University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Graduate Representative Council

MEETING MINUTES

FEBRUARY 26TH, 2019, 5-7 PM

Council Members Attending:

Anthropology: Maya Cowan
Art History & Visual Studies: Anahita Ranjbar
Biochemistry & Microbiology: Jacob Imbery
Biology: Keyrian Le Gratiet
Civil Engineering: Saeed Rezvani (Alt.)
Computer Science: Olga Gould
Earth & Ocean Sciences: Christiana Laureijns
Economics: Ryley Erickson
Education Curriculum & Instruction: Meaghan Storey
Education Psychology & Leadership Studies: Theresa Wanninger
English: Janice Niemann
Exercise Science, Physical & Health Education: Stina Grant
French: Rachel Corwin
Germanic & Slavic Studies: Jae Hyun Kim
Greek & Roman Studies: Alyssa Allen
History: Sydney Fuhrman
Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs: Anthony Gavin
Law: Chinwendu Nwanisobi
Mathematics & Statistics: Joseph Horar
Mechanical Engineering: Charlotte Lafleur
Neuroscience: Chad Williams
Physics & Astronomy: Maan Hani
Psychology: Tom Ferguson
Public Administration: Charlie White
Social Determinants of Health: Matty Cervantes
Social Work: Sarah Krahn (ONLINE)
CUPE 4163: Mitchell Haslehurst

GSS Executive and Staff:

Chair: Arash Isapur
Director of Communications: Kelly Clark
Director of Student Affairs: Esmail Rahimi (ONLINE)
Director of Services: Mahsa Mahtab

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

Regrets:

Director of Finance: Carla Osborne
Environmental Studies: Tanya Tran
Hispanic & Italian Studies: Estelle Kurier
Public Health & Social Policy: Anabelle Bernard Fournier
Theatre: Jemma Llewellyn

Absent:

Business: Kathryn Jeffrey
Electrical & Computer Engineering: Munlyat Rafa
Political Science: Franziska Fischer

DINNER AND NETWORKING

Informal sharing of department news and updates occurred.
CALL TO ORDER

ISAPOUR called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm.

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.

ISAPOUR read a personal land acknowledgement reflection submitted by Board of Governors graduate student rep, Andrea Mellor.

STANDING ITEMS

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

   MOTION: RESOLVED the agenda is approved, with minor corrections.
   M/S ERICKSON/KIM
   CARRIED

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

   MOTION: RESOLVED that the minutes from the January 29th, 2019 Grad Council meeting are approved with minor corrections provided.
   M/S HORAN/MANI
   CARRIED

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PAST MINUTES (APPENDIX A: GRC MOTION LOG)

HORAN reported that Dr. Stephen EVANS clarified the theses/dissertation attribution requirement in an email. Dr. EVANS emphasized the importance of theses/dissertation being in line with copyright law, where the student contribution to any collective piece is clearly articulated. DR. EVANS stated that this recent change in the calendar is an editorial change and that the substantive policy change occurred previously through several bodies with graduate student representation. HORAN reported the change had been discussed at the various bodies of approval e.g. the Senate, the Senate Committee on Academic Standards, Faculty of Graduate Studies Executive Committee, and the new attribution requirement has already been published in the May 2019-20 calendar.

HORAN suggested that graduate students could use help to understand copyright law and/or how to write up their contribution to each collaborative piece included in their thesis/dissertation submission. HORAN suggested that perhaps FGS might be able to provide examples of what fulfilling the submission requirement might look like so the GFC will be in a more informed position to support members.

HANI asked if the new requirement is actually different from what graduate students with collaborative work have already been doing? HANI suggested the requirement might already be common practice.
LAFLEUR reported that she asked her supervisor and librarians about this requirement change, and they reported this was already standard practice in her department.

Support was expressed to make greater connections between GSS and the Library for learning about these requirements.

CHAPPEL expressed that there were no objections in principle behind the change, rather the issue was procedural, and concern for graduate students close to finishing who were not prepared for this change are expected to do catch-up work or face unexpected requirements.

