

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society
Graduate Representative Council
(ONLINE VIA BLACKBOARD) MEETING MINUTES

FEBRUARY 23RD, 2021, 5-7 PM

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

Anthropology: Robert Gustas	Economics: Gerard Wu	Psychology: Thomas Ferguson
Art History & Visual Studies: Mel Granley	English: Elyse Loewen	Social Dimensions of Health:
Biochemistry & Microbiology: Michael Allison	French: Tiffany Kuo (Electoral Officer)	Courtney Majewski
Biology: Nicholas Planidin	Geography: Brianna Brandon	Visual Arts: Liam O'Sullivan
Chemistry: Gregory Gaube	Germanic & Slavic Studies: Rachel Colquhoun	Other Reps Present:
Civil Engineering: Aryia Eini	History: Michelle Snidal	None.
Curriculum & Instruction: Adair Ng	Law: Adekunle (Kunle) Adewumi	Other Guests (Non-voting):
Earth & Ocean Sciences: Chrissy Schellenberg	Nursing: Erin Donald	Brian Jord
	Physics & Astronomy: Bobby Bickley	

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

Chair: Drake RUSHFORD	Director of Services: Daniel GUDIÑO
Director of Communications: Nicole KENT	Director of Student Affairs: Antoine ROSE
Director of Finance: Jacob HUNT	Executive Director: Kyla TURNER (non-voting)

Recorder: GSS Governance Coordinator: Karen L. Potts

Regrets:

Electrical & Computer Engineering: Alexandros Dimopoulos
Music: Tiess McKenzie

Absent:

Educational Psychology & Leadership: Lauren Petersen, Meng Qi (Annie) Wu
Medical Sciences (Neuroscience): Hannah Reid
Pacific & Asian Studies: Maeve Milligan
Political Science: Brianna Parent-Long
Public Administration: Amanda Leclerc, Luisa Trux, Hannah Kim
Sociology: Talya Jespersen, Mandana Karimi
CUPE 4163: Christine Todd
CSPT: Rachel Schneider TBC

CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

RUSHFORD, in the chair, called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

TURNER provided a personal statement of land acknowledgement.

STANDING ITEMS

A. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: RESOLVED THAT the agenda is approved as presented.

M/S ROSE/KUO

CARRIED

B. TIMEKEEPER VOLUNTEER

GUSTAS volunteered.

C. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

MOTION: RESOLVED that the Minutes from the January 26th, 2021 Grad Council meeting are TABLED for review and approval until the April GRC.

M/S RUSHFORD/DONALD

CARRIED

D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/PAST MEETINGS

Noted as completed: TURNER has asked for GRC to report on academic unit associations, thanked those who responded and asked those that hadn't yet responded to do so.

RUSHFORD will recommend the review of how GSS may incorporate issues related to medically vulnerable graduate students be picked up by the next GSS Chair.

E. REPORTS

1. MEMBERSHIP REPORT

GSS Membership: As of February 16, 2021 there are 2983 GSS Members.

GRC Membership: Since the January 26, 2021 GRC meeting, as per Bylaw 6.3 g, 1 member is deemed to have resigned, Devon Goldie from Theatre.

GRC now consists of 35 voting members: 28 academic units (out of 47 academic units eligible), 1 additional academic unit, CUPE, and 5 Executive Board representatives.

Meeting Quorum: With 2 regrets received, quorum for tonight's meeting is 17. Quorum is met.

2. CHAIR'S REMARKS

RUSHFORD noted elections campaigning starting next week, and will be working on the orientation and transition plan. Concerns raised at last GRC regarding UVic's re-opening plan taken to UVic Executive to Executive meeting. Also part of summit with other BC GSS's.

3. EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS – QUESTIONS ARISING AND MOTION TO APPROVE

MOTION: RESOLVED that Grad Council approves the Executive Board Reports received for the month of January 2021.

