

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society  
Graduate Representative Council

MEETING MINUTES

FEBRUARY 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2020, 5-7 PM

**Elected Academic Unit Reps (1 vote per academic unit) Attending:**

<b>Civil Engineering:</b> Shervin Shameli	Russell	<b>Political Science:</b> Sydney Krill
<b>Earth &amp; Ocean Sciences:</b> Rebecca Morris	<b>Geography:</b> Parnian Rezania	<b>Psychology:</b> Connor Leshner
<b>Economics:</b> Brooklynn Trimble	<b>History:</b> Tim Cunningham	<b>Public Administration:</b> David Foster
<b>Electrical &amp; Computer Engineering:</b> Alexandros Dimopoulos	<b>Law:</b> Eva Linde	<b>Social Dimensions of Health:</b> Daniel Gudiño
<b>English:</b> Farhad Poordakan (alternate)	<b>Mathematics &amp; Statistics:</b> Joseph Horan	<b>Visual Arts:</b> Lauren Brinson
<b>French:</b> Angélique Rose, Tiffany Kuo	<b>Mechanical Engineering:</b> Graham Wilson	<b>CUPE 4163:</b> Mitchell Haslehurst
<b>Germanic &amp; Slavic Studies:</b> Braden	<b>Neuroscience:</b> Chad Williams	
	<b>Physics &amp; Astronomy:</b> Maan Hani	

**GSS Executive Board (1 vote per elected board member) Attending:**

<b>Chair:</b> Mehdi HASHEMI	<b>Director of Services:</b> Sima SHANJANI
<b>Director of Finance:</b> Carla OSBORNE (part)	<b>Executive Director:</b> Stacy CHAPPEL (non-voting)
<b>Director of Student Affairs:</b> Saeed REZVANI (part)	

**Guest:** Tanya Tran, Environmental Studies

**Recorder: Office Coordinator, Governance:** Karen L. Potts

**Regrets:**

**Director of Communications:** Elaine LABERGE  
**Education Curriculum & Instruction:** Jeffrey Bruton, Hossein Ghanbari  
**Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies:** Rana Battah, Mónica Carbajal Uribe  
**Greek & Roman Studies:** Allie MacIlroy

**Absent:**

**Anthropology:** William Campbell, Rae Dias  
**Art History & Visual Studies:** Arash Eghbal Jahromi  
**Biochemistry & Microbiology:** Jacob Imbery  
**Biology:** Nicholas Planidin  
**Chemistry:** Talita de Francesco  
**Computer Science:** Omer Wasim  
**Pacific & Asian Studies:** Zhuangyuan Wang  
**Public Health & Social Policy:** Juliana McPhail  
**School of Music:** Rachel Burtman  
**Social Work:** Diana Baskier, Dionne Mohammed  
**Sociology:** Alison Barnard, Finn Deschner  
**Theatre:** Devon Goldie

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## CALL TO ORDER

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HASHEMI called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

### LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

LESHNER provided a personal land acknowledgement. HASHEMI noted the importance of acknowledgements not being about the past, but acknowledging current land status including unresolved land claims.

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## STANDING ITEMS

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### 1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

*MOTION: RESOLVED that the agenda is approved as presented.  
REZANIA/CUNNINGHAM*

*Amendment: to move Executive and Stipend Committee Report and motions to the end of agenda.  
M/S HORAN/LESHNER  
Amendment CARRIED*

*Motion as Amended:  
CARRIED*

### 2. TIMEKEEPER VOLUNTEER

Cunningham volunteered.

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*MOTION: RESOLVED that the Minutes from the January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Grad Council meeting are approved with minor corrections provided.  
M/S REZANIA /TRIMBLE  
CARRIED*

### 4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/PAST MEETINGS

None.

### 5. REPORTS

#### A. CHAIR'S REMARKS

HASHEMI noted that this is the last GRC for the 2019-20 Executive Board. There were many challenges this year, HASHEMI acknowledged some shortcomings, the hard decisions that had to be made, and appreciation that the Board arrived at the end of their term together. The intent of the Board was to make a positive impact and always try their best for the GSS. HASHEMI acknowledged GRC members who provided extraordinary support over the past year, and also support provided by staff.

