University of Victoria Graduate Students’ Society

Graduate Representative Council

MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 16, 2018, 5-7 PM

Council Members Attending:

Anthropology: Anu Lotay
Biochemistry & Microbiology: Jay Joshi
Biology: Keyarian Le Gratiet
Computer Science: Olga Gould
Earth & Ocean Sciences: Christiaan Laureijis
Economics: Ryley Erickson
Education Curriculum & Instruction: Meaghan Storey
Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies: Theresa Wanninger

English: Janice Niemann
Environmental Studies: Tanya Tran
French: Ryleigh Lightbourn
Germanic & Slavic Studies: Lauren Thompson, Jae Hyun Kim
History: Sydney Fuhrman
Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs: Anthony Gavin
Law: Chinwendo Nwanisobi
Mathematics & Statistics: Joseph Horan
Neuroscience: Chad Williams
Physics & Astronomy: Maan Hani
Political Science: Franziska Fischer
Psychology: Tom Ferguson
Public Health & Social Policy: Anabel Bernard Fournier
Social Determinants of Health: Matty Cervantes
Social Work: Sarah Krahn
Theatre: Jemma Llewellyn
CUPE 4163: Mitchell Haslehurst

GSS Executive and Staff:

Chair: Arash Isapour
Director of Communications: Kelly Clark
Director of Finance: Carla Osborne
Director of Student Affairs: Esmaeil Rahimi

Director of Services: Mahsa Mahtab
Executive Director: Stacy Chappel
Office Coordinator, Governance: Karen L. Potts

Guests:

Faculty of Graduate Studies, Dean, David Capson
Theatre Studies, Devon Golde

Absent:

Art History & Visual Studies: Anahita Ranjbar
Civil Engineering: Kamran Tayyebi
Electrical & Computer Engineering: Muniyat Rafa

DINNER AND NETWORKING

The Director of Student Affairs invited GRC reps for an introductory session to Roberts Rules of Order, why these procedural rules are followed in GSS, and how to use them for effective discussion. RAHIMI’s notes from this session are available for GRC Members in the GRC Getting Started Info and Orientation folder on the GRC Connect site.
CALL TO ORDER

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ISAPOUR called the meeting to order at 5 pm, making the following land acknowledgement:

_We acknowledge and respect the Lkwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the Graduate Students’ Society exists, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose relationships with the land continue to this day._

Council members were asked to volunteer to provide a personal statement of land acknowledgement. HORAN offered a personal reflection.

UPDATE FROM THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Guest, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, David Capson provided an update since his last visit to the GSS GRC in 2017. Slides from his presentation can be found on the GRC Connect: [Dean Capson’s Presentation to the GSS GRC - Oct 16 2018.](#)

Dean Capson emphasised that:

- the Faculty of Graduate Studies Dean and Associate Deans are available to be a confidential resource to both graduate students and faculty;
- that the Faculty of Graduate Studies will be working with faculty deans to address funding concerns; and,
- that the focus of the Faculty of Graduate Studies is to ensure stability and security for all graduate students to be successful and complete their programs.

A short question and answer session was held after Dean’s Capson’s formal presentation.

Areas of concern from GRC members included:

- Is FGS taking into account the real completion time for different academic units, particular non-STEM departments? Capson stated a priority of his is to improved completion times. To recognize real completion times, FGS will use 5 years and 3 years as standard completion times (instead of 4 years and 2 years). Dean Capson believes UVic in general has students with longer completion times due to high living, housing costs and students participating in program options such as co-op terms.
- How will faculties with larger graduate enrollment fair in the new funding allocation? Capson stated that faculties with research based programs will fare very well.
- Will there be information about, and training regarding applying, for funding opportunities? Capson emphasized that there are coaching workshops for students applying Tri-Council awards. Department graduate student handbooks should make the departmental opportunities clear. However, Capson recognized the need to find better ways to get information out about specific donor awards.

ISAPOUR closed the session thanking Dean Capson and suggested that if GRC wishes for further discussion, time could be scheduled in a subsequent GRC meeting.
STANDING ITEMS

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion: RESOLVED to approve the agenda.
M/S   HANI/CLARK
CARRIED

COMMENTS: time stamps are requested for all agenda items.

CHAIR’S REMARKS

The 2017-18 GRC EPLS rep, Courtney Baldwin, for is facilitating a GVAT workshop October 20th. GSS joined GVAT as a member last year, therefore all of our members have free access to workshops and meetings. ISAPOUR encouraged members to consider attending the GVAT training, and will send out more information over the Grad Council listserv.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion: RESOLVED to approve the GRC Minutes of September 25, 2018.
M/S   MAHTAB/CLARK
CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

HORAN asked about the progress made by the Executive Board on the April GRC motion to do a FOI request into UVic’s international tuition fee increases. ISAPOUR responded that it was difficult to get a meeting with the UVic VP Finance. ISAPOUR believes there is now more information on how tuition money is used for scholarships, support etc. on the UVic webpage.

NEW BUSINESS

AGM PROMOTION

All GRC members were encouraged to attend, and to promote the GSS AGM on October 23.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: GRC AND UVIC

Appeals Committee: Training for Appeals Committee members will be October 23.
Events Committee: Please come to the GSS Events to help build community and support. The event list for this semester is in the GSS Office, on the Grad Centre bulletin board, and available on the GSS website.

Bylaw and Policy: No report.

Communications: Meeting postponed until October 23rd.

Finance: Orientation was held for one new member. A follow up meeting will be held.

Student Affairs: The Committee met and did the review of the Student Survey as requested by the GRC.