M/S BRANDON/KUO

CARRIED

4. GRC STANDING COMMITTEES – APPOINTMENTS AND REPORTS

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Appeals – GUDIÑO no report.
- Bylaw & Policy – RUSHFORD reported that the committee has not met.
- Communications – KENT no report.
- Events – GUDIÑO encouraged members to attend Speed Friending event, Feb 24th, co-hosted with International Student Services. Hoped that candidates for next year’s Executive will attend.
- Finance – HUNT reported that the committee reviewed the latest statements, everything looked ok, came up with priorities for budget, and set timeline for budget proposal for SAGM.
- Student Affairs – ROSE no report.
- Stipend Review – PLANIDIN reported that the SRC is reviewing Executive job descriptions hoping to provide a recommendation on bylaw change in near future.
- Electoral Officer – KUO reported that at the close of nominations today, there were: 1 candidate for Chair, 2 candidates for Director of Student Affairs, and 2 candidates for Director of Communication.

5. GRADUATE REPRESENTATION ON UVIC COMMITTEES

REPORTS FROM GRAD REPS ON UVIC COMMITTEES:

Dean of Graduate Studies Search – RUSHFORD and KENT reported that the process is going well.

6. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

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

Two main issues were flagged:

1. Students are struggling financially. RUSHFORD wondered if GSS shouldn’t look into the COVID bursary process and resources and ask for an update.
2. Concern about how UVic on-campus COVID cases are being reported. In one academic unit, no one was notified when one of the unit’s members tested positive. Other universities provide notices when there are positive cases and notices of where contact might have happened. RUSHFORD committed to raising this issue with Jim DUNSDON next week.

*MOTION: RESOLVED to move scheduled break until after first two items of new business.
M/S RUSHFORD/GUDIÑO
CARRIED*

MEETING NEW BUSINESS

1. EXECUTIVE TRAINING PAYMENT

Lead: Nicholas Planidin

*MOTION: RESOLVED that Grad Council approves the payment of \$406.50 to the outgoing (2020-2021) and incoming (2021-2022) executive boards for additional work time due to incoming executive board training.
M/S PLANIDIN, Chair of Stipend Review Committee/ALISON*

Discussion:

RUSHFORD expressed a preference that the outgoing Executive not receive any additional payment as he feels that this is part of expected duties.

RUSHFORD also expressed concern that specifying a lump sum might be unfair if any incoming Executive did not attend all the hours of training. RUSHFORD expressed support for deviating from normal GSS practice and tie the compensation paid to the actual hours that incoming Board members participate in.

PLANIDIN expressed support for tying compensation to hours of participation.

PLANIDIN withdrew the motion.

RUSHFORD proposed an alternative motion:

*MOTION: RESOLVED that Grad Council approves the expenditure of up to \$2000 from the Operating Fund for a collection of training sessions for non-returning, incoming Executive Board members to take place during the week after the SAGM, with a stipend for those members to be per hour of training attended at a rate of \$27.10.
FURTHER RESOLVED that the outgoing exec shall be paid per hour of training attended outside their term at a rate of \$27.10.
M/S RUSHFORD/DONALD*

Discussion:

PLANIDIN asked if GRC would need a follow up motions approving the final amounts to each incoming/outgoing Executive member once hours are known. RUSHFORD did not believe this would be necessary unless the total amount would exceed the \$2000 allocated.

*CARRIED
RUSHFORD abstained.*

For the next agenda item, RUSHFORD relinquished the chair to Kyla TURNER.

Elected Executive Board members recused themselves and exited the Zoom session.

2. EXECUTIVE TOP-UP

Lead: Nicholas Planidin

*MOTION: RESOLVED that Grad Council approves the payment of \$200 to the chair, \$150 to the director of finance, \$100 to the director of student affairs and \$100 to the director of services.
M/S KUO/ALISON*

Discussion: PLANIDIN noted that more was allotted this year than in the past, due to larger hours required without an Executive Director for 3 months, and with lower GSS expenses during this COVID

year. PLANIDIN also noted that the Director of Communications has just started her term. RUSHFORD was particularly noted as putting in hours over and above what is normally expected.