## B. GRC STANDING COMMITTEES – APPOINTMENTS AND REPORTS

### **COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:**

None.

### **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

APPEALS – SHANJANI reported that the Committee had resolved two appeals.

BYLAW & POLICY – HASHEMI reported that the policy manual update continues and will need to be continued in the next term. Work on a bylaw amendment will be presented later in the agenda.

COMMUNICATIONS – has not met since December.

EVENTS – ROSE reported that many of the Feb events will be run again in March. Thesis writing time is now once per week. HORAN's last Trivia will be the March event.

FINANCE – TRIMBLE reported that the Committee had met.

STUDENT AFFAIRS – no report.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PARTICIPATION – MORRIS reported this Committee had its first introductory meeting. The second meeting will be March.

ELECTORAL OFFICER UPDATE – TRIMBLE provided the GRC with an update on the GSS referenda and elections, including:

- Nomination update: there has been 1 member nominated for each of 4 positions. 1 position had no nominees at the close of the nomination deadline and this position will be filled at the SAGM with nominations from the floor.
- Referenda update: there is 1 opponent declared for the PIRG referendum question, and 1 proponent declared for the WUSC referendum question.
- Have received 1 complaint to date. Issue was the wording on regarding the PIRG information. TRIMBLE ruled in favour of the complainant, made the wording change, and resent the referenda information.
- Reminders of the upcoming key dates, including the campaign and voting period.

## C. GRADUATE REPRESENTATION ON UVIC COMMITTEES – VACANCIES

There were no volunteers for current vacancies.

## D. OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS – OPEN FLOOR

Senate Committee on Academic Standards – SHANJANI reported that the Committee is discussing academic integrity based on reports from TAs about how faculty are reacting to issues of cheating etc. GRC members are asked to email SHANJANI with any input.

FGS Council – HORAN reported that there has been a new bio medical engineering program approved, as well as approved program changes for English. Also noted was that departmental grad advisors' accessibility e.g. through holding office hours; varies across campus.

HASHEMI noted that he has been discussing with Jim DUNDSON and Carrie ANDERSON about how to make graduate student participation more accessible, especially with Committees that require a high

number of hours. Potential supports that UVic could provide are being discussed.

## E. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Members in attendance shared current events and concerns from their departments. Members who would like their update recorded in the official minutes were requested to email their reports to [gssgov@uvic.ca](mailto:gssgov@uvic.ca) for inclusion.

BREAK

## MEETING NEW BUSINESS

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### 1. SEMI ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – BYLAW CHANGE PROPOSAL (BYLAW 6)

*MOTION: RESOLVED to submit a motion to change Bylaw 6, as presented, for consideration at the Semi-Annual General Meeting.  
M/S HANI/HORAN*

Discussion:

CHAPPEL reviewed the proposed changes to Bylaw 6. HANI emphasized that the principle is that all co-reps are created equal. Any inequality between co-reps would have to explicitly be determined by a department's graduate students.

FOSTER proposed two friendly amendments which were discussed and accepted:

Section 6.5.h add 'and voting' after quorum.

Section 6.3.g clarity is needed as to when the term 'grad rep' is expected to include 'co-rep' as well. For example, as long as 1 grad rep is attending meetings, then the grad department rep is in good standing (no requirement that a co-rep must attend as well).

It was agreed that CHAPPEL would take FOSTER's amendment intentions and be trusted to do the final wordsmithing.

WILSON asked that in Section 6.5 h changes be made to clarify 'for the purposes of voting and quorum'.

From discussion it was agreed to breaking the section into two parts to clarify the effect of co-reps on quorum, and on voting. To be added will be that for quorum, when 2 co-reps are present, they count as 1 member, and to confirm that for voting each academic unit has 1 vote.

HORAN noted he will provide CHAPPEL two typos to be corrected, and asked that in Section 6.3d the pronoun 'they' be used.

FOSTER asked that in Section 6.3.a, 'the following members' be added to the introduction.

