

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Graduate Representative Council

(HYBRID) MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 23, 2024, 5-7 PM

Executive Board Invited (1 vote per member):**Chair:** Wyatt Maddox**Director of Internal/University Relations:** Rosemary Webb**Director of Finance:** Samuel Fielder**Director of Student Life:** Maggie Lawton**Director of External Relations:** Jitendra Palaparty**Executive Director (non-voting):** Kyla Turner**Elected Academic Unit Reps Invited (1 vote per academic unit):**

Anthropology: Rachel Hooton	Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies:	Law: Katarina Sawchuk	Political Science: Michael Chutskoff
Art History: Sarah Roberts & Jessica Ziakin Cook	Electrical and Computer Engineering:	Linguistics:	Social Dimensions of Health:
Biochemistry and Microbiology: Sushant Suresh	Environmental Studies: Lauren Burton & Diana Bertuol Garcia	Mathematics and Statistics:	Social Work:
Biology: Dominique Maucieri	Exercise Science, Phys. & Health Ed:	Mechanical Engineering: Maziyar Khadivi & Diogo Bravo	Sociology: Iman Fadaei & Jasmine Padam
Business:	French:	Music: Olivia Charette	Social Work:
Chemistry: Nick Roberts & Harvey MacKenzie	Geography:	Neuroscience:	Theatre:
Child and Youth Care:	Germanic and Slavic Studies:	Nursing:	Visual Arts:
Civil Engineering: Sanaz Ajabshir & Monika Mikhail	Greek and Roman Studies: Ben Watts-Woolridge	Pacific and Asian Studies: Delaney Johnson & Ivan Garcimartin Carmona	Writing:
Curriculum and Instruction: Nabila Kazmi & Aleksandra Waliszewska	Health Information Science: Haopeng Ren	Philosophy:	CUPE:
Earth and Ocean Science: Katie Jamson & Stacey Edmonson	History: Abigail Romano	Physics and Astronomy: Jade Fischer & Jonathan Qualter	Other Programs:
Economics:	Indigenous Governance: Kyle Cook	Psychology: Cian Dabrowski & Tara Cooper	Interdisciplinary Studies:

Recorder: Irfan Tanveer, Governance Coordinator**Invited Guests:** none**Regrets Received:** 2**Absent without regrets:** Rachel Hooton, Sushant Suresh, Nick Roberts, Harvey Mackenzie, Nabila Kazmi,

Aleksandra Waliszewska, Haopeng Ren, Maziyar Khadivi, Dhvani Sura, Olivia Charette, Nancy Henderson, Ivan Garimartin Carmona, Micheal Chutskoff, Cian Dabrowski, Tara Cooper, Iman Fadaei

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND OPENING ITEMS

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by MADDOX at 5:00 pm.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Councillors are asked to take a turn to provide a personal, meaningful statement of land acknowledgement.

Today's personal land acknowledgement will be provided by ROMANO.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: to approve the agenda as presented.

M/S: Executive Board/BURTON

CARRIED

TIMEKEEPER VOLUNTEER

Today's timekeeper was: JOHNSON.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT, MEETING QUORUM AND ATTENDANCE

GSS Membership: As of January 26, 2024, the GSS has 2997 members.

Meeting Quorum: With 2 regrets received, quorum for tonight's meeting is 15.

Meeting Guests: Any non-voting reps or guests? Please identify yourself so we can welcome you!

Welcome to new GRC reps!

REPORTS AND OPEN DIALOGUE

A. CHAIR'S REMARKS

MADDOX will update GRC on the goings on of the Executive Board. The Board has just completed their training over this last weekend and will be meeting about their annual plan this Thursday. They will finalize their annual plan by the end of June and present it to the membership in the Fall with the new GRC term.

MADDOX mentioned about summer project for the staff and board members along GSS committees summer work.

MADDOX further added that annual plan is a major part of summer projects.

A. GRC COMMITTEE, ELECTORAL OFFICER REPORTS, UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- **Advocacy and Campaigns:** PALAPARTY/WEBB reported the Advocacy and Campaigns met April 18 to review their TOR, materials produced by a Law class on campus about creating lactation friendly spaces on campus which will be presented to UVic at the board's forthcoming Operational Relations meeting, discussed the BC Provincial Nomination Program changes, and discussed the Climate Action show-and-share meetings starting in May. TURNER discussed the committee report.