CARRIED

Elected Executive Board members returned to the meeting.

BREAK

Meeting resumed at 5: 52 pm.

3. FEES FOR 2021-22 ACADEMIC YEAR

Lead: Jacob Hunt

MOTION: WHEREAS BC CPI for 2020 is 2.2% increase, and WHEREAS a CPI increase is applied to certain GSS fees, therefore RESOLVED THAT the 2021-2022 GSS membership fee schedule is as follows, unless changed by a membership referendum:*

	Regular	Co-op	Distance	Co-op & class
Operating*	\$50.81	\$25.41	\$50.81	\$25.41
Capital Fee*	\$10.37	\$5.18	\$10.37	\$5.18
Childcare fee	\$1.02	\$0.51	\$1.02	\$0.51
Anti-Violence Project	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$2.00	\$1.00
Ombudsperson	\$1.50	\$0.75	\$1.50	\$0.75
Constituency Groups	\$1.33	\$0.67	\$1.33	\$0.67
Clubs	\$0.50	\$0.25	\$0.50	\$0.25
WUSC (Student Refugee Program)	\$5.00	\$2.50	\$5.00	\$2.50
Campus food bank*	\$1.85	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1.85
CFUV*	\$0.56	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.56
University 101*	\$0.56	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.56
Conference Travel fee*	\$4.71	\$2.35	\$4.71	\$2.35
Distance travel fee*	\$1.10	\$0.56	\$1.10	\$0.56
Student Advocate	\$1.00	\$0.50	\$1.00	\$0.50
TOTAL	\$82.31	\$39.67	\$79.35	\$42.64

M/S HUNT/EINI

Discussion:

HUNT explained that with the fees adjusted for inflation, next year's full time members will be paying less than \$2 more in fees than this year.

CARRIED

4. PRESIDENT'S LISTENING TOUR PREPARATIONS

Lead: Daniel Gudino

GUDIÑO explained that the new UVic President has organized a Listening Tour with stakeholder groups across UVic and in the community. Graduate students are one of the stakeholder groups.

GUDIÑO walked through the proposed process leading up to the March 8th meeting. The President has asked that during the 1 hour meeting, the GSS focus on 5 main issues/themes. RUSHFORD is to be the facilitator. GUDIÑO asked for 5 GRC reps who are willing to submit a 1 minute video on 1 issue that includes 1 specific question for the President to address. At the meeting the President will watch the videos and respond. People attending will be able to ask follow up questions.

GUDIÑO provided potential themes (as compiled by GUDIÑO, TURNER and BARNEY). These include:

- COVID-19 recovery
- Graduate student employees
- Graduate Funding
- Registration and tuition
- Academic progress
- Non-academic campus services
- Outside UVic

Discussion:

Various GRC Councillors provided opinions regarding priorities and the potential to combine themes/issues.

DONALD asked where the concerns expressed about International students access to campus and services, were in the themes presented. RUSHFORD expressed that this might be better expressed in other forums and with other UVic administrators.

After hearing the discussion, RUSHFORD suggested 5 re-worked themes and asked for volunteers to film 1 minute segments:

1. EDI & barriers to graduate education - DONALD (EDI Alison to connect PhD student in BCMC on this)
2. Research & academic supports - GAUBE will provide someone from Chemistry
4. COVID-19 recovery - SCHELLENBERG
5. Graduate funding - KUO
3. Graduate student promotion / grad student opportunities – RUSHFORD may rework this theme

TASK: GUDIÑO and RUSHFORD will contact all volunteers in the near future to meet to assist with the video creation and wording of the question for the President's Listening Tour.