*Motion, with friendly amendments as noted, and with permission to wordsmithing as discussed:  
CARRIED*

**TASK: CHAPPEL will send to the GRC the final updated motion inclusive of all amendments.**

## 2. DECLARATION OF INTENT – BYLAW AND POLICY COMMITTEE

HASHEMI provided the context for the Declaration of Intent statement that was started in 2018.

*MOTION: RESOLVED that the Declaration of Intent is adopted as presented to make visible the practices and behaviours that those working with and for GSS aspire towards.*  
M/S HANI/OSBORNE

Discussion:

*Friendly Amendment to re-title the Declaration of Intent to 'Statement of Values'*  
M/S FOSTER/LESHNER

HORAN noted the title should be changed at the bottom of the document as well as the title.

*Motion as amended:*  
CARRIED

*MOTION: RESOLVED that Grad Council direct the Bylaw and Policy Committee to decide where it fits in the GSS policy manual.*  
M/S HORAN/TRIMBLE  
CARRIED

## 3. RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO STIPEND REVIEW POLICY AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

*Motion: RESOLVED Policy 19.1 Stipend for Executives is amended as follows:*  
*"The executive stipend rates are appended to the policy as Appendix 1. The Appendix is amended annually to reflect the decision of the members at the SAGM.*  
*for 2010-2011 is set at the CUPE 4163 September 2009 hourly TA rate of 23.27/hr as follows:*  
*a. 26 hours per month for the Chair and Director of Finance; and*  
*b. 22 hrs per month for Directors of Communications, Services and Student Affairs.*  
*The hours are not meant to reflect hours of work."*  
M/S HASHEMI, Chair of Bylaw and Policy Committee / HORAN

Discussion: The question was asked, if there was no quorum at SAGM, would stipends remain the same. CHAPPEL clarified that this is a policy change, not a bylaw change. Therefore this change is not being taken to the membership for ratification.

CARRIED

*MOTION: RESOLVED the following appendix is added to the policy manual:*  
*"APPENDIX 1 – Executive Board Stipends*  
*The stipends for the Executive Board in 2019-2020 remain unchanged relative to the stipends approved at the March 29, 2016 SAGM. Amounts are noted below. Hours are provided as an estimate of average hours per month; however the stipend is an honorarium and actual hours vary over the year.*

*Chair: \$823.14 /month (34 hours/month)*

*Director of Finance: \$ 823.14 /month (34 hours/month)*

*Director of Student Affairs: \$ 823.14 /month (34 hours/month)  
Director of Communications: \$ 726.30 /month (30 hours/month)  
Director of Services: \$ 726.30 /month (30 hours/month)”*

*M/S HASHEMI, Chair of Bylaw and Policy Committee / HORAN  
CARRIED*

*MOTION: RESOLVED that the Stipend Review Committee terms of reference are amended as follows:*

*“20.14.2 Duties*

*...*

*To survey members of Graduate Representative Council throughout the year on the performance of the Executive Board;*

*...”*

*M/S HASHEMI, Chair of Bylaw and Policy Committee /REZANIA  
CARRIED*

#### 4. INTERIM CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY – BYLAW AND POLICY COMMITTEE

*MOTION: RESOLVED that the Interim Code of Conduct Policy is adopted as presented.  
M/S HASHEMI/LESHNER*

Discussion: Members asked about the timeline for developing an in-house Code of Conduct. Concern was expressed that without a deadline, will it happen? HASHEMI and CHAPPEL asserted that as it has mandated by the GRC, the Bylaw and Policy Committee should see this as a priority.

*CARRIED.*

#### 5. PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS PROBLEMATIC BEHAVIOUR

Regarding implementation of the Interim Code of Conduct, HASHEMI and CHAPPEL assembled the following guidelines, based on current practices, for when an issue of problematic behaviour at GSS cannot be resolved directly with a conversation.

Where to request assistance to address problematic behaviour (current best practice):

Issues arising in meetings: use procedures of Robert’s Rules within the committee itself (point of privilege, request for apology or other action), escalate to GRC where appropriate.

