

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Executive Board

(HYBRID) MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 11, 2024

Zoom Link: <https://uvic.zoom.us/j/2244264481>

EXECUTIVE INVITED:

Wyatt MADDUX, Chair;
Samuel FIELDER, Director of Finance;
Rosemary WEBB, Director of Internal/University Relations;
Maggie LAWTON, Director of Student Life;
Kyla TURNER, Executive Director (non-voting)

GUEST: Greg Melnechuk, President of CUPE 4163

REGRETS: Jitendra PALAPARTY, Director of External Relations;

STANDING ITEMS PART 1

A. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by MADDUX at 12:05pm.

B. TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Territorial acknowledgement offered by TURNER.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: to approve the agenda with the amendment to add a scheduling check on board availability for April 22 for a meeting with Minister for Post-Secondary Education, Beare.
M/S: FIELDER/LAWTON
CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

1. SUMMER SERVICES AND PLANNING

Lead: TURNER

For: Discussion

TURNER provided an overview of the operational changes that the GSS undergoes over the summer:

- Grad House closed April 22 for an all-staff meeting/training day
- Grad House hours change: starting May 1, GH is open Wednesday-Friday only
- The office will close for one week in early-mid June to review all society records
- The office may or may not close some or all Mondays for quiet, uninterrupted work time

This allows the staff to complete a range of projects planned out over the course of April, as well as allows for office coverage while the staff take well-deserved holidays. Thus far, the GSS doesn't have multiple staff out on vacation at the same time, but we will be down one manager for 5 consecutive weeks in July-August.

2. GSS HEALTH AND DENTAL RENEWAL OVERVIEW

Lead: TURNER

For: Discussion

TURNER provided an overview of the annual insurance renewal procedure, which is:

1. April - Pacific Blue Cross (PBC, our insurance *provider*) reviews the use of our plans for the first six month of coverage (Sept-Mar) and, based on use, requests an increase to premiums
2. April-May – Aon (our insurance *broker*) presents PBC's initial request to us, receives a list of plan changes requested throughout the year from GSS staff, and then negotiates these plan changes as well as the premium rates with PBC. Then Aon presents the results of their negotiations to us.
3. May-June – Based on Aon's negotiations, the GSS plans a fee referendum for June. This includes preparing information sharing opportunities like Town Hall meetings, FAQ sheets for the website, referendum side formation planning, etc.
4. With the results of the referendum, the GSS signs off on a renewed annual contract for insurance with Aon and PBC

This year, Aon is aware of the following requests that have been raised throughout the year by members, staff, and board: gender affirming care (especially for those procedures not covered by TransCare BC), increasing physiotherapy coverage from \$250/year to \$500, increasing vision exam coverage from \$75 to \$100, decreasing the recall rate for dental exams from 9 months to 6 months.

Also new this year, Aon is negotiating a multi-year increase to decrease the uncertainty in insurance costs that creates a lot of headaches for the GSS and Aon administratively.

3. CUPE 4163 UPDATE

Lead: Greg Melnechuk

For: Discussion

CUPE is awaiting further info on the University budget cuts. MELNECHUK expects significant cuts to sessional positions and moderate cuts to TA work on campus. MADDUX asked how the loss of TA work (positions, hours, student load?) would be distributed. LAWTON noted that Biology has cut back on marking positions/hours by about half by restructuring course requirements. MELNECHUK noted that this year would be a strong one for collaboration between CUPE 4163 and GSS due to the losses for graduate student financial security.

The Organize UVic campaign is looking at who to include in the RA union for the first round of Labour Relations Board negotiations. The UBC-RA legal action is forthcoming in the next few weeks and the SFU-RAs have been at the negotiation table with SFU.

CUPE 4163 is also about one year out from bargaining – between the budget cuts, labour movement, provincial election, etc. they expect to spend a full year preparing for the next round of collective bargaining.

FIELDER asked after posters, banners and other visible advertising for the last push for the RA card drive.

MADDUX asked after collaboration with the Faculty Association for the RA card drive.

4. LACTATION FRIENDLIER CAMPUS UPDATE

Lead: WEBB

For: Discussion

WEBB provided an update from the Law class which took on the lactation friendlier campus project on behalf and created a comprehensive suite of policy changes recommended, costing, etc. Routes include retrofitting existing spaces (with comfortable chair, lockable fridge, completely private space) or lactation pods.

TURNER noted that with the University budget cuts, we should expect that this year would be ground-work year for advocating for building upgrades. We can still seek buy-in for the policies and ask for the changes to be incorporated into the Campus Plan and see policy to include lactation-friendly spaces in all new builds.

WEBB will bring in materials produced by the Law class next board meeting.

TASK: the Board to bring the Lactation Friendlier Campus project to a forthcoming Operational Relations meeting.

