental</th>
<th>Capital</th>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Food and Beverage</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>375,378</td>
<td>1,030,690</td>
<td>82,315</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,489,383</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gross profit</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>478,285</td>
<td>478,285</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expense</td>
<td>281,264</td>
<td>1,028,855</td>
<td>87,513</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>518,574</td>
<td>1,916,206</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net</td>
<td>94,114</td>
<td>1,834</td>
<td>-5,198</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-39,289</td>
<td>51,461</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Questions and Discussion:**

SOMMERFELD asked about the anticipated increase in wages and health and dental fees. CHAPPEL reviewed some of the new staffing positions created with the new coffee shop operation, and how an increase in health and dental ‘revenue’ is not income to the GSS as most new revenue is transferred to the insurer.

CHRISTIANSE asked when audited finance statements are available and if they contributed to the budget forecast. GOULD explained that the fiscal year ends March 31, 2018. The auditors have the summer to review and prepare the audit. Audited statements are presented at the October AGM. The Finance Committee had 1 month of restaurant operational data to work on for this year’s budget.

HANI asked about department grant funding line item change. CHAPPEL explained that GSS used to include the Travel Grant money in this line item. However, going forward there is a dedicated fee that graduate students pay, and this money is directly sent to Faculty of Graduate Studies for administration of the grant and will no longer be reflected in this GSS line item.

**Fund Balances as of January 31, 2018:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Operating Fund</th>
<th>Health &amp; Dental Fund</th>
<th>Capital Fund</th>
<th>Building Fund</th>
<th>Food and Beverage Fund</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASSETS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASH ASSETS</td>
<td>1,148,528</td>
<td>646,140</td>
<td>666,197</td>
<td>7,518</td>
<td>61,155</td>
<td>2,529,538</td>
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<td>FIXED ASSETS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>956,786</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL ASSETS</td>
<td>1,148,528</td>
<td>646,140</td>
<td>1,622,983</td>
<td>7,518</td>
<td>61,155</td>
<td>3,486,324</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>730,710</th>
<th>754</th>
<th>662,936</th>
<th>396,461</th>
<th>1,790,861</th>
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<td>TOTAL LIABILITIES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL EQUITY</td>
<td>417,817.82</td>
<td>645,387</td>
<td>960,047</td>
<td>7,518</td>
<td>-335,306</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>1,148,528</th>
<th>646,140</th>
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<tr>
<td>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Important Changes Upcoming:

- Loan repayment is hoped to be accomplished in 5 years instead of 7 years, but need to establish equilibrium in food and beverage operations. In the meanwhile, an operational contingency fund will be held.
- There will be an increased advertising budget.
- The health and dental plan referendum.
- The development of multi-year budgets to match long term strategic plan process.

Motion: RESOLVED that the 2018-19 budget is approved as presented.

M/S EXECUTIVE BOARD/WILLIAMS

CARRIED

HEALTH AND DENTAL PLAN UPDATE

CHAPPEL presented on the status of the GSS Health and Dental Plan, and the intention to go to referendum to cover the increasing costs in April 2018.

The fee increase proposed on the referendum will be:
- Increase health plan $26/year
- Decrease dental plan ($12)/year
- Total change proposed: increase $14/year

The referendum options will be to either increase fees, or to change the coverage offered.

Any change would affect fees in September 2018.

The referendum in summer 2017 added a $49 fee increase for health, and $12 increase for dental. This was after many years of having no fee increases and relying on the stabilization fund to mitigate small increases.

Factors Affecting Plan Costs, include:

- Plan costs are based on usage in the past year. Vancouver Island, in general, has a high use rate.
- General trends in health insurance costs increasing about 14% per year across the board.
- Actuarial assessment of risk.
- Projected administrative costs for the insurer (standard percentage of fees).
- Type of insurance package, and risk involved for insurer:
  - Experience rating
  - Retention Accounting (used by GSS) – GSS gets a locked in price, and any surplus is shared.
  - Administrative Services Only (ASO)

Values Guiding Choices in Plan Changes

CHAPPEL reviewed the values discussed by the GRC that will be paramount in determining any coverage changes. These include:

- When changing the extended health and dental plan, the GSS will work to preserve:
  - things that maintain overall health and wellness;
  - basic dental hygiene and cleaning;
  - stability in plan design (for the purposes of long-term costing); and,
  - "all in this together" attitude, not targeting one specific health area or service.

  - When changing the extended health and dental plan, the GSS will consider:
    - what is actually usable for our members (e.g. accessibility of services);
    - how a dependant may be affected (i.e. what might be good for 25+ year olds may not be good for children);
    - what provides peace of mind to plan members; and
    - the collective benefit to making plan changes, but not to the point where someone's life is endangered at the cost of collectivity.

Questions and Discussion:

TRAN asked about the earliest possible referendum vote date. CHAPPEL explained that it is preferable to have the vote in April as many graduate students are not on campus in summer.

Notice of referendum could be in 7-14 days. GSS members can expect benefit package options shortly.

CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS RECEIVED WITH NOTICE

KIM presented the two Bylaw change proposals:

- Adding reporting requirements regarding the extended health and dental plan to general meetings and Grad Council agendas, and,
- Adding land acknowledgements as standing items on Grad Council and General Meeting agendas.