Ad Hoc Committee on International Student Tuition Fees: ISAPOUR reported that one meeting was held last year, with 1 member attending. No others who previously indicated interest attended. After that meeting ISAPOUR met with the VP Finance and requested information on the allocation of the international student tuition money.

*Motion:* RESOLVED that the GRC direct RAHMI to re-invigorate the Ad Hoc Committee on UVic International Student Tuition Fees.

*M/S* HANI/WILLIAMS

Discussion: As Chair of Students Affairs, RAHMI feels that this Committee alone cannot absorb this issue. To ensure that there was support for the Committee, RAHMI asked for a straw poll, and 4 GRC members indicated willingness to volunteer for the Committee.

*CARRIED*

Stipend Review: Still looking for Committee members. HORAN has reviewed Executive Reports to date.

Faculty of Graduate Studies Council: HORAN reported that the Psychology department is de-affiliating with the Neuroscience department. Also, UVic had worked to find the best accommodation for Saudi Arabian students ordered by their country to leave Canada. There were 26 graduate students affected. UVic assisted 6 students who were close to completion to fast track their defence and graduate. In other cases, leaves were offered to allow students to return and complete at a later date, and in at least one case, a graduate student was assisted to transfer to a university in Australia to complete their program.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: GRC

*Motion:* RESOLVED to accept the resignation of Jo Roy as GRC rep for Greek and Roman Studies, as a Bylaw & Policy Committee member, as the GSS rep to the Senate Committee on Academic Standards, and as grad student rep on the Faculty of Humanities Council, as of October 9th, 2018.

*Motion:* RESOLVED to elect Anthony Gavin to the Stipend Review Committee.

*Motion:* RESOLVED to elect Jae Hyun Kim to the Appeals Committee and the Bylaw & Policy Committee.

*Motion:* RESOLVED to elect Matty Cervantes to the Bylaw & Policy Committee.

*Motion:* RESOLVED to elect Kirsten Schuhmacher to the Finance Committee.

*Motion:* RESOLVED to elect Anabelle Bernard Fournier to the Communications Committee.

*Motion:* RESOLVED to elect Janice Niemann to the Student Affairs Committee.
M/S as an Omnibus Motion by: CLARK/FERGUSON
CARRIED.

Motion: RESOLVED to elect Jay Joshi to the GRC Finance Committee.
M/S STOREY/HANI
CARRIED.

Motion: RESOLVED to elect Chinwendu Nwanisobi to the Bylaw & Policy Committee.
M/S WILLIAMS/WANNIGER
CARRIED.

Motion: RESOLVED to accept the resignation of Christian Laureij from the Student Affairs Committee due to a scheduling conflict.
M/S RAHIMI/WILLIAMS
CARRIED.

As of October 16th, 6 GRC members have yet to be assigned to a Committee to fulfill their responsibilities as a GRC member.

Electoral Officer and Electoral Appeals Committee: Further Nominations and Election

The Chair called for nominations for the position of GSS Electoral Officer for 2018-19. Two candidates were nominated, RYLEY ERICKSON representative from Economics, and JAE HYUN KIM representative from Germanic and Slavic Studies. Both candidates introduced themselves, gave a description of their election related experience and their interest in the position.

A secret ballot was held, and ERICKSON was successful.

Motion: RESOLVED to elect Ryley Erickson as the GSS Electoral Officer for 2018-19.
M/S HANI/WILLIAMS
CARRIED.

A call for further nominations to the Electoral Appeals Committee was held.

Motion: RESOLVED to elect Jae Hyun Kim, Tanya Tran, and Joseph Horan to the 2018-19 Electoral Appeals Committee.
M/S HANI/STOREY
CARRIED.
COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: UVIC

Graduate student representative on the UVic Convocation Committee

Motion: RESOLVED to elect Chinwendu Nwanisobi to represent the GSS on the UVic Convocation Committee.

M/S GOULD/TERESA
CARRIED

Other UVic Committees

Motion: RESOLVED to elect Nicole Goldring to the Campus Sustainability Fund Applications Review Committee.

M/S STOREY/HANI
CARRIED.

Motion: RESOLVED to elect Sean Oliver to the Faculty of Humanities Council.

M/S WANNINGER/GOULD
CARRIED.

Motion: RESOLVED to elect Annabelle Bernard Fournier to the Senate Committee on Academic Standards.

M/S CLARK/GO/JLD
CARRIED

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Motion: RESOLVED the Executive Reports are referred to the Stipend Review Committee.

M/S HANI/FERGUSON
CARRIED. HORAN abstained.

GRADUATE STUDENT ELECTIONS AND STUDENT REPRESENTATION

CHAPPEL provided background on the need for a structured process for graduate students to be elected as representatives in their departments.

See Briefing: 2018-10-16 Briefing on proposal to update GSS elections of student reps
Motion: WHEREAS GSS policy on election of Grad Reps to the Graduate Representative Council has not been reviewed in recent years; and
WHEREAS a consistent electoral policy ensures graduate students all have ability to vote to stand for election and vote in elections to GSS and UVIC committees; and
WHEREAS unclear and irregular electoral policies undermine confidence in elections and impede graduate student representatives in performing their role; therefore
RESOLVED that the Bylaw and Policy Committee conduct a review of election procedures for graduate students elected in department and faculty elections; and
FURTHER RESOLVED that the Bylaw and Policy Committee develop proposals for improving election procedures and report on their findings to Graduate Council.

M/S HORAN/THOMPSON
CARRIED

CLOSING ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting.
M/S CLARK/HANI
CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 pm.

[Signatures]

Approved, Chair

Approved, Executive Director

klp/SC/jh