- Appeals: FIELDER noted that appeals have met and reviewed all outstanding appeals. Due to the recent board election, the Appeals committee has too many board members and not enough GRC reps on it, so they'll be seeking a new GRC rep tonight.
- Bylaw & Policy: MADDOX reported that BPC met this afternoon to discuss their summer projects, including the creation of Electoral Appeals Committee terms of reference. MADDOX said that bylaw and policy are in contradictions and working to edit the policy.
- MADDOX said that another change of bylaw clause a nonpartisan, so this will prevent people to exert their on political view
- Events: LAWTON April is quite month and petri has been on vacation. There are a whole a lot of events for the summer.
- Finance: FIELDER noted that Finance Committee has not met in April. However, our new budget was adopted at the SAGM as expected. Management has started work on getting our records ready for the annual audit.
- Stipend Review: FISCHER reported that SRC met in April to discuss the March board reports, approve top-ups to the 2023-24 board for their exemplary work, and meeting scheduling over the summer.
- Electoral Officer: QUALTER no report. QUALTER asked if the TOR would give him more workload for the committee. MADDOX mentioned the development of the TOR will subsidize the amount of workload by distributing among other committee members rather than just performed by QUALTERS.
- RAMANO asked if there is a possibility to waive the blackout period each year for health insurance. TURNER said that we are unable to get final names of the registered student until the end of the black out period. MADDOX added that students are covered during the blackout period for which you will get reimbursed for any covered medical expenses by the plan.

B. GRC STANDING COMMITTEES – APPOINTMENTS

*MOTION: RESOLVED to remove Jitendra Palaparty from the Appeals Committee.
FURTHER RESOLVED the 2023-24 GRC reps are appointed to the GRC Standing Committees as follows:*

Advocacy and Campaigns: ABBYGAIL ROMANO

Appeals: JADE FISCHER

Events: LAUREN BURTON

M/S: MIKHAIL/QUALTER

CARRIED

C. OPEN DIALOGUE AND REPORTS

LEAD: MADDOX

QUALTER mentioned about physics department students have raised an issue that GSS do not have enough gluten free and celiac food options.

MADDOX If everyone has a vote in the faculty meeting? FISCHER mentioned that there is no vote but student in there depart have an opportunity to discuss their issues openly. ROBERTS said student association.

MIKHAIL and BURTON both mentioned they are invited for their department meeting, but they do not have any voting right or are involved in any department committee.

ROMANO mentioned they are not aware of there are any graduate student involvement in their department.

JOHNSON mentioned that only one of the GRC rep can attend. No voting right is provided.

PADAM said

We have a rep who is elected to our equity committee each year during the summer semester. No vote (I think) but able to voice concerns.

JAMSON

In SEOS, we are invited to attend department meetings. We are allowed to comment but not vote. However,

everything that is raised that impacts grad students is brought up at the Grad Committee meetings beforehand and we voice our concerns/suggestions etc. and take things back to the students for opinions and comments... so we kind of vote on things before the department meetings, before they are taken to the faculty officially, if that makes sense.

MADDOX said he is not invited into department meetings. Further adding graduate students must have an opportunity to participate and this could be a campuswide initiative in the fall 2024.

TURNER mentioned that all tri council have got overall in the 2024 budget and replaced by with three-part model but assigning the number of awards by graduate student category.

Further no new funding availability for supervisor in the budget 2024.

Master 27000

PHD 40000

Post doc 70000

ROBERTS said that curriculum committee is being raised in her department but its not met to their needs now. Would prefer pitch for change with having a voice. BURTON added that a single rep is participating.

ROBERTS said adjudicating the scholarship is going to undermine for non-stem program. TURNER said that she hasn't got any hint if the fed is rolling back on the this.

BREAK – 5 MINUTES

MEETING NEW BUSINESS

1. INTRODUCTIONS TO THE 2024-25 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Lead: MADDOX

Reference:

For: Discussion

As the 2024-25 Board has introduced themselves and their main goals on the board repeatedly to GRC, this round of introductions focused on their individual research projects as graduate students around UVic.

PALAPARTY studies data science in the CS department

LAWTON studies PhD department of biology.

FIELDER studies in astronomy

WEBB they/them is second year PHD linguistic.

2. FGS SUPERVISION POLICY

Lead: MADDOX

Reference:

For: Discussion

MADDOX gave another brief recap that the Faculty of Graduate Studies is in the process of reviewing and revising their Graduate Supervision Policy. MADDOX is the GSS representative on the committee that will revise this policy and he is looking for as much student feedback as possible from graduate students about the good, the bad, the ugly, and the wonderful about what their supervisory relationship looks like, and what policy is required to support grad student growth and success.

MADDOX requested everyone to provide feedback their graduate supervisor's experience with them.

ROBERTS asked when MADDOX is meeting. MADDOX mentioned they are in preliminary phase and there are working on the survey which will be forwarded to the supervisors. MADDOX added that this will be a long project and can take up to a year or longer to complete. MADDOX emphasised GRC Members to ask international student community and so that they are part of it as well.

3. MCKINNON GYM UPDATE

Lead: MADDOX

Reference:

For: Discussion

MADDOX provided information regarding the McKinnon weight room and dance studios, which were closed in April for renovations prior to their use for the new UVic-Canadian Sports Institute Pacific joint research project that will use those spaces exclusively for exercise science projects with CSIP. This is, of course, a significant win for our colleagues in the Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education department. However, these services were previously some of the only exercise spaces made available to all ATRS-fee paying students (ie all on campus students). UVic did not make any formal announcements before this change was made, though they had planned to, and they've since changed the language that they use to define the ATRS fee from a fee that grants students access to the McKinnon pool, weight rooms, dance studios, and CARSA squash courts, to a fee that supports all on campus student athletics. It appears that students will not be granted equivalent access at CARSA to services they've lost in McKinnon.