A. MOTION TO AMEND BYLAWS TO ADD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS ON HEALTH AND DENTAL PLANS

    Motion: RESOLVED that Bylaws 5.6 and 9.4 be amended to include additional requirements for reporting on the extended health and dental plan, as follows:

    "5.6 Procedure at General Meetings:
a. Quorum for all General Meetings shall be twenty-five (25) members. In the event that attendance at a General Meeting is above fifteen (15) but below twenty-five (25) members, the meeting will continue for the purposes of fulfilling the Society Act of British Columbia, but shall be limited to the following items of business:

i. reports of the Executive Board;

ii. reports of committees of the Society;

iii. adoption of the budget;

iv. appointment of auditor;

v. approval of the audited statements;

vi. ratification of acclaimed nominees for election; and

vii. reports on the status of the extended health and dental plan.

and

“9.4 The Director of Finance shall:

a. Present budgets and audited financial statements to General Meetings for ratification by the members;

b. Report on the status of the extended health and dental plan at General Meetings;

c. Act as chair of the Food and Beverage Advisory Committee of the Society;

d. Be responsible for development and negotiation of staff and external contracts in conjunction with Executive Board;

e. Act as primary signing authority for the Society;

f. Normally act as the Personnel Officer for the Society; and

g. Be responsible for other duties as agreed upon and assigned by the Executive Board.”

FURTHER RESOLVED that Bylaw 4.3 be amended as follows:

“4.3 Referenda

[...]

b. Referenda questions shall be phrased by the Executive Board. However, where a referendum is initiated by petition, the phrasing shall not alter the original intent of the petition.

c. Where the referenda is initiated by the Executive Board, the Graduate Representative Council will be notified within 48 hours [OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING].”

M/S: GRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL/ HANI

WHITTINGTON asked to clarify the wording of 4.3 c.

CARRIED as [AMENDED].
B. MOTION TO AMEND BYLAWS TO ADD LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AS STANDING ITEMS ON GRAD COUNCIL AND GENERAL MEETING AGENDAS

Motion: RESOLVED that Bylaw 5.6 be revised to add land acknowledgement as a standing item on general meeting agendas, as follows:

5.6 Procedure at General Meetings:
Quorum for all General Meetings shall be twenty-five (25) members. In the event that attendance at a General Meeting is above fifteen (15) but below twenty-five (25) members, the meeting will continue for the purposes of fulfilling the Society Act of British Columbia, but shall be limited to the following items of business:

i. **meaningful and intentional [AND RELATED] land acknowledgement**;

ii. reports of the Executive Board;

iii. reports of committees of the Society;

iv. adoption of the budget;

v. appointment of auditor;

vi. approval of the audited statements; and

vii. ratification of acclaimed nominees for election.

FURTHER RESOLVED that Bylaw 6.5 be revised to include land acknowledgement as a standing agenda item for meetings of Grad Council, as follows:

6.5 Procedures of the Grad Council:

a. Meetings of the Grad Council shall be run according to Robert’s Rules of Order.

b. Meetings shall be chaired by a member of the Executive Board or a meeting chair appointed by the Executive Board.

c. **Meetings shall begin with a meaningful, intentional, and related land acknowledgement**.

d. Grad Council shall meet approximately once per month between September and April inclusive and as needed between May and August inclusive.

e. Notice of a Grad Council meeting shall be given at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

f. Quorum for Grad Council meetings shall be at least fifty percent (50%) of Grad Council members, excluding vacancies and regrets. No meeting of Grad Council is quorate with fewer than ten (10) members.

g. If no quorum is observed, agenda items may be moved to the next meeting.

h. All members of the Society may attend Grad Council meetings and participate in discussions, although only Grad Council members may vote.

M/S: EXECUTIVE BOARD / HOHENDORF
HENDERSON asked why the wording of 5.6.i did not include the word ‘related’ as in 6.5.c.

_Motion to amend: RESOLVED to correct the missing word_

_M/S TRAN/SHAW_

_CARRIED as [AMENDED]. UNANIMOUS._

REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL OFFICER AND ELECTIONS

A. REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL OFFICER

KIM spoke to the report provided by ANISMAN, the GSS Electoral Officer. During the nomination period candidates were nominated for each of the 5 board positions. Overall 8 members successfully submitted their candidacy. Three positions had a single nominee. Two positions were contested and went to a vote: Chair and Director of Student Affairs.

The Executive Board election was held February 28th - March 2nd. 227 out of 2960 voters participated in this election (7.7% turnout).

The results were:

- Arash ISAPOUR was elected Chair; and,
- Esmaeil RAHIMI was elected Director of Student Affairs.

There were no appeals, and these results are final.

B. RATIFICATION VOTE FOR ACCLAIMED POSITIONS

In accordance with Bylaws, the single candidates for Executive positions must be ratified by the membership at a general meeting.

_Motion: RESOLVED to ratify Kelly CLARK as Director of Communications_

_M/S KERNAN/HASELHURST_

_CARRIED_

_Motion: RESOLVED to ratify Mahsa MAHTAB as Director of Services_

_M/S ISAPOUR/GOULD_

_CARRIED_

C. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

KIM reported that the acclaimed candidate for Director of Finance has withdrawn. In accordance with the Bylaws, a call for nominees was issued, and an election would now proceed.

The Chair opened nominations.

Carla OSBORNE was nominated.

KIM declared nominations closed.
OSBORNE gave a brief statement outlining her background, experience, and commitment to working across difference, continuing work on the strategic plan, and working with the Communications Committee to bring more information about budgeting, finance and operations to members.

Motion: RESOLVED that Carla OSBORNE be elected Director of Finance.

M/S HENDERSON/WYATT
CARRIED

OTHER BUSINESS

HENDERSON requested a discussion to generate a response from GSS to the decision by the Board of Governors to increase international student tuition fees. KIM suggested a meeting be immediately convened after the SAGM to discuss. Members agreed.

RAFFLE

Raffles were held for multiple door prizes.

THANKS

Appreciation was expressed to GSS Office and Grad House staff. CHAPPEL also expressed appreciation to the outgoing Executive Board.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting.

M/S ESO/CLARK
CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 pm.

___________________________   __________________________
Approved, Chair     Approved, Executive Director

KLP/jh