Issues arising at GSS sponsored events: Seek assistance from committee chair (committee responsible for event), or GSS Chair.

Issues arising outside meetings/GSS activities: Contact campus resources (e.g. Ombudsperson, EQHR). Bring to relevant GSS meetings where related to GSS work.

Issues related to conduct of the elected Executive Board members: Stipend Review Committee, discipline and removal procedures as per Bylaws.

Behaviour of GSS members or members of public in the Grad Centre: Report to GSS manager/campus security.

Behaviour of staff/management staff: speak to GSS Chair.

## 6. GSS FEE SCHEDULE FOR 2020-21

CHAPPEL explained that it is not required for GRC to pass the annual fee schedule. However, as there is an upcoming fee referendum, CHAPPEL felt it was important for the GRC to confirm the amounts going into the referendum.

*MOTION: WHEREAS BC CPI for 2019 is 2.1% increase, and WHEREAS a CPI increase is applied to certain GSS fees\*, therefore RESOLVED that the 2020-2021 GSS membership fee schedule is as follows, unless changed by a membership referendum:*

Registration status	Regular	COOP	Distance	Coop + class
<b>Operating Fund*</b>	\$ 44.72	\$ 22.36	\$ 44.85	\$ 22.36
<b>Capital Fund*</b>	\$ 10.15	\$ 5.07	\$ 10.18	\$ 5.07
<b>Childcare</b>	\$ 1.02	\$ 0.51	\$ 1.02	\$ 0.51
<b>VIPIRG</b>	\$ 2.00	\$ 1.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 1.00
<b>AVP</b>	\$ 2.00	\$ 1.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 1.00
<b>Ombudsperson</b>	\$ 1.50	\$ 0.75	\$ 1.50	\$ 0.75
<b>Constituency Groups</b>	\$ 1.33	\$ 0.67	\$ 1.33	\$ 0.67
<b>Clubs</b>	\$ 0.50	\$ 0.25	\$ 0.50	\$ 0.25
<b>WUSC</b>	\$ 3.00	\$ 1.50	\$ 3.00	\$ 1.50
<b>Food Bank*</b>	\$ 1.83	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1.83
<b>CFUV*</b>	\$ 0.55	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 0.55
<b>University 101*</b>	\$ 0.55	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 0.55
<b>Conference Travel fund*</b>	\$ 4.65	\$ 2.33	\$ 4.66	\$ 2.33
<b>Distance Travel Fund*</b>	\$ 1.09	\$ 0.55	\$ 1.10	\$ 0.55
<b>Advocate Fund</b>	\$ 1.00	\$ 0.50	\$ 1.00	\$ 0.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 75.89</b>	<b>\$ 36.49</b>	<b>\$ 73.13</b>	<b>\$ 39.42</b>

*\*Note that any fee referendum to increase fees will be applied after the CPI increase.*

M/S TRIMBLE/CUNNINGHAM  
CARRIED

## 7. GVAT MEMBERSHIP

*MOTION: To table the discussion of continuing GVAT membership indefinitely.*  
M/S HORAN/REZANIA

CHAPPEL noted that this item continues to be outstanding on the GRC agenda. At this time there are no active members in GVAT. Therefore it would seem that the question of our membership could be tabled until there were GRC members who felt strongly about the membership.

FOSTER asked for clarification if there would be any GSS staff resources contributed to GVAT if GSS is not an active member. CHAPPEL clarified that up to this point, GSS has been a net receiver of resources.

*CARRIED*

## 8. GRC SUMMER SCHEDULE

The last pre-scheduled GRC meeting for 2019-20 is April 21, 2020. Discussion was held on the potential of a GRC meeting(s) during May-August.

Consensus of the GRC was that the summer schedule should be decided after the election of the new board, at the April 21, 2020 GRC.

TABLED to the April 21 GRC meeting.

## 9. STIPEND REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

HORAN reported that the Stipend Committee has held regular meetings and has reviewed all Executive Reports submitted to date.

