

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA GRADUATE STUDENTS' SOCIETY

Annual General Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

October 29th, 2019

Halpern Centre for Graduate Students
University of Victoria

PRESENT:

Chair: Mehdi HASHEMI
Director of Finance: Carla OSBORNE
Director of Student Affairs: Saeed REZVANI
Director of Services: Sima SHANJANI
Director of Communication: Elaine LABERGE
Public Administration: David Foster (GRC and Meeting Parliamentarian)
Economics: Brooklynn Trimble (GRC and GSS Electoral Officer)
Mathematics & Statistics: Joseph Horan (GRC, Stipend Review Committee, Chair)
Political Science: Phil Henderson
French: Tiffany Kuo (GRC)
Psychology: Connor Leshner (GRC)
Social Dimensions of Health: Anabelle Bernard Fournier (GRC)
Visual Arts: Lauren Brinson (GRC)
History: Tim Cunningham (GRC)
Social Dimensions of Health: Sanjit Roy
Mechanical Engineering: Azita Sharif Ahmadian
Mechanical Engineering: Arman Nikkhah
Geography: Parnian Rezaia (GRC)
Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies: Rana Battah (GRC)
English: Lauren Elle DeGaine
Earth & Ocean Sciences: Sheryl Murdock
Astronomy: Tarun Kumar
Astronomy: Katie Crofts
Mechanical Engineering: Graham Wilson (GRC)
Sociology: Shreyashi Ganguly
Sociology: Sarah Revilla
Math & Statistics: Mitchell Haslehurst (GRC – CUPE)
Physics & Astronomy: Chelsea Dunning
Public Administration: Meghan Corbett (GRC)
Psychology: Thomas Ferguson (GRC)
Social Dimensions of Health: Daniel Gudiño (GRC)
Anthropology: C. William Campbell (GRC)
Physics: Maheyer J. Shroff

Educ. Curriculum & Instruction: Jeffrey Bruton (GRC)
Civil Engineering: Armin Aini
Anthropology: Rae Dias (GRC)
Political Science: Thea Lewis
Astronomy: Brittany Howard
Physics & Astronomy: Maan Hani (GRC)
Law: Eva Linde (GRC)
Chemistry: Talita de Francesco Calheiros (GRC)
English: Janice Niemann (GRC)
Political Science: David Lark
Political Science: Jordon Sheppard
Political Science: Ebubekir Gorgun
Mechanical Engineering: Rad Haghi (GRC)
Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies: Natasja Benfaida
Electrical & Computer Engineering: Narges Attarmoghaddam
Electrical & Computer Engineering: Alexandros Dimopoulos (GRC)
Neuroscience: Chad Williams (GRC)
Computer Science: Omer Wasim (GRC)
Mechanical Engineering: Bob Noakes
Biology: Nicholas Planidin (GRC)
Civil Engineering: Leigh Borrett
Civil Engineering: Mohammad Miri
Civil Engineering: Robert Xu
Educ. Curriculum & Instruction: Hossein Ghanbari (GRC)
Division of Medical Sciences: Eslam Mehina
Law: Esteban Vallejo Toledo
Division of Medical Sciences: Maria Raudales

Non-voting attendees:

Executive Director: Stacy CHAPPEL
Office Coordinator, Governance: Karen L. Potts (Recorder)
Office Coordinator, Communication and Outreach: Neil Barney

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:11 pm with HASHEMI in the Chair.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

HENDERSON provided a personal land acknowledgement.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

HASHEMI reported that at 5:10 pm, 52 voting members were in attendance, therefore the meeting was quorate. (Final count of voting members in attendance was 61.)

HASHEMI reminded members of the procedural rules for GSS General Meetings, including that voting cards are not transferrable (no proxies), and that meetings are based on Roberts Rules.

FOSTER, a GRC Rep for Public Administration, was introduced as Parliamentarian for the meeting.

Motion: RESOLVED to approve the agenda.

M/S EXECUTIVE BOARD / DEGAINE

CARRIED

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion: RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the March 26th, 2019 SAGM as presented.

M/S EXECUTIVE BOARD / LESHNER

CARRIED

MEETING BUSINESS

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

1. GSS Membership and Representation Report – REZVANI

GSS Membership as of October 24, 2019:

Total Members: 2927 members.