STANDING ITEMS PART 2

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: to approve the minutes from the April 4, 2024 Executive Board Meeting as presented.

M/S: LAWTON/FIELDER

CARRIED

E. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Lead: TURNER

Note: To ensure motion log is updated, ensure completed items are reported in the minutes.

Items assigned to board members that Kyla thinks are complete or abandoned will be listed below and highlighted in yellow. If there's an item you were assigned below highlighted in yellow, please confirm if the task was completed, revoked, or abandoned!

Tasks Completed/Decisions fully acted upon:

TASK: TURNER to invite CARSA to the May GRC meeting to discuss services available for graduate students.

TASK: TURNER to invite Dawn Schell from the Student Wellness Centre to a board meeting in summer for a meet and greet.

F. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

No appointments made.

G. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Item 1: Response from Ministry from Post-Secondary Ed

Item 2: Anti-Racism Training Response (Appendix D)

Motion: to receive the correspondence.

M/S: WEBB/LAWTON

CARRIED

H. AGENDA PLANNING, OR MEETING DEBRIEF

Reference: [Meeting Debrief Template \(link actually works now\)](#)

1. April 22 Minister Beare on Campus – who is available? – LAWTON, WEBB, MADDOX (PALAPARTY invited and may confirm upon her return)
 - i. Questions to ask: 1. Doctors working at campus health clinics are paid less than any other GP in BC. This makes staffing campus clinics a challenge and leads to a lack of access to care and continuity of care for student populations. Will the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education join the UVic GSS in calling on the Ministries of Health and Finance to re-classify all student clinic practitioners as Defined Scope –A to end the differential pay for practice in student clinics?
 - ii. What specifics can you give us regarding Premier Eby’s statement in February of this year and your own statement on March 1 that public post-secondary’s will not face a reduction in their international student enrolment? Can UVic expect to enrol the same number of international undergraduates in 2024 as in 2023?
 - iii. UVic is planning to bid for a new 500-bed dormitory soon. The UVic GSS believes that now is the right time to create a graduate student-only dorm, given the continued growth of graduate education at UVic and the fact that grad students were excluded from the new student visas caps. Grad students are overrepresented in family housing, even when they do not have dependents, as well as accessible suites in undergrad housing. We would like to ensure family housing is available for families and accessible housing is available for those who need it. To make space for everyone, grad students need a space of their own. Will your Ministry support UVic’s bid to build a 500-bed graduate student dorm on campus?

2. April 23 GRC – agenda must be ready to distribute NOW!

TASK: Complete formal debrief of the April GRC meeting.

I. LOBBYING REPORTS

Reports due at the first meeting of every month.

J. ANNUAL PLAN CHECK-IN

CLOSING ITEMS

EXECUTIVE INFORMAL DISCUSSION/UPDATES/QUESTIONS

Chair: MADDOX had two papers accepted to a conference and his equipment is now working!

Director of Finance: FIELDER the Student Life Grant committee meeting went well and gave in depth review of the applications. And had a paper accepted!

Director of Internal/University Relations: WEBB will be planning Grad Student Appreciation Week and Excellence in Graduate Research Symposium in May with LAWTON and Daviel.

Director of External Relations: PALAPARTY

Director of Student Life: LAWTON got engaged!

Executive Director: TURNER

NOTICE OF MOTIONS, AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETING

Notice of agenda item: Jim Dunsdon, Associate VP Student Affairs to attend April 18

Notice of agenda item: Robin Hicks, Dean Faculty of Grad Studies to attend April 18

Notice of agenda item: tabled from April 4 – BC PNP discussion – April 18

Notice of agenda item: discussion on questions and strategy for Minister Beare visit – April 18

Notice of agenda item: Monthly GRC reports overview with Chair, SRC – April 25

Notice of agenda item: Annual planning brainstorming – April 25

Notice of agenda item: Board summer availability check in – April 25

Notice of agenda item: Meet and greets with Library, International Centre Students, Global Community, Student Wellness Centre – TBD

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND IMPORTANT DATES

****Task Reminder: Please be sure your meetings and events are up to date on OUTLOOK CALENDAR****

Next Executive Meetings: April 18, 2024

Next GRC Meeting: April 23, 2024

AGM: October 22, 2024

Office, Staff Scheduling:

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: to adjourn the meeting.

M/S: LAWTON/WEBB

CARRIED

X

Wyatt MADDIX

GSS Chair 2024-25

X

Kyla Turner

GSS Executive Director

APPENDIX D – CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Item 2:

From: Farah Stonebanks <bipocac.media@gmail.com>

Sent: March 13, 2024 12:04 PM

To: GSS Chair

Subject: Re: BIPOC Academic Coalition - Presentation Information

Notice: This message was sent from outside the University of Victoria email system. Please be cautious with links and sensitive information.