MADDOX discussed the student can have access to the athletic services for which they have to further pay for these services. Since the closure of the McKinnon gym will force students to join CARSA membership and which cost quite a bit. ROMANO asked if ATRS can be included into the tuition and TUENRS mentions that in 2009 the UVic wasn't able to increase tuition fee itself because of the provincial government gap and UVic added it to the UPASS program.

ROBERTS said the key problem with this situation is that lack of transparency and student aren't clear what are they getting in return for paying ATRS.

STANDING ITEMS

D. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

MOTION: to approve the Minutes of the February 27, 2024, GRC meeting as presented
M/S: QUALTER/BURTON
CARRIED

E. EXECUTIVE BOARD STIPEND REPORTS – QUESTIONS ARISING AND MOTION TO ACCEPT

LEAD: FISCHER

REF DOCS: Executive Board Reports Folder

Councillors are required to read the Executive Board reports prior to the meeting.

MOTION: to approve the March 2024 Executive Board Reports;
To approve top-ups for the 2023-24 Board in the following amounts:
\$500 to Wyatt Maddox
\$300 to Greg Gaube
\$300 to Lindsay Beal
\$300 to Mitch Nascimento
\$300 to Sam Fielder
Moved: Stipend Review Committee Seconded: ROMANO
CARRIED

B. REPORTS FROM GRAD REPS ON UVIC COMMITTEES

LEAD: MADDOX

Open Floor to hear any reports from graduate student representatives on:

- Faculty of Graduate Studies Council:
 ROBERTS mentioned the updates from Tricia Best re: International Grads: The provincial government has updated the PNP (provincial nomination program) terms, which go into effect Jan 2025. This primarily effects some Masters STEM programs, as students who were previously automatically eligible for PNP (permanent residency) will now have to secure a 1-year job offer. Furthermore, ROBERTS said some grad advisors said this is already impacting recruitment with incoming students turning down places following changes. The provincial government has not yet agreed to "grandfather" students in if they began their program before changes.

ROBERTS mentioned that a faculty member raised concerns around communicating dept. info with graduates, they said some are not reading emails/missing information. One member suggested discord. WEBB and ROBERTS raised concerns about moderating a server with all

grads- this would be time-consuming. They asked how departments might reach students (if not by email)

- Senate Committee for Scholarships and Awards:

ROBERTS said the senate committee has been meeting 1 x per month and have been discussing on updating our TOR to reflect gender diversity following committee conversations. ROBERTS further added, this is a long-term project of large scale/scope and will be ongoing. ROBERTS also said that committee is meeting this week to finalize Schulich scholar nominations.

- Multifaith Advisory:

ROBERTS said, we have discussed the 2025/6 AGM structure, suggestions for more representation for student clubs/campus organisations who have connection with faith/spirituality e.g. Inclusive Christians, NSU, Sikh Students Society. There were discussions about forming a student based Multifaith committee/council, but some raised concerns about timing/workload etc. for student reps. They are doing an internal hire for a new Spiritual Care Lead (co-ordinates all Spiritual Care Providers).

Furthermore, ROBERTS added one student raised issue of uneven representation for SCPs for different faith groups, e.g. there are 9 Christian/Catholic SCP's and only 2 who represent Muslim faith.

Note: Reps are encouraged to submit short written reports to gssgov@uvic.ca for inclusion in the minutes.

F. GRADUATE REPRESENTATION ON UVIC COMMITTEES

LEAD: TANVEER

Grad Councillors are asked to sit on at least one UVic Committee to ensure graduate student interests are represented. For information on each committee please see the GSS webpage:

<https://gss.uvic.ca/about-gss/get-involved/committees/grad-representation-at-uvic/>

*MOTION: to elect the following graduate student representatives to UVic committees:
Committee: Appointment Committee for the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts
(Requires a secondary graduate student in the event the primary is unavailable)*

Member: MIKHAIL/ROBERTS

Committee: Library External Review

Member: LAUREN BURTON

M/S: ROMANO/FISCHER

CARRIED

C. REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT/ADVOCACY/PARTICIPATION

LEAD: MADDOX

Opportunity for any GRC member participating in a group or issue to request support or participation from other graduate students. Bring information about rallies, events, good information and resource links and be ready to post in the CHAT!

D. NOTICES OF AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

LEAD: MADDOX

E. IMPORTANT DATE REMINDERS:

LEAD: MADDOX

Next Meeting: GSS Annual General Meeting! October 22, 2024

- Agenda to be posted: October 22, 2024

Next GRC Meeting: May 28, 2024

- Please have any potential agenda items, with supporting materials, to the Executive Board for consideration, in advance of May 14
- Agenda to be posted: May 21


Office, Staff Scheduling Notes:

F. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: to adjourn the meeting.

M/S: JOHNSON/BURTON

CARRIED

X 

Wyatt MADDOX
GSS Chair 2024-25

X 

Kyla Turner
GSS Executive Director