

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

## Executive Board

(ONLINE VIA ZOOM) MEETING MINUTES

JANUARY 4, 2022 VIA ZOOM

**EXECUTIVE PRESENT:** David FOSTER, Chair; Nicole KENT, Director of Communications (partial); Adair NG, Director of Services; Nahid SAFARI, Director of Student Affairs (partial); Ryan KHAN, Director of Finance; Kyla TURNER, Executive Director (non-voting)

**GUESTS:** Neil Barney, Operations and Services Manager

### STANDING ITEMS

---

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 1:33PM with FOSTER in the chair.

**B. TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Land acknowledgement offered by KHAN.

**C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*Motion: RESOLVED the agenda is approved as presented.*

*M/S: FOSTER/SAFARI*

*APPROVED by Consent*

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*Motion: RESOLVED to table approval of the minutes from the December 7, 2021 Executive Board Meeting.*

*M/S: FOSTER/NG*

*APPROVED by Consent*

**E. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

None.

[KENT arrived at 1:37pm]

**F. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

*Motion: RESOLVED graduate student representatives are elected to the following UVic committees:*

- *2021-22 Appointment Committee, Associate VP Research – 1 member*

*Nominations: David FOSTER     Member elected: David FOSTER*

- *Faculty of Social Sciences Awards and Recognition Committee – 1 member in Social Sciences*

*tabled*

- Faculty of Social Sciences Dean's Advisory Forum on Indigenization – 1 member in Social Sciences

tabled

M/S: KENT/NG

Discussion:

FOSTER notes that the March 1, 2022 board meeting will need to be rescheduled in an Executive Board member serves on the Associate VP Research Appointment Committee. Rescheduling will be on the January 18, 2022 Executive Board meeting agenda.

*APPROVED by Consent*

## G. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

No correspondence received.

## H. AGENDA PLANNING, OR MEETING DEBRIEF (GRC, OPERATIONAL RELATIONS, ETC.)

### 1. OPERATIONAL RELATIONS AGENDA PLANNING, JANUARY 19, 2021

Potential Agenda Items:

- Follow-up on messaging to instructors and department chairs on accommodation of overseas international students
- Consultation schedule for revision of UVic Policy AC1205 – Academic Accommodation and Access for Students with Disabilities
- Protocol for notifying GSS of consultations on new and revised UVic policies (notification apparently did not occur for the Sexualized Violence Policy)
- Facilities for “multi-access” graduate level courses, given that the two technology enabled classrooms are too large to be booked for many graduate courses
- Expansion of hot supper options in UVic Food Services once classes return to in-person attendance – tabled to subsequent Operational Relations Meeting

**Note:** Discussion of COVID-19 related items for the Operational Relations agenda was held under New Business.

## I. ANNUAL PLAN CHECK-IN

Discussed under New Business.

## NEW BUSINESS

---

### 1. GRAD HOUSE RESTAURANT REFERENDUM

Reference: Supporting documents for the proposed 2022 Food and Beverage Referendum including drafts of webvote request form, budgeting information, scheduling requirements for referendum, budgeting, election, and SAGM planning, survey questions and town hall presentations for member consultation ahead of the referendum

Invited: Neil BARNEY, Operations and Services Manager

*Motion: RESOLVED the following schedule is approved for the Grad House Restaurant referendum:*

- January 10-February 4, 2022: Survey period
- January 11, 2022, 1-3pm: Referendum Town Hall #1
- January 19, 2022, 3:30-5:30pm: Referendum Town Hall #2
- January 27, 2022, 5-7pm: Referendum Town Hall #3
- February 15, 2022 Board meeting: Approval of Referendum Questions
- February 15-22, 2022: Referendum Side Nomination Period
- February 23-March 11, 2022: Referendum Campaign Period
- March 9-11, 2022: Voting Days

*FURTHER RESOLVED the Grad House Restaurant referendum consultation documents are approved, subject to further minor grammatical/style edits.*

*M/S: FOSTER/KENT*

**Discussion:**

FOSTER provided an overview of the documentation sent to the board on December 17, 2021.

TURNER provided a review of the rationale for the referendum and work completed to date.

KHAN asked for clarification on the budget assumptions. TURNER and BARNEY provided information and offered to provide an additional budget estimates.

FOSTER walked the board through the member consultation tools and asked for board feedback.

TURNER and FOSTER reminded all board members to attend as many town halls as possible within their schedules. FOSTER noted that FOSTER, KHAN and NG held the most directly related portfolios to the issues raised at the town halls.