Hello Wyatt,

I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

The length of the sessions run at around 1h 30min, and we like to stay longer at the end for any open discussion that students would like to have.

In terms of cost, we do not want to make a group's ability to access money a barrier to the dialogue and activism we want to foster. However, if your group has access to speaker fees, we would greatly appreciate the effort of securing these resources as we are a not-for-profit and would like to start developing sustainability to hire students who are currently volunteering.

Hosting via Zoom can either be done by us or by you, whichever you would prefer. We are able to take charge of the event, and would just ask for your help in spreading the word to your group to help organize attendees.

Finally, the purpose of the session is to both engage in discussion and knowledge sharing, and at the end provide an introduction and reasoning behind our organization. The topic is on how systemic racism operates through a DARVO (Deny, Attack, & Reverse Victim and Offender) approach when BIPOC academic members speak truth to authority. In other words, how academia deny, deflect, derail, dehumanize & destroy anti-racism within the ivory tower.

Let me know if there's anything else you would like me to expand on!

Best,

Farah

On Wed, Mar 13, 2024 at 2:19 PM GSS Chair <gsschair@uvic.ca> wrote:

Hello Farah,

Thank you for reaching out. I have discussed your proposal with the Board of Directors and we have a few questions regarding your program.

I believe that your session would garner interest from graduate students at UVic. Our Graduate Representative Council only meets once per month for 2 hours, so I don't think that this forum would be the appropriate space. To determine how we might facilitate this, could you please provide more detail on the necessary length and content of the session? What costs are associated with this program? Would hosting via zoom be facilitated by our organization or yours? And finally, is the purpose of the session to engage in discussion and knowledge sharing, or is it more focused on providing an introduction to your organization?

We appreciate you reaching out to us and look forward to continuing this conversation.

Sincerely,



Wyatt Maddox (He/Him)
GSS Chair
Graduate Students' Society, University of Victoria
PhD Candidate - Department of Geography
gss.uvic.ca, [@uvic_gss](https://twitter.com/uvic_gss)

From: Farah Stonebanks <bipocac.media@gmail.com>

Sent: March 7, 2024 9:19:47 AM

To: GSS Chair; Kyla Turner - Executive Director, Graduate Students' Society

Subject: Re: BIPOC Academic Coalition - Presentation Information

Notice: This message was sent from outside the University of Victoria email system. Please be cautious with links and sensitive information.

Hello,

I hope this email finds you well. I wanted to follow up on the email I sent a little while ago regarding potential collaborations between our respective groups.

I understand that schedules can be quite hectic, so I wanted to check in and see if you had any further questions or if there's anything additional I can provide to assist you in considering our proposed collaborations.

If you've had a chance to review the information provided and discuss it with your team, I'd love to hear your thoughts on whether any of the proposed collaborations align with the interests and goals of your group!

As well, please feel free to let me know a convenient time for a Zoom meeting if you would like to discuss this further.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Warm regards,

Farah

On Wed, Feb 21, 2024 at 8:55 PM Farah Stonebanks <bipocac.media@gmail.com> wrote:

Hello,

I spoke with a member of your team through Instagram, and they asked if I could send information concerning our nonprofit organization and the presentation we would like to offer your group. I spoke about the presentation with them briefly, and they mentioned the possibility of scheduling one during your Graduate Representative Council.

Just as a small note before I begin, our usual email server is currently experiencing some issues. For the time being, I will be using this email account for all my communications. Once it is fixed, I can send you my permanent email address. Thank you for your understanding!

To quickly summarize, The BIPOC Academic Coalition is a nonprofit organization committed to breaking the cycle of racial inequity through Unity, Research, Education, and Advocacy, uniting as a force for positive change. You can find more information about us through our website at bipocac.org.

Our speakers and co-founders, Dr. Aime Avolonto (York University) and Dr. C. Darius Stonebanks (Bishop's University), are award-winning, tenured professors who bravely spoke out against institutional racism during the George Floyd protests. They faced repercussions from their institutions, resulting in termination, and are currently in arbitration over the unjust nature of their dismissals. Drs. Avolonto and Stonebanks are now offering presentations on how systemic racism operates through a DARVO (Deny, Attack, & Reverse Victim and Offender) approach when BIPOC academic members speak truth to authority.

Our sessions are tailored for individual groups and combined groups of interest. The approximately two-hour session includes dedicated time for questions and answers. We are flexible with presentation formats, comfortable with Zoom sessions, or, if resources permit, in-person presentations.

Please let me know if you have any more questions or would like more information! As well, let me know when you'd be available for an online meeting, if interested. We would be happy to meet with you to go over more information.

Thank you for your time, and we look forward to the opportunity to collaborate with your group.

Best,

Farah Stonebanks