5. GSSBC MOU (APPENDIX A)

Lead: Drake Rushford

REF DOCS: [GSSBC MOU](#)

*MOTION: WHEREAS effective advocacy would be improved by allyship between graduate student societies,
 WHEREAS the graduate student societies in BC have significant circumstantial commonalities and common advocacy goals,
 WHEREAS graduate student societies have been working closely together in the past year with great success,
 RESOLVED THAT Grad Council endorse the presented Memorandum of Understanding for the Graduate Student Societies of BC (GSSBC);
 FURTHER RESOLVED that Council supports future GSSBC Executive Committee efforts to build an effective force for graduate student advocacy.
 M/S KUO/BRANDON*

Discussion:

RUSHFORD provided the rationale for this motion. Last year BC GSS reps met over concerns that the Ministry of Advance Education seemed to have little understanding of graduate education. RUSHFORD noted that there was little structured or coordinated provincial and federal advocacy. The UVic GSS is one of the lowest per capita funded GSS's in the province and does not have a designated Board member responsible for external lobbying and advocacy. Given this, RUSHFORD argued that our GSS would greatly benefit from an alliance as we do not have the internal resources or membership base to make a significant lobbying difference on our own. As part of an alliance there can be support in collaboration with the weight of 20,000 graduate student members in BC.

CARRIED

CLOSING ITEMS

IMPORTANT DATE REMINDERS: CHECK YOUR GRC CONNECT HOMEPAGE CALENDAR!

GSS Board of Directors Election Dates:

Monday-Wednesday, March 3-5 – Voting period (webvote)

President's Listening Tour: March 8, 2021

GSS SAGM: March 23rd, 2021

- Please have any potential agenda items, with supporting materials, to the Executive Board for consideration, in advance of March 2nd, 2021 Executive Board meeting.
- Agenda, Notice of Motions to be posted: March 9th, 2021
- Nominations and elections from the floor for Director of Finance and Director of Services.

Next GRC meeting: April 20th, 2021

- Please have any potential agenda items, with supporting materials, to the Executive Board for consideration, in advance of April 13th, 2021.
- Agenda, Notice of Motions to be posted: April 13th, 2021

REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT/ADVOCACY/PARTICIPATION

None.

NOTICES OF MOTION FOR NEXT MEETING


None.

ADJOURNMENT


*MOTION: RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting.
M/S KENT/KUO
CARRIED*

The meeting adjourned at 6:43 PM.

klp/KLP

X 

Drake Rushford
GSS Chair 2020-21

X 

Kyla Turner
GSS Executive Director

APPENDIX A: BC GSS MOU

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Graduate Student Societies of British Columbia was established in 2021 to create an alliance that would support each society in their initiatives to build and strengthen our collective advocacy efforts on behalf of all graduate students in British Columbia.

This Memorandum of Understanding, dated _____, 2021 by and between:

The Graduate Student Society of University of British Columbia Vancouver (signed and ratified on _____, 2021)
The Northern British Columbia Graduate Students' Society (signed and ratified on _____, 2021)
The University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society (signed and ratified on _____, 2021)
The Graduate Student Society at Simon Fraser University (signed and ratified on Feb 9, 2021)

Hereafter referred to together as "The Parties", or separately "The Party".

1. PARTIES

- 1.1. The Parties to this Memorandum of Understanding (The MOU) are:
 - 1.1.1. The Graduate Student Society of University of British Columbia Vancouver
 - 1.1.2. The Northern British Columbia Graduate Students' Society
 - 1.1.3. The University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society
 - 1.1.4. The Graduate Student Society at Simon Fraser University.

2. AGREEMENT TO THE MOU

- 2.1. Each Party's agreement to The MOU must be ratified by its Board of Directors.
- 2.2. Each Party's agreement to The MOU can be unilaterally revoked at any time by the decision of the respective Party's Board of Directors.
- 2.3. Any changes to the MOU shall be ratified by the Board of Directors of all Parties. Changes shall only become effective once all Parties have ratified the MOU.

3. PURPOSE OF MOU

- 3.1. The purpose of this MOU is to define and specify a framework for coordination and collaboration between the Parties on advocacy to government bodies under the umbrella of The Graduate Student Societies of British Columbia (see Section 4).
- 3.2. The Parties agree to communicate, coordinate, and collaborate in good faith in matters related to external advocacy efforts to support graduate students in BC.