*APPROVED by Consent*

## 2. COVID-19 UPDATES

### *a) BC Public Health Orders*

Reference: December 2021 BC Public Health Orders regarding COVID-19 restrictions

The BC government has taken the following measures:

- Indoor organized gatherings of any size are not permitted (until January 18, 2022)
- Indoor events at venues (e.g., concerts, sports arenas, movie theatres) are limited to 50% capacity (until January 18, 2022)
- All bars and nightclubs are closed (until January 18, 2022)
- Restaurants, cafes and pubs can have a maximum of six people at each table and must have physical distancing or barriers between tables (until January 18, 2022)
- Indoor adult exercise, fitness and dance activities are not permitted (until January 18, 2022)
- Restaurants, cafes and pubs are required to have customers remain seated, not move between or visit other tables, and wear masks when not seated (until January 31, 2022)
- Sports tournaments are not permitted (until January 31, 2022)

**Discussion:**

FOSTER asked if there were any concerns about the current or anticipated BC restrictions. There were none.

### *b) UVic Response*

Reference: [UVic Webpage – Planning for Next Term \(January 2022\)](#)

The University of Victoria has taken the following measures:

- Classes will be held online from January 10 to 24, with the exception of courses with essential clinical or other experiential performance, studio or lab components, which will remain in person
- Campus services, including student housing and dining, student services, research facilities and libraries, will be open as normal on January 4
- New student welcome and orientation events will be held online

i) *Course drop dates and hybrid access*

REF DOCS: [Open Letter to President Kevin Hall](#); [Petition to change drop dates and allow hybrid course access](#)

*Motion: RESOLVED the Board of Directors endorses the open letter to UVic President Kevin Hall calling on UVic to move the 100% tuition fee reduction date to January 30, the 50% tuition fee reduction date to February 21, and the final course drop date to March 14 or later as well as providing continuing online access to course materials and lectures, including labs, throughout the Spring 2022 semester; and FURTHER RESOLVED the Society will promote the petition calling on UVic to change the course drop dates and allow hybrid course access.*

*M/S: FOSTER/NG*

*APPROVED by Consent*

**TASK: FOSTER to report to the Executive Board regarding whether the open letter to President Hall regarding January 2022 add/drop deadlines can be moved onto the Senate January meeting agenda from the floor.**

ii) *Rapid testing for vaccinated students, staff and faculty*

*Motion: WHEREAS individual students have reported being denied booking at the UVic COVID-19 rapid testing centre due to being vaccinated, and WHEREAS the Omicron variant of COVID-19 appears to be significantly more transmissible to vaccinated individuals compared to previous variants, and WHEREAS the Omicron variant comprises a major and growing portion of COVID-19 infections in BC,*

*RESOLVED the Board of Directors writes to the University of Victoria requesting clarification of the University's policy on the ability of vaccinated students, staff and faculty to book COVID-19 tests at the UVic rapid testing centre, and advocating that vaccinated students, staff and faculty who experience a COVID-19 exposure should be able to use the UVic rapid testing centre.*

*M/S: FOSTER/NG*

Discussion:

FOSTER noted that as per the December 14, 2021 GRC meeting, members are not able to access rapid testing if they are vaccinated against COVID-19. TURNER noted that BC's updated COVID testing policy (which removes PCR testing options for asymptomatic people) makes a policy change at UVic unlikely, but it is still important to advocate for members' access to rapid testing.

*APPROVED by Consent*

c) *GSS Operations and Services*

For discussion

BARNEY provided an overview of service provision changes (Halpern Centre closed to the public and staff offered the option to work from home until January 17, 2022 at the earliest). The staff are dealing with student issues and service provision needs are dealt with on a case by case basis. Departments with large cohorts have been contacted to make service provision arrangements. TURNER noted staff will be meeting weekly regarding COVID safety planning and will report all changes to the board.

### 3. ANNUAL PLAN REVIEW – JANUARY TO MARCH 2022 WORKPLAN

Reference: [GSS Annual Plan 2021-22](#)

*Motion: RESOLVED the GSS 2021-22 Annual Plan Workplan for January to March 2022 is approved.*

*M/S: FOSTER/NG*

Discussion:

FOSTER presented a three month work plan for the Executive Board which included action items for the RA employment legal status, compensation for students on time-intensive university committees, elimination of International Student MSP fees, policy and governance improvements, GRC structure and elections, student wellness, board visibility, HR development, student advocate fund repurposing, and COVID-19 recovery.