HANI wondered if the wording of the requirement could be changed to greater protect the graduate student e.g. that the student must get credit for their contribution, and should not expect to be examined on parts of the research where they were not a contributor.

CHAPPEL suggested that the annual form each graduate student submits to FGS might include a flag regarding any collaborative work intended for thesis submission. This way there would be annual tracking to protect credit for the student.

STOREY asked if GSS should produce guidelines for how members should be prepared to protect themselves.

CHAPPEL thought GSS could also request this information be included in the graduate student handbook that each faculty is required to produce as the procedures and implementation practices will vary between departments.

HORAN suggested that each GRC rep should investigate how this requirement is being rolled out within their department so we better understand what it is we need to investigate.

**TASK:** ISAPOUR will contact reps from FGS/Library/Senate Committee on Academic Standards and find someone who can come to a future GRC meeting to share information on procedures and practices.

4. ASSIGNMENT OF TIMEKEEPER

ERICKSON volunteered.

5. REPORTS

   A. CHAIR’S REMARKS

As his term is ending, ISAPOUR provided some thoughts on how GSS is doing. ISAPOUR emphasized the importance of teamwork between the Executive, GRC, and staff. ISAPOUR emphasized that GSS is much more than services or the building, that GSS is a community.

   B. EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

Reminder that Executive Board written reports for January 2019 are available on Connect. The opportunity to ask questions of the Executive was given.
C. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REMARKS

CHAPPEL reported that the new broker for the GSS health and dental plan will be AON brokers. CHAPPEL recognized the extensive work (Health and Dental Plan Coordinator) MICHAUD-OLULLET and OSBORNE put into the formal tendering. The GSS model of in-house administration, independent broker and separate insurer continues to be unique amongst BC student societies but CHAPPEL sees evidence that our current model is still the best model to ensure an in-house staff person is able to advocate for our members.

CHAPPEL reported that the Executive Board had a successful governance workshop with Volunteer Victoria trainer, Lisa Mort-Putland, and noted the work POTTs has invested in improving governance training for the GSS.

CHAPPEL reported that all Departmental Grant money has been allocated for this year.

CHAPPEL reported that she has been working with various students in depth on 7 different cases that require serious advocacy intervention. The amount of time and effort required by these cases takes away from the Executive Director’s other work, emphasizing the need for the proposed Student Advocate position. CHAPPEL expressed thanks for the Student Affairs Committee’s work on the new Student Advocate job position.

D. GSS STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

APPEALS – MAHTAB reported that the last meeting was Feb 5, and the Committee was able to come agreement on a difficult appeal. The last Appeal Committee for MAHTAB will be in March.

BYLAW & POLICY – ISAPOUR reported that the Committee has not been able to meet with quorum.

COMMUNICATIONS – CLARK reported work is underway to plan for the 2019-20 Handbook.

EVENTS – ALLEN reported that the Committee decided to put more effort into advertising events including flyers to departments. Upcoming will be Colouring and Cocoa, Bingo, and Meet the Candidates.

FINANCE – GOULD reported that there have been 2 meetings of the Committee. More details later in the agenda with the financial update.

STUDENT AFFAIRS – RAHIMI reported that the International Student Tuition Fee Ad-hoc Committee has not had a response from UVic with respect to the FOI request. The deadline was Feb. 25. The information is needed for the Committee to proceed. RAHIMI will follow up. RAHIMI also reported that the Student Advocate job description is almost complete and will be meeting with UVSS to hopefully finalize.

Discussion: HANI asked if the Board of Governors decision regarding tuition for international students for next year is known. HANI expressed concern that we might still be focused on past increases when we need to be proactive if there are new increases upcoming. No information was known.

Discussion: HANI asked about who will be chairing the International Student Affairs Ad-hoc Committee after RAHIMI’s term of office is finished. RAHIMI agreed to chair, not as Director of Student Affairs, but as an individual GRC member. Decision to bring this question back to next GRC meeting. RAHIMI asked that anyone interested in spearheading this committee join the committee’s Slack site now to be sure they are up to date on the progress of the work so far.
STIPEND REVIEW – HORAN reported that the last meeting was snowed out and will be rescheduled.