On-campus: 1906 (65%)

Distance: 892 (31%)

Co-op 129 (4%)

Representation Grad Council: 32 Academic units with representation on GRC (50 eligible units)

Graduate student representation at UVic:

- i. GSS has recruited and appointed GSS members to volunteer and represent graduate student interests on 23 separate and committees including:

- UVic Senate Committees: Appeals, Awards, Continuing Studies, and Libraries

- UVic Hiring/Review Committees: HSD Associate Dean, Fine Arts Acting Assoc. Dean, and UVic Associate Vice-President Research
- Advisory and Consultation Committees: 16 committees

ii. GSS Executive Board members have also volunteered to represent graduate student interests on an additional 20 committees at UVic:

- UVic Senate Committees: Academic Standards, Planning, Teaching and Learning
- UVic Hiring/Review Committees: UVic Associate Vice-President Academic Planning, UVic Vice-Provost, UVic VP External Relations, Associate Dean Social Sciences, and UVic President and Vice-Chancellor Search Committee
- Advisory and Consultation Committees: 11 committees

a. Work of the 2019-20 Executive Board to date (April 1, 2019-October 29, 2019)

REZVANI introduced the Executive Board.

REZVANI presented the Executive Board's strategic goals for the year (set in consultation with the GRC).

The 2019-20 goals included:

- Financial Sustainability
- Policy Manual Review
- Internal and External Relations Development
- Standardization of student elections and representation procedures
- Communications Improvement
- Advocacy Project

REZVANI reviewed the key challenges faced by this year's Board, including:

- Record 7% drop in graduate student enrolment (GSS membership base)
- Low level of member engagement
- Director of Communication resignation and midterm election
- Departure of the Operations and Services Manager
- Organizational change to move responsibility for supervising and supporting the Restaurant Manager, in addition to the Executive Director, to the Executive Board
- Financial troubles with decreased membership revenue, and low restaurant revenue
- Staff shortages with Victoria in record low unemployment conditions

REZVANI provided some of the accomplishments and progress on projects to date:

- Represented graduate students on various university governing bodies
- Advocacy support to individual students
- Regularizing Labour Management Committee meetings
- Responding to the restaurant financial situation, and hiring a new manager
- Getting the advocacy fund project underway
- Starting work on the Departmental Students Associations policy

Other GSS work in progress cited, included:

- Succession/transition planning

- Improving graduate student representation to university governing bodies
- Updating the GSS policy manual
- Supporting CUPE 4163 (component) bargaining
- Internal/external communication improvement
- Opposing MSP fees for international students

GSS INTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Bylaw and Policy** - HASHEMI reported that the Committee is working on two main projects, the department associations project and the policy manual revision.
- Communications** - LABERGE reported that the Committee has been discussing the currently used GSS communication strategies and are considering options to better engage members.
- Events** - SHANJANI reported on the Fall events underway and planning for upcoming events. SHANJANI also reported on the extensive work done around Orientation and the success in bringing in funds from UVic to help pay for some of the orientation activity costs.
- Appeals** - SHANJANI explained the role of the Appeals Committee. This year's Committee is not only reviewing appeals but is also reviewing related materials on the GSS website.
- Finance** - OSBORNE reported that the Committee is considering an additional project on GSS financial history as well as the upcoming budget preparation.
- Student Affairs** - REZVANI provided an update on the Committee's two main projects, moving forward with the student advocate fund, and using the student survey data to communicate graduate students' issues and concerns to relevant bodies. REZVANI also provided a short review of the some of the data and key findings from the graduate student survey.
- Stipend Review** – HORAN reviewed the Committee's role to ensure the Executive Board members work meets the requirements to receive the Executive stipend. HORAN announced that the Committee has created an anonymous web-based survey to enable GRC members to provide feedback on the work of Executive members. HORAN explained that the feedback is read by the Committee, who follow up on issues raised. HORAN explained that while the main purpose of the Stipend Review is to provide accountability to members, the Committee also wants to support the Executive to do their best work.
- Electoral Officer** - HASHEMI introduced Brooklyn TRIMBLE as the GSS Electoral Officer for 2019-20.

PRESENTATION OF THE 2018-19 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

REF DOCS: [2018-19 GSS Audited Financial Statements](#)

OSBORNE, Director of Finance, presented the 2018-19 Audited Financial Statements. (See Appendix A for full presentation slides.)

