University of Victoria Graduate Students’ Society
Graduate Representative Council
MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 26TH, 2018, 5-7 PM

Department Reps Present:

Anthropology: Luke Kernan, Maya Cowan
Biology: Lucianne Marshall
Computer Science: Olga Gould
CUPE 4163: Mitchell Haslehurst
Educational Psychology & Leadership: Cortney Baldwin (ONLINE)
English: David Eso
Environmental Studies: Tanya Tran
Mathematics and Statistics: Joseph Horan
Mechanical Engineering: Markus Sommerfeld
Neuroscience: Chad Williams
Philosophy: Gennady McCracken
Political Science: Stephanie Gruhlke
Psychology: Myles Maillet (ONLINE)
Sociology: Renay Maurice
Writing: Janet Munsil

Guest: Past GSS Chair: Susan Kim

GSS Executive:

Chair: Arash Isapour
Director of Communications: Kelly Clark (ONLINE)
Director of Finance: Carla Osborne
Director of Student Affairs: Esmaeil Rahimi
Director of Services: Mahsa Mahtab

GSS Staff:

Executive Director: Stacy Cireapple
Office Coordinator, Governance: Karen L. Potts

Regrets:

Community Development: Mike Butler
Exercise Science, Physical & Health Ed: Stephen Luehr
Physics and Astronomy: Maan Hani

Absent:

Art History and Visual Studies: Lindsay Kaisla
Biochemistry & Microbiology: Emily Koide, Karen Lithgow
Business Administration: Harleen Randhawa
Chemistry: Charlotte Dewar
Civil Engineering: Pejman Azarsa
Economics: Tien-Yun (Arielle) Shih
Electrical & Computer Engineering: Priyani Vanaparthi
Germanic and Slavic Studies: Tessa Couto
Law: Ngozi Nwoko
Linguistics: Adar Anisman
Public Administration: Leila Bautista
Social Dimensions of Health: Lindsay Shaw
Social Work: Madeleine Harber

DINNER AND NETWORKING - 4:30 PM
Lead: GSS Director of Finance

Motion as Amended: M/S RAHIMI/OSBORNE
CARRIED.

ASSIGNMENT OF TIMEKEEPER

RAHIMI volunteered to act as timekeeper.

MEETING BUSINESS

A. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

ISAPOUR reported that the annual GSS Executive Board strategic planning retreat was held. It was noted that there were two outstanding items from last year’s strategic plan for the upcoming year:

1. The Research Assistants union drive.
2. Implementation of the Graduate Student Advocate program.

B. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Land Acknowledgement: For this meeting, each GRC rep was invited to introduce the indigenous territory they come from, as part of their Department Report. Carla Osborne provided resources for Reps to refer to prior to meeting.

GRC members in attendance shared news and events from their departments.

Members who would like their update recorded in the official minutes are invited to email their reports to gssgov@uvic.ca for inclusion.

WILLIAMS reported that the Neuroscience graduate students held a vote regarding support/disapproval for the UVic international student tuition increase. The vote was strong disapproval of UVic’s tuition increase.

C. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committees of GRC

Appeals: MAHTAB reported that the Committee met twice and reviewed three appeals.

Bylaw and Policy: ISAPOUR reported that the Committee has not yet met but will convene soon.

Communications: CLARK reported that the first Committee meeting will be this week to finalize the GSS Handbook and work on communications plan for September start up.

Events: MAHTAB reported that World Cup games are now being streamed and will continue for the next two weeks. The lake visit was not successful. It was decided to focus on weekday, on campus events for now.
Finance: OSBORNE reported that the Finance Committee currently is not quorate, so will be dormant over summer.

Food and Beverage: OSBORNE reported that Grad House sales are up and bookings are strong but it is still operating at a loss most months. Side Project sales are not currently adequate to cover its costs. Currently working on inventory control and adjusting hours related to overtime due to start-up and relaunch. Actions: point of sale system upgrade will be happening this summer (instead of next year), will be relaunching catering menu in Sept, will minimize overtime, and will focus on advertising, Side Project hours will be adjusted until September without layoffs. CHAPPEL invited comments and feedback to be sent to her.

Student Affairs: RAHIMI reported that work on the grad student survey will be presented later in the agenda.

Stipend Review: HORAN reported that Executive Board reports for April and May have come in and the Committee is working with the new Executive on documentation.

Open Floor:

Ad Hoc Library: ESO reported that Lee Anderson is no longer with the Committee. The Committee’s proposal is with UVic Library. When a response is provided, will need to look at reconvening the Committee.

Board of Governors: ESO reported that he finished his term with Board of Governors. Andrea Mellor is the new graduate student Board of Governors representative. He noted that this position requires a significant time commitment and GSS members should be thinking now if they have the interest to run. The contentious issue coming forward is how UVic will respond to legalization of cannabis.