E. UVIC COMMITTEES – VACANCIES AND APPOINTMENTS

One outstanding request for a graduate student representative was for the Harry Hickman and Gilian Sherwin Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching Adjudication Committee. 2018 rep HANI explained that last year the Committee reviewed four candidates. The work was one evening to review the portfolios and the time to go the meeting and present your rankings. HORAN also emphasized the importance of the volunteer having time to do the preparation work.

Motion: RESOLVED to elect Seyed Saeed Rezani as graduate student representative on the UVic Harry Hickman and Gilian Sherwin Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching Award Committee.

M/S HANI/WANNINGER
CARIED

F. OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS – OPEN FLOOR

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AWARD RECOGNITION COMMITTEE – ERICKSON reported that there so many nominees the Committee will be having a second meeting.

DEAN OF SOCIAL SCIENCE SELECTION COMMITTEE – COWAN reported that significant work has been done on an approved new job description that includes things like reconciliation goals.

GRADUATE FEE REDUCTION APPEAL COMMITTEE – NIEMANN reported that previously the Committee had more leeway in its application of calendar regulations but this year the new position will be to adhere to the calendar regulations.

G. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

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

NEW BUSINESS

1. GRADUATE STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH – THERESA WANNINGER

The guest speaker was not able to attend tonight. Discussion will be rescheduled for March.

2. FOLLOW UP ON FELLOWSHIP FUNDING

ISAPOUR reported information from the UVic/GSS Operations Committee including:

- International Student Bursaries $269,000 this year, $115,000 last year ($110,000 given out);
- Change to the process of bursary application – student must apply online as well as meet with officer in Financial Awards;
- The number of awards decreasing, however the amount of each award is increasing, on average $3500 was provided to each of 30 students last year;
- Increased money being spent for support services – ISS office, library – was reported; and
- Although the new BC provincial grad student scholarships are not available to international students, UVic will examine how internal funding can be used to retain a balance in funding recipients.

GRC Discussion:

GRC members expressed the need for information on the numbers of students receiving support services, if the number receiving support has gone up, and if all our international members know about these services.

CHAPPEL believes that the intervention of the GSS in the past few years played a roll at keeping international graduate tuition increases at 4%, while undergrads faced much higher increases. CHAPPEL explained that GSS has argued that the departments with the most international graduate students often fund the students with research grants; thus increasing tuition actually leaves less of the research grant money for research and facilities. Historically the GSS has argued that any differential tuition fee is wrong and is bad for the university in terms of reputation, enrollment, student and economic health. For perspective, CHAPPEL stated that 30 years ago, 12% of UVic’s operating budget was tuition, now UVic has come to rely on tuition fees for over 40% of its operating budget.

CHAPPEL suggested a motion against differential tuition fees and then task the Executive Board with preparing a brief, or short statement on this issue to the Board of Governors. Deadline for submissions is March 11.

CLARK expressed support for the motion and also suggested packing the Board of Governors meeting with graduate students.

*Motion: RESOLVED to extend discussion time by 5 minutes.*
M/S CLARK/HANI
CARRIED

*Motion: RESOLVED that on behalf of the GSS, the Graduate Representative Council remains firmly opposed to differential tuition for international students.*

FURTHER MOVED that the GSS Chair, with assistance from the Director of Communication, will send a letter on behalf of GRC to the Board of Governors for their March 2019 meeting.

M/S HORAN/CLARK
CARRIED with 1 abstention
3. FINANCE UPDATE – CHAPPEL

The planning for the 2018-19 GSS budget anticipated the following risks:

- Grad House and Side Project Coffee: New operations and had limited data
- Health and Dental Plan: Renewal process at point of Board and Budget turnover.
- Renovation loan repayment.