OSBORNE summarized the financial position of for the year ended March 31, 2019 as stable, but the risk areas continue to need to be managed through:

- Food and Beverage as the highest risk will have operational adjustments ongoing to decrease risk,
- Balancing capital purchases with debt repayment for renovation,
- As graduate student enrolment dropped for the last three years, GSS will use more conservative indicators and estimates than UVic is using/projected, and
- Although Health and Dental Insurance Plan costs are increasing, ensuring they are manageable.

Motion: RESOLVED that the 2018-19 Audited Financial Statements are approved as presented.

M/S EXECUTIVE BOARD / WILLIAMS

Discussion:

HORAN asked for confirmation that even though the current audit shows that GSS lost \$153,000 in 2018-19, compared to a loss in the previous fiscal year of \$50,000 that the Director of Finance is confident GSS is a stable financial position.

OSBORNE explained that the extra-ordinary losses were specific to 2018-19, that they included the restaurant closure, the slow return of customers, the difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff in the current low unemployment market, and the record drop in graduate student enrollment at UVic.

CHAPPEL also explained that the major loss in the capital fund (\$76,000) was the depreciated cost of the assets for the renovation.

CARRIED

REAPPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

Motion: RESOLVED the 2019-20 financial auditors shall be Obara & Company.

M/S EXECUTIVE BOARD/HAGHI

CARRIED

Abstention: VALLEJO TOLEDO

RESTAURANT FINANCIAL UPDATE, AND PREVIOUS SAGM BUDGET ACTION ITEMS

OSBORNE, Director of Finance, provided members with an update on the budget and general financial health of the Grad House restaurant, as recommended at the March 2019 SAGM. (See Appendix B for Grad House Restaurant revenue data slide as presented.)

At the March 2019 SAGM, OSBORNE noted that restaurant sales and projections were more optimistic than what actually transpired. When it became apparent that the restaurant was in serious trouble, a number of major initiatives were taken including:

- A GRC-driven survey
- Undertaking a Third Party Management Review
- Hiring a restaurant consultant
- Implementing necessary structural changes
- Creating a new restaurant manager position that will solely focus on the restaurant.

Changes were also made in the restaurant operations including:

- Adjusted hours of operation
- Adjusted liquor pricing
- Introduced “Happy Hour”
- Introduced rotating food items

- Optimized liquor stocking
- Promotion and expansion of catering services

OSBORNE emphasized that the restaurant staff have been fabulous and that the lower revenues were not due to staff. Revenue issues related to problems re-securing customer base after the renovation closure, the increased competition of food outlets on campus, massive staff shortages in Victoria for hospitality workers, and challenges of matching open hours (staff costs) with hours that customers utilize.

OSBORNE noted that from the budget presented at the March 2019 SAGM, there have been two major changes. The Restaurant Manager salary was moved to the Food and Beverage Fund. As well, there were unbudgeted expenses for external consultant fees.

OSBORNE also noted that the potential of a fee increase referendum is on the agenda for the November GRC.

WILLIAMS expressed appreciation for the work done to date to stabilize the restaurant, but asked for assurances that closing the Grad House was no longer an option being considered. OSBORNE stated that there was never a vote to close the restaurant. OSBORNE noted that with risk-based operations, there can never be guarantees, but the financial indicators over the past few months are positive.

STUDENT ADVOCATE FUND TERMS OF REFERENCE

REF DOCS: *Student Advocate Fund Terms of Reference.* (See Appendix C)

REZVANI presented the draft Terms of Reference for the re-envisioned Student Advocate Fund. REZVANI explained that work on this initiative started with Executive Boards and GRCs in 2011. REZVANI recognized the work done by these graduate student members people who were never going to see the benefit. REZVANI explained that after finally going to referendum to jointly fund a Student Advocate Office with UVSS, and the UVSS referendum failed, the Student Advocate project had to be re-envisioned to work within the limited funding provided solely by graduate students.

Motion: BIRT the Student Advocate Fund Terms of Reference are approved as presented.

M/S: Executive Board / NIEMANN

Amendment: that the Student Advocate Terms of Reference are approved as presented, with minor corrections.