*MOTION: RESOLVED that Grad Council approves the Executive Board Reports received for January from the Chair and the Directors of Finance, Services, and Student Affairs.*

*M/S HORAN, as Chair of Stipend Review Committee/ WILLIAMS*

Discussion: It was asked why only 4 of 5 director reports are being recommended for approval. HORAN reported that the Committee has discussed with the Director of Communication that the reports submitted to date did not provide the content necessary for committee approval.

*CARRIED*

*Abstention noted: OSBORNE*

*MOTION: RESOLVED that Grad Council approve stipend top-ups to the Executive Board as follows:*

*Chair: \$200*

*Director of Finance: \$200*

*Director of Services: \$100*

*Director of Student Affairs: \$100*

*M/S: HORAN, Chair of Stipend Review Committee/ REZANIA*

[The elected Executive Board members recused themselves from the meeting.]

HORAN assumed Chair for the discussion.

Discussion:

HORAN presented the specific reasons behind the recommended top-ups for each of the individual directors. The difficult challenges faced by GSS this past year were acknowledged.

Some members expressed that the amounts being recommended were too small compared to the work and effort expended by some members of the Board. HORAN acknowledged that the amounts

recommended were not commiserate with the actual amount of work put in, but the amounts recommended act as a token recognition of extraordinary work.

CHAPPEL also noted that these top-ups do not reflect extra work put in by any Executive member on their own projects of interest. The top-ups recommended are in recognition of the extra work that the Executive did not have a choice to take on, but circumstances in the GSS organization required extraordinary time.

A suggestion was made to adjust the top-up amounts to bring the amounts for each Executive closer together. TRIMBLE asked HORAN, as the Stipend Review Committee member present, who had read all the Executive reports, if the amounts recommended were proportionate to the amount of extra work put in by individual Executive members, and HORAN affirmed.

*Amendment: to equalize the top-up amounts to \$150 per person.*

*M/S LESHNER/WILLIAMS*

*FAILED.*

*Amendment: to increase the \$100 top-ups to \$150.*

*M/S WILLIAMS/REZANIA*

*Amendment CARRIED*

*Abstention on amendment noted: LESHNER*

*Motion as amended: RESOLVED that Grad Council approve stipend top-ups to the Executive Board as follows:*

*Chair: \$200*

*Director of Finance: \$200*

*Director of Services: \$150*

*Director of Student Affairs: \$150*

*CARRIED unanimously.*

[The elected Executive Board members rejoined the meeting.]

*MOTION: to extend the meeting by 5 minutes.*

*M/S CUNNINGHAM/WILLIAMS*

*CARRIED*

## CLOSING ITEMS

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### IMPORTANT DATE REMINDERS

Election and Referenda Key Dates:

- February 26 – Campaign Begins
- March 4 to March 6 – Voting Period
- March 6 – Campaign ends

GSS SAGM: March 24, 2020

- Please have any potential agenda items, with supporting materials, to the Executive Board for consideration, in advance of March 2, 2020.
- Agenda, Notice of Motions to be posted: March 10, 2020

REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT/ADVOCACY/PARTICIPATION

CUNNINGHAM asked for time to make a request for support and ceded the floor to Tanya TRAN, graduate student from Environmental Studies.

TRAN spoke to the efforts being made by many students engaged in the protests supporting the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs at the BC Legislature. This work is taking significant time and energy. Some students are receiving academic concessions, but this is not standardized across campus. TRAN offered to circulate the statement of solidarity being prepared by her department and requested that GRC reps try to get similar statements in their departments to help lobby UVic not to penalize students who have been doing this solidarity work.

CHAPPEL also noted that any affected individuals could be referred to the Ombudsperson.

NOTICES OF MOTION FOR NEXT MEETING

LESHNER asked that the opt in email list be revisited at the April GRC.

Summer schedule for GRC.

ADJOURNMENT

*MOTION: RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting.*

*M/S HORAN/REZVANI*

*CARRIED*

HASHEMI adjourned the meeting at 7:08 pm.

klp/JH

X

Mehdi Hashemi  
GSS Chair

X

Stacy Chappel  
Excutive Director