The strategies implemented to deal with the 2018-19 anticipated risks:

- We projected -1% enrolment, which was slightly more conservative than UVIC’s projections
- We budgeted a substantial surplus in the Operating Fund to cover the risk of new restaurant operations
- We planned for a Health and Dental Fee referendum
- We deferred planned capital purchases until loan repayment stabilized
- We budgeted an overall staffing cost increase over past audit years to accommodate upcoming changes with collective bargaining and not keeping pace with market wages.

1. Operating Fund:

- Budgeted for enrolment drop of -1%
- Projected drop in fees (based on actuals to date) is closer to -7% over last year. Have never seen a drop like this in recent GSS 15 years
- Projections vs actuals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>budgeted</th>
<th>projected</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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<tr>
<td>Operating</td>
<td>369,548</td>
<td>342,420</td>
<td>(27,128)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>82,315</td>
<td>75,729.99</td>
<td>(6,585)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Restaurant (Grad House and Side Project):

- Sales are significantly lower than budgeted, and costing did not keep pace
- Per customer sale amount dropped – shift to lower cost items
- Currently projecting a $60,000 loss when coming in the Operating and Food and Beverage Funds
- Projecting Operations and Food Actuals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>budgeted</th>
<th>projected</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant sales</td>
<td>673,944</td>
<td>514,396</td>
<td>(159,548)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of sale</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour as a % of sales</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Restaurant: risk areas that arose during 2018-19:

- Deferred catering sales due to Operations Manager focus on implementing “point of sale” system (Touch Bistro) 1 year earlier – so many large annual events not held
- High levels of inventory (might be $7-8000 adjustment)
- Market adjustment to wages (kept on track – one of the biggest problems was not being able to hire and retain staff when we had not kept pace with market wages)
- Roofing work and closures due to snow, leak, illness (scaffolding in Sept, our building looked closed a lot and at key times) – our renovations, Uvic roofing, and then construction damage
- Overtime due to start up
- Overtime due to injury and understaffing
- Due to enrolment Operating Fund no longer has enough revenues to cover losses in restaurant

QUESTION: does GSS use workstudy positions? CHAPPEL, not currently, although the GSS has had workstudy positions in past.

Grad House Restaurant actions taken and pending:
- Revised operating hours in summer 2018
- Social media advertising – mostly spent on advertising for staff
- Market adjustment to wages (improves hiring and retention)
- Adjusting kitchen staffing (continually rehiring means continuous training and need to double staff)
- Revisiting operating hours for 2019 – 2020 (pending)
- Menu price adjustments (second round pending)
- Relaunch catering service (pending)
- Inventory and costing system upgrades

3. Capital Fund:
- The GSS is doing fine on loan repayment, despite revenue drop.
- Loan payments proceeding as planned, despite revenue drop.
- Maintained plan to minimize capital upgrades. For example, upgrades to data projector and sound deferred.

4. Health and Dental Plan:
- Projecting to meet budget targets
- Retention Fund reserve nearly at target (within $5000), which could reduce insurer admin costs for coming year – were not planning to reach this for another 3 years

Next Steps
- Using new data, revisit budget projections for membership fees and restaurant revenues – can plan more effectively
- Develop restaurant operational scenarios
- Revisit risk assessment for restaurant operational change – need to look more strategically at what things we roll out, when e.g. later opening hours seem to be working, but so far, not Saturday openings
- Determine if a fee referendum is needed to address enrolment drop
CLOSING ITEMS

IMPORTANT DATE REMINDERS

GSS Executive Election: Election and Referenda Voting: March 6, 7 and 8, 2019.
Next GRC meeting: March 19, 2019
Upcoming SAGM: March 26, 2019 – please volunteer to help!

REQUESTS FOR SUPPCRT/ADVOCACY/PARTICIPATION

None.

NOTICES OF MOTION FOR NEXT MEETING

None.

ADJOURNMENT

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

ISAPOUR adjourned the meeting at 6:59 pm.