M/S HORAN / HANI

Amendment CARRIED

Discussion:

HORAN, referring to the Terms of Reference 1.3a, asked, what are exceptional circumstances? CHAPPEL explained that this would be defined by the Executive based on the individual case, for example cases which have complex issues, where urgency was an issue, or where it could be anticipated that legal advice would be needed. CHAPPEL stated that in her term as the GSS Executive Director, there would have been 2-3 cases that would have fit these criteria.

HORAN asked about the Reports to GRC 1.3h, and whether the reports on the fund should be presented to general meetings. CHAPPEL explained the preference to present to GRC as a case may indicate a broader

systemic issue that the GRC could be in a position to take action. CHAPPEL also explained that use of the Fund would be seen and reviewed at general meetings via the financial reports and budget presentations.

MAAN encouraged the GSS to regularly report on the issues that prompt usage of the fund, to ensure timely actions to substantial issues, and that there is current information regarding the fund's utilization. HANI asked the Student Affairs Committee to look at a metric for capturing the issues that require the funds use.

HORAN asked about the funding restrictions. CHAPPEL explained the language related to restricted funds, and fund accounting language.

FOSTER commented that the motion provides the bare bones of the fund. It ensures the GRC will not act contrary to the intent, but that there is room for the GRC to elaborate and expand if warranted.

Motion as amended:

RESOLVED the Student Advocate Fund Terms of Reference are approved as presented, with minor corrections.

CARRIED

EXTENDED HEALTH AND DENTAL INSURANCE PLANS – SEMI ANNUAL UPDATE

CHAPPEL provided the regular semi-annual update on the GSS health and dental insurance plans.

Currently 1500 graduate students are members, with 120 members who have chosen to add family members. Fortunately for the stability of the plans, enrolment in the plans have been steady despite the overall drop in GSS membership. The GSS office processed 172 opt ins and 495 opt outs in September 2019.

CHAPPEL noted that the Health and Dental Coordinator took a leave from the position in August 2019. Due to the many other issues facing GSS, existing management/staff fulfilled the basic duties usually performed by the Coordinator, and all opt in/opt out enrollments for September were completed on time. A temporary Coordinator is anticipated to be in place for January 2020.

The successful referendum in March 2019 has meant:

- A rebalancing of fees between the Extended Health and Dental plans could occur
- There was a return to \$10 overall deductible on EHC (vs. \$50)
- There was an increase of the clinical counsellor/psychology benefit to \$500 per calendar year
- The “second opinion” service was eliminated as a cost saving due to lack of member use

As well, in the past six month, the new GSS broker, AON, successfully completed negotiations on our plan renewal for 2019-2020. They have also been involved in formalizing agreements on policy interpretation.

CHAPPEL reported that reconciliation procedures were developed and implemented in summer 2019.

Also from the audit, CHAPPEL noted that:

- The audit shows Health and Dental Fund in an adjusted 12 month period (September – August) rather than audit year (April – March),
- That GSS drew on GSS Health Plan Stabilization Fund to pay the August 2019 bill,
- That \$41,871 remained in reserve fund as of August 31, and
- That as of August 31, 2019, for the first time, reserves held at Pacific Blue Cross are in the positive [~\$8,000].

Discussion:

TRIMBLE brought forward member questions about the difference in coverage between UVSS and GSS plans. CHAPPEL explained that our plan was very different and lacked certain advantages of the UVSS plan, such as an average age of members being in early 20s, and that UVSS has 6 x the number of members funding their insurance. CHAPPEL reminded members that people struggling with the GSS drug coverage should come see her, as there may be other options.

OTHER BUSINESS

a. Proposal for an ad hoc committee on member participation

WILLIAMS, speaking on behalf of Connor LESHNER, provided a notice of a motion to be presented at the November 2019 GRC meeting. LESHNER will propose the establishment of a GRC Ad Hoc Committee to look at member participation and representation issues, such as how information about GSS/GRC participation opportunities are disseminated to incoming students, learning more about the barriers to joining GRC (including if there may be secondary options for representation), how to increase the number of members running for Executive positions, and how to increase member voter turnout in elections and referenda. LESHNER noted specific departments and faculties with large numbers of members who do not have active GRC representation.

Discussion:

NIEMANN raised the concern that GSS does not pressure marginalized, already overtapped graduate students to perform more free labour. WILLIAMS noted that LESHNER's proposal did specifically mention the need to consider secondary representation ideas.