Campus Development Committee: TRAN thanked everyone who participated in cycling survey. Scheduled are big changes for the civil engineering space. Campus housing plan is being implemented.

International Student Tuition Fee Committee: ISAPOUR noted the Committee has not yet convened.

Make Transit Work Coalition: OSBORNE reported that the Committee has still not responded to the Minister’s refusal of giving the UVic rep a vote (argument that the people on the UVic Committee are not democratically elected) on the BC Transit Commission. A new GSS representative will be needed as OSBORNE’s term is finished.

D. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Motion: RESOLVED that the GRC accepts Lee Anderson’s resignation as the GRC rep for Greek and Roman Studies, as well as from the Finance Committee as of 26 June, 2018, with appreciation for contributions made.

Motion: RESOLVED that the GRC accepts Beth Tuinstra’s resignation as GRC rep for Education Curriculum and Instruction, as well as from the Communications Committee, as of 26 June, 2018, with appreciation for contributions made.

Motion: RESOLVED that Olga GOULD is elected as the Grad Council Representative for the Computer Science Dept. and is elected to serve on the Finance Committee, as of 26 June, 2018.

Omnibus Motion to approve all three previous motions:

M/S COWAN/KERNAN

CARRIED.
Motion: RESOLVED that Maya COWAN is elected to serve on the Make Transit Work Committee.
M/S HORAN/MAURICE
CARRIED. UNANIMOUS.

Motion: BIRT [Student Name] is elected to serve on the Communication Committee.
Tabled.

E. PRESENTATION: STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE’S GRADUATE STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Preliminary Results of Graduate Student Survey were presented by RAHIMI. RAHIMI emphasised that the credit for this survey and its information goes to the previous Student Affairs Committee, and particularly the time and work put in by Myles MAILLET.

Work with the data will be an ongoing project for the Student Affairs Committee. RAHIMI emphasized that the data has not yet been interpreted.

Currently the GSS membership is 3446 graduate students, of which approximately 1000 are international students. 610 members responded to the survey, of which approximately 120 were international students.

Discussion: MAILLET clarified that these data snapshots were quickly put together for this GRC meeting. It is the intention to make the presentation clearer and easier for interpretation. MAILLET reminded GRC that participants were promised that the data would only be shared within GSS in full, and that outside bodies would only receive the aggregate data and trends with full analysis.

HASLEHURST emphasised that CUPE would find the final results very helpful in its negotiations.

TRAN requested not to lose trends even if the response rate for some questions belies statistical significance. Suggestion was made to repeat the survey every year, or every second year. The significant amount of work for the Student Affairs Committee and individuals was noted.

General concern was expressed not to rush the presentation and interpretation of results.

Motion: RESOLVED to bring the next iteration of the results and trends presentation to a special meeting of the GRC on July 24th, 2018.
M/S MAURICE/RAHIMI
CARRIED.

Motion: To extend the GRC meeting time to 7:30 pm.
M/S RAHIMI/COWAN
CARRIED

F. PRESENTATION: GVAT MEMBERSHIP

Susan Kim and Cortney Baldwin brought back to the GRC the discussion and motion made regarding GSS joining the GVAT coalition.
On March 20th the following motion was tabled with more information requested:

Tabled Motion: BIRT the GSS join the Greater Victoria Acting Together coalition as a partner organization.
BIFRT the Finance Committee provide recommendations for the most feasible membership dues model.

Reference Material: March 2018 GRC Minutes, includes initial GVAT conversation and motion.
Reference Material: GRC-GSS Briefing Note for an overview of the case for membership.
Reference Material: GVAT Supplementary Materials Folder for more information.

At this point in the meeting, an attendance/quorum count was held. The 15 GRC members still in attendance were: Sommerfeld, Mahtab, Eso, Marshall, Tran, Kernan, Maurice, Horan, McCracken, Cowan, Haslehurst, Osborne, Rahimi, Baldwin, and Isapour. 17 members were required for quorum. Quorum was lost.

As quorum was lost, no formal motion was made. However a straw poll was taken and there was support to take the motion to the Executive for review and recommendation.

MCCracken noted he was not being convinced that the GSS should become a member of GVAT, and would object to the Executive making a decision on membership instead of a full GRC vote.

G. VOLUNTEERS FOR DEPARTMENT ORIENTATIONS – TABLED

CLOSING ITEMS

IMPORTANT DATES

Special Meeting of the GRC: July 24th, 2018
Next Regular GRC Meeting: September 25th, 2018

ADJOURNMENT

With quorum lost, the meeting was dissolved at 7:40 pm.

Approved, Chair

Approved, Executive Director

KLP/