4. THE GRADUATE STUDENT SOCIETIES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

- 4.1. The purpose of The Graduate Student Societies of British Columbia is to protect and advocate for the interests of all graduate students in British Columbia.
- 4.2. The Parties agree to communicate, coordinate, and collaborate in their advocacy efforts to external government bodies under the umbrella of The Graduate Student Societies of British Columbia.
- 4.3. All statements and advocacy efforts of GSSBC must align with the values, beliefs, and interests of each of the Parties as expressed by each Parties executives or Board of Directors.

5. MEMBERSHIP TO GSSBC

- 5.1. As of 2020, the Membership of GSSBC is composed of:
 - 5.1.1. The Graduate Student Society of University of British Columbia Vancouver
 - 5.1.2. The Northern British Columbia Graduate Students' Society
 - 5.1.3. The University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society
 - 5.1.4. The Graduate Student Society at Simon Fraser University.
- 5.2. Membership is based on a voluntary agreement by each member, as expressed by each Member being a Party to this MOU.
- 5.3. All Members of GSSBC must be a Party to this MOU.

6. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 6.1. The highest decision-making body of GSSBC is its Executive Committee.
- 6.2. The Executive Committee may exercise all the powers and actions that GSSBC may undertake (subject to provision 4.3).
- 6.3. The voting members of the GSSBC Executive Committee are composed of one representative from each member organization. Each member of GSSBC is entitled to one voting member.
- 6.4. Members, staff, and executives from each member organization can attend meetings of the GSSBC as guests, by invitation from a member of the Executive Committee.

7. CHAIRPERSON

- 7.1. GSSBC shall have a rotating Chairperson that will serve their term from May 1st to April 30th of the following year.
 - 7.1.1. In the event that the term of the elected official holding the Chairperson role comes to an end before May, the role of Chair shall be passed on to the incoming executive of that member organization.
- 7.2. The Chairperson shall be selected from one of the elected officials of one the member organizations by the GSSBC Executive Committee through a democratic majority vote facilitated by the Chairperson of the previous year.
- 7.3. No society can serve two consecutive terms as chairperson, unless by unanimous decision of the Executive Committee.
- 7.4. In the event that the GSSBC Chairperson resigns, the Executive Committee shall convene to appoint a new GSSBC Chairperson by majority vote.
- 7.5. The Chairperson shall be the primary representative and public spokesperson for GSSBC (unless otherwise agreed upon by the Executive Committee).
- 7.6. The Chairperson has a duty to notify and report to the Executive Committee on all meetings, communication, and activity they partake in during their role as GSSBC Chairperson.
- 7.7. The Chairperson shall be responsible for summarizing the activities of GSSBC in an annual report in March.

8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- 8.1. The GSSBC Executive Committee will meet at least once a month, unless there is unanimous agreement otherwise.
- 8.2. Any member of the Executive Committee can call a meeting with unanimous agreement, but otherwise the Chairperson shall be in charge of calling and scheduling Executive Committee meetings.

9. FINANCES

- 9.1. All expenses related to activities of GSSBC shall be paid for in equal parts by GSSBC members.

- 9.2. All expenses related to activities of GSSBC must be unanimously agreed upon by the Executive Committee. 9.2.1. The core expenses of GSSBC are estimated to be \$250 annually per member.
- 9.3. In the event that an expense related to activities of GSSBC is paid by one GSSBC member, that member shall invoice other GSSBC members to pay their equal share.
- 9.4. All GSSBC Members agree to pay the expenses invoiced to them in less than 30 days.

10. GSSBC SUMMIT

- 10.1. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for convening an annual 'GSSBC Summit' with the goal of discussing broad issues facing graduate students across BC.
- 10.2. The intention of the GSSBC Summit is to foster collaboration and dialogue amongst all member organizations and to identify opportunities and goals for the year.
- 10.3. The executive bodies of all member organizations shall be invited to the GSSBC Summit.