HANI asked about what other member groups (aside from departments) may be underrepresented in GRC. CHAPPEL noted indigenous graduate students, as well as grad students with families and dependents.

b. Grad House hours of operation

BRUTON brought forward a request from members that the Grad House be open the same hours every day to help ease patronage.

It was noted that it is not financially viable to staff the Grad House during hours of low patronage (e.g. Monday, Tuesday evenings).

c. Executive Board continuity

BRUTON noted the intention to bring forward a motion for the March 2020 SAGM to adjust the election timing of the GSS Board to extend the terms of office and stagger the elections to avoid 100% turn over in any given year.

HANI asked that the Bylaw and Policy Committee look at other university graduate student societies to investigate governance models that may provide better continuity.

HORAN stated that there are discussions with the Stipend Review Committee about how to improve elected Executive transition and capacity building. HASHEMI confirmed that the Bylaw and Policy Committee is also considering policy changes that would support more effective Executive transitioning.

d. Executive Stipend policy correction

HORAN provided notice of motion for the March 2020 SAGM that the Stipend Committee is working to update the stipend policy to reflect the correct amounts.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting.
M/S EXECUTIVE BOARD / BRUTON
CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 pm.

klp/JH

X

Mehdi Hashemi
GSS Chair 2019-20

X

Stacy Chappel
GSS Executive Director

APPENDIX A: PRESENTATION OF THE AUDITED STATEMENTS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	31-Mar-19	31-Mar-18	31-Mar-17	31-Mar-16
TOTAL ASSETS	2,187,553	2,561,607	2,151,137	1,942,720
Liabilities	1,217,771	1,438,467	978,402	849,133
Fund Balances (equity)	969,782	1,123,140	1,172,735	1,093,587
TOTAL Liabilities & Fund Balance	2,187,553	2,561,607	2,151,137	1,942,720

HISTORICAL: FINANCIAL POSITION

	31-Mar-14	31-Mar-15	31-Mar-16	31-Mar-17	31-Mar-18	31-Mar-18
TOTAL ASSETS	1,764,161	1,840,556	1,942,720	2,151,137	2,561,607	2,187,553
Liabilities	733,408	754,834	849,133	978,402	1,438,467	1,217,771
Fund Balances (equity)	1,030,753	1,085,722	1,093,587	1,172,735	1,123,140	969,782
TOTAL Liabilities & Fund Balance	1,764,161	1,840,556	1,942,720	2,151,137	2,561,607	2,187,553

STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES (VS BUDGET)

	Total 2019	Budget 2019	Total 2018	Total 2017	Total 2016
Revenue	1,467,972	1,461,654	1,480,516	1,456,287	1,447,918
Restaurant Gross Profit	306,848	338,775	87,070	308,709	295,984
Expenses	1,928,178	1,800,429	1,617,181	1,685,848	1,736,037
Balance	(153,358)	0	(49,595)	79,148	7,865

HISTORICAL: STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

	31-Mar-14	31-Mar-15	31-Mar-16	31-Mar-17	31-Mar-18	31-Mar-19
Revenue	1,403,890	1,433,600	1,447,918	1,456,287	1,480,516	1,467,972
Restaurant Gross Profit	315,688	301,535	295,984	308,709	87,070	306,848
Expenses	1,662,280	1,680,166	1,736,037	1,685,848	1,617,181	1,928,178
Balance	57,298	54,969	7,865	79,148	(49,595)	(153,358)

OPERATING FUND DETAIL

Budgeted Operating Fund Surplus: \$0

Actual was a loss: -17,242

Reasoning:

- Effects of 7% decrease in enrolment
- Ongoing effects of staffing ahead of restaurant launch

HEALTH AND DENTAL PLAN DETAIL

Budgeted Health and Dental Fund: 1,834

Dental Fund actuals: (loss of 47,050)

Statements are adjusted to the plan year (September - August)

Reasoning:

- Enrolment held steady, inconsistent with overall enrolment.
- Shared office expense higher than budgeted.
- Enrolment error found during audit, this resulted in higher fees than budget.
- GSS will aim to correct the error and realize the benefit in next fiscal.

FINANCIAL PRESENTATION SUMMARY

Society is in a stable financial position overall.