MINUTE APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A: 2018-19 GRC RECORD OF APPROVED MOTIONS TO DATE

Approved, Chair

Approved, Executive Director

Klp/sc/jh
### APPENDIX A: 2018-19 GRC RECORD OF APPROVED MOTIONS¹

**AS OF FEBRUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRC MEETING</th>
<th>MOTION</th>
<th>COMPLETE</th>
<th>REVOKED OR MODIFIED</th>
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</table>
| 2018 September 25 | **RESOLVED** that GRC directs Student Affairs Committee to do an interpretive analysis to be presented in a private meeting with the UVic President and senior administration.  
**RESOLVED** that GRC directs Students Affairs Committee and Communications Committee to develop a press release that will include results of the survey to be released publically.  
**RESOLVED** that the GRC directs the Student Affairs Committee (with support from other committees as appropriate) to review the results presented today, strip away unneeded interpreted information, and make the amended results available to relevant decision making bodies and members at large. | ✓        |                     |
| 2018 October 16 | **RESOLVED** that the GRC direct RAHIMI to re-invigorate the Ad Hoc Committee on UVic International Student Tuition Fees.                                                                                               | ✓        |                     |
| 2018 November 27 | **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.  
**RESOLVED** that the Bylaw and Policy Committee, in consultation with the Stipend Review Committee, and in consultation with the GRC and previous board members (when possible), establish a model by which the GRC members report on their committee’s progress to the Stipend Review Committee in a procedural, systematic and meaningful manner, to improve transparency and facilitate an equitable review process. | ✓        |                     |
| 2018 December 18 | Internal GRC motions only.                                                                                                                                                                          |          |                     |

¹ This document is intended to assist with resolution follow-up and completion, particularly during Executive and GRC annual transitions. Motions pertaining to internal GRC administration such as the approval of agendas, minutes, committee appointments have not been summarized in this document.
Motion: WHEREAS the GSS member fee is not equal to the UVSS member fees, therefore, RESOLVED to hold a referendum of the GSS membership to ask the following questions:

Are you in favour of an increase of $0.33 for the Constituency Groups, to increase the total fee from $1.00 to $1.33 per term?
Are you in favour of an increase of $0.75 for the Clubs, to increase the total fee from $0.50 to $1.25 per term?
Are you in favour of an increase of $0.75 for the campus food bank, to increase the total fee from $1.04 per term to $1.79, and increase this fee annually by CPI?
Are you in favour of an increase of $0.50 to the Ombudsperson fee, for an increase of the total fee from $1.00 per term to $1.50 per term?

Motion: WHEREAS the Anti-Violence Project is the sexual assault centre on campus and provides anti-oppressive and sex-positive services, advocacy and support to all students, staff, faculty, and community members, in partnership and collaboration, in order to address and resist gender-based violence and all other forms of harm.
WHEREAS AVP saw a 50% increase in the requests for support sessions in the 2017-2018 academic year compared to the 2016-2017 academic year, including requests from graduate students.
WHEREAS full-time undergraduate students are paying $4 per term and part-time undergraduate students $2 per term to the AVP; therefore, RESOLVED to hold a referendum of the GSS membership to ask the following question:

Are you in favour of an increase of $1.00 to the AVP fee for graduate students enrolled in classes and $0.50 for graduate students enrolled in co-op, to increase to a total fee of $2.00 for graduate students enrolled in classes and $1.00 for graduate students enrolled in co-op?

Motion: WHEREAS the UVSS will hold a referendum of their membership to establish a dedicated fee for the creation of a Student Advocate Office; WHEREAS the GSS has long supported the creation of a Student Advocate position to assist students engaged in appeals or academic tribunals at the University, therefore, RESOLVED to hold a referendum of the GSS membership to ask the following question:

Are you in favour of the creation of a new fee of $1 per term to fund a Student Advocate Office?

Motion: RESOLVED to create a temporary GRC seat for CSPT.

Motion: RESOLVED that on behalf of the GSS, the Graduate Representative Council remains firmly opposed to differential tuition for international students.
FURTHER RESOLVED that the GSS Chair, with assistance from the Director of Communication, will send a letter on behalf of GRC to the Board of Governors for their March 2019 meeting.