TURNER stated that our Work Study student conducting research and policy development on the UVic committees issue works until the end of April so there is capacity to bring this policy to the May 2022 Senate meeting with FOSTER and KENT still serving as student senators.

SAFARI noted that all International Student MSP fee petition pages from UVSS have been received therefore we need to retrieve petitions from other universities that circulated the petition.

**TASK: FOSTER, SAFARI, and TURNER to meet to create an action plan for bringing the International Student MSP fee petition to the floor of the legislature.**

TURNER noted that the staffing needs to take on all GRC elections are more extensive than just the hours for a temp electoral officer. These plans must include training time, a training plan, allocation of existing staff hours to said training and training development,

KENT noted that the Communications Committee would like to discuss further access to GSS social media accounts with BARNEY and Melissa WOTKYNS, Office/Communications and Outreach Coordinator.

TURNER and KHAN suggested removing the development of a five year HR strat plan for the next board.

*APPROVED by Consent*

### 4. ACADEMIC UNIT GRANT PROGRAM

REF DOC: [Academic Unit Grant Program Briefing Note](#)

*Motion: RESOLVED the Board of Directors refers the draft Academic Unit Support Fund Terms of Reference to the appropriate Development Authority, as determined by the Bylaw and Policy Committee.*

*M/S: FOSTER/NG*

Discussion:

FOSTER provided an overview of his briefing note on the academic unit department grant.

TURNER noted that the briefing note was developed without consultation with the staff who administer the grant or consideration for staffing requirements to support a change in the level of support to academic unit associations GSS provides. As a result, the briefing note does not take into account the operational side of a revised academic unit support program. This project is not part of the board's Annual Plan and needs further development to be actionable. TURNER recommended the board do not approve plans without an operational plan for revising staffing needs.

FOSTER noted he is only recommending a change to offer some baseline operating funding for academic unit associations and he did not feel that there would be a rapid rise of the number of academic unit associations. This change, along with offering the option for multiple academic units to apply under a single grant application, could reduce staffing needs for administering this grant.

[SAFARI left the meeting at 3:13pm]

*APPROVED by Consent*

## 5. ICE BREAKER

Foregone.

## 6. IN-CAMERA SESSION

### a) Personnel

*Motion: RESOLVED to move in-camera without staff at 3:24pm.*

*M/S: FOSTER/KENT*

*APPROVED by Consent.*

## CLOSING ITEMS

---

### EXECUTIVE INFORMAL DISCUSSION/UPDATES/QUESTIONS

Chair: FOSTER spent December break developing the annual plan work plan and academic unit support briefing note. Additionally reviewed and edited the Food and Beverage referendum materials. Finally reviewed current COVID restrictions to keep the board informed.

Director of Communications: KENT The Communications Committee has met in December. They are looking at increasing our social media presence and would like to review strategies for making our online presence more impactful. The VPAC hire has now been ratified (Congrats to KENT for the success of her long hard work on that hiring committee).

Director of Finance: KHAN noted that finance and human resources are going forward well. Work on the annual plan is going smoothly. KHAN is excited to hear member feedback on the Food and Beverage referendum. The Finance Committee has not been quorate and KHAN is struggling with connecting with Finance Committee members.

Director of Services: NG The Events Committee remains committed to their mandate despite new COVID-19 restrictions. The Appeals Committee continues to work on a steady and manageable number of appeals.

Director of Student Affairs: SAFARI no report.

Executive Director: TURNER working on planning for the Food and Beverage Town Halls as well as gathering the necessary documents for budget preparations and continuing to train Melissa.

Operations and Services Manager: BARNEY focused on similar issues to TURNER along with ensuring our services are working well as we return to remote work.

#### NOTICE OF MOTIONS, AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETING

Rescheduling the March 1, 2022 Executive Board meeting to accommodate FOSTER's attendance at the Associate VP Research appointment committee meetings.

#### UPCOMING MEETINGS AND IMPORTANT DATES

\*\*Task Reminder: Please be sure your meetings and events are up to date on the GRC Connect Calendar\*\*

Next Executive Meetings: January 18, 2021

GRC Meetings: January 25, 2021

SAGM: March 22, 2021

Office, Staff Scheduling Notes: Halpern Centre to remain closed to the public and half the staff to work from home until January 17 or until further notice. The closure will be reviewed on January 14, 2022 at the staff meeting.

#### ADJOURNMENT

*Motion: RESOLVED the meeting is adjourned.*

*M/S: FOSTER/SAFARI*

*APPROVED by Consent*

KT/klp

X



---

David Foster  
GSS Chair 2021-22

X



---

Kyla Turner  
Executive Director