Risk areas:

- Food and Beverage remains highest risk area, with adjustments to operation ongoing to decrease risk
- Balancing capital purchases with debt repayment for renovation
- Enrolment dropped last three years
- Health and Dental insurance plan costs are increasing but manageable

APPENDIX B: FINANCIAL UPDATE ON RESTAURANT

GH Financial Background

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Net revenue (loss)	(49,778)	(67,074)	(59,916)	(41,887)	(80,635)

Month	April - 19	May - 19	June - 19	July - 19	August -19	September – 19 est.
Net Revenue (loss)	(7,170)	(18,109)	717	(5646)	(7289)	1,547

* Balances do not include restaurant management costs.

APPENDIX C: DRAFT STUDENT ADVOCATE FUND TERMS OF REFERENCE

STUDENT ADVOCATE FUND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approved at the October 29, 2019 GSS AGM

PURPOSE

In 2019, the members voted in a referendum to establish a Student Advocate Fund fee. This policy outlines the process for accessing and restricting access to these funds.

ADDITIONS/TRANSFERS TO THE FUND

Revenues to the fund are from the following sources:

- Fees collected as a result of a referendum to establish or increase the Student Advocate Fund fee;
- Ordinary budget resolution and/or other expenditure resolutions in accordance with the constitution and bylaws;
- Reallocation of funds in accordance with the Fiscal Updates and Budget Amendments policy;
- Donations from individuals.

APPROVAL OF EXPENSES PAID FROM THE FUND

Requests for funds

Requests for funds are generally triggered by a request from the Executive Director. In exceptional circumstances, the Executive Board may consider a request from a member of the Executive Board or the Graduate Representative Council.

Approval of fund allocations

Fund allocations are approved by an ordinary motion of the Executive Board.

In an urgent case, the Executive Director may request an expedited approval by the Chair or Director of Student Affairs. In such cases a report on the decision will be made to the Executive Board by email, and be recorded at the next Executive Board meeting.

Scope of work

Scope of work for the advocate engaged by the GSS could include:

- Interviewing the student(s) and witnesses;
- Preparing a docket;
- Attending hearings/meetings with or on behalf of the student(s);
- Research;
- Advising the student(s);
- Mediating.

Responsible use of resources

Members benefitting from the fund will make reasonable efforts to limit the expense of their case. This can be done by ensuring they have a reasonable understanding of the applicable university policies, preparing and collating relevant materials, and drafting a written summary of their concern where appropriate.

Records of approved allocations

Discussion regarding the request for funds and any details related to the individual student or the case will be held in camera. The motion to approve allocation of funds will be made in open session. The motion will include the estimated amount of funds allocated, the expected timeline for contract completion, the party to be contracted, if known, and the scope of work.

Considerations in allocating funds

The Fund is to be used to support GSS members, including members currently on leave.

When allocating funds, the Executive Board will consider whether:

- the request is in keeping with GSS Purposes;
- the individual case is significant to the GSS membership as a whole;
- legal or other professional services are more cost effective than staff time spent on the same tasks;
- outside legal advice is more appropriate than staff involvement;
- the case should be referred to the Ombudsperson, a shop steward, or to the personal legal counsel of the student(s); and
- it will produce the best outcome for the student(s).

Legal considerations

Duty to the GSS

When the GSS engages a lawyer on behalf of members, the lawyer works for the GSS. The Student Advocate Fund cannot be used to take action against the GSS, or take actions that put the GSS at risk.

Confidentiality and Records

Any information collected by the University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society will be protected and used in compliance with the BC Personal Information and Privacy Act (2004).

Ineligible expenses

The Student Advocate Fund cannot be used for the following purposes:

- Actions in which the GSS, its' officers, or staff are the respondent;
- Matters unrelated to university policy and procedures;
- Matters related to work where the student is represented by a union;
- Undergraduate student cases, or cases where the primary beneficiary of support is not a member of the GSS;
- Appeals on admission decisions;
- Reimbursements for legal costs already incurred.

Accountability

The GSS Executive will report annually on the use of the fund to the Graduate Representative Council.

This report will respect confidentiality, and will include:

- Number of cases receiving assistance from the fund;
- Amount expended; and
- Number of cases resolved.

INTEREST/INVESTMENT OF FUND

The funds may be invested in short term GICs at the discretion of the Executive Board.

Interest/returns accrued by the fund shall be retained/reinvested within the fund.