

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Executive Board

(ONLINE VIA BLACKBOARD) MEETING MINUTES

AUGUST 4, 2020

EXECUTIVE PRESENT: Drake RUSHFORD, Chair; Matty CERVANTES, Director of Communications; Jacob HUNT, Director of Finance; Daniel GUDIÑO, Director of Services; Antoine ROSE, Director of Student Affairs; Stacy CHAPPEL, Executive Director (non-voting).

STANDING ITEMS

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 pm with RUSHFORD in the chair. RUSHFORD gave a land acknowledgement. RUSHFORD welcomed GUDIÑO to his first meeting.

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion: RESOLVED that the agenda is approved as presented.
M/S HUNT/ROSE
CARRIED.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tabled.

D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

TASKS WERE REVIEWED in Separate document and noted where complete.

E. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

None.

F. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Letter re: Premier Horgan's comments about out-of-province license plates.

Letter re: UVSS lobbying regarding Saanich Police Budget and changes to policing.

Motion: RESOLVED that the correspondence presented has been received by the Executive Board.
Approved by CONSENT.

TASK: RUSHFORD to respond to the student and will write to the premier reminding him that students may have out-of-province plates.

TASK: RUSHFORD to write to UVSS sharing our projects for Black Lives Matter and declining to participate officially in this project but to invite them to keep us posted.

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

No August meetings upcoming.

MEETING BUSINESS

1. ANNUAL PLAN NEXT STEPS

REF DOC: Annual Plan Next Steps (Appendix A)

Discussion:

RUSHFORD asked for thoughts on input from Grad Council.

RUSHFORD stated his goal is to complete the written plan into a coherent document by the end of August. He noted that items with an asterisk already have write-ups for the plans.

CHAPPEL noted there is written material that can be drawn from that POTTS and HASHEMI had drafted for submissions to AVP Student Affairs.

CERVANTES suggested the plan could be included in the e-handbook.

RUSHFORD noted there is a sample write up for formatting the sections.

TASKS: Executive will draft sections by the next Executive Board meeting on August 18 as follows:

- **Events in a new environment (GUDIÑO)**
- **Communications Strategy & Style Guide (CERVANTES)**
- **Update for COVID-19 student needs briefing (CHAPPEL)**
- **Executive Director transition (CHAPPEL and HUNT)**

TASK: Once the Annual Plan Draft is complete, RUSHFORD to format the full set of goals

CERVANTES noted that GRAD COUNCIL had identified website transparency as an issue—for minutes and agendas. CHAPPEL noted there are some minutes outstanding for signature, and once these are posted she can notify COUNCIL that this has been complete.

TASK: RUSHFORD noted that he and CHAPPEL should have all the outstanding approved minutes signed so they can be posted by Thursday, August 6.

2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HIRING COMMITTEE

Meeting went in camera for a report from the Hiring Committee at 4:53 PM. Executive rose from in-camera at 5:30 pm.

Decision: The Executive decided to hire an ED with a probational period of 3-6 months as recommended by the Hiring Committee.

3. IN PERSON EVENTS

RUSHFORD reported the Events Committee has planned some in-person events. He expressed concern about this idea.

HUNT suggested it is imprudent to host in-person events when the university is not doing this.

ROSE said concerns are valid. Certain public places, such as Beacon Hill Park and Gyro Beach are open to the public. The university is not entirely dormant and he thought it is acceptable to hold events in keeping with health advisory rules.

RUSHFORD stated that even if spaces open, the GSS should not necessarily be hosting group gatherings.

GUDIÑO thought it was imprudent to host events. If something happens the GSS will be responsible as the event sponsor, even if it is in a public space. He noted one event is a beach party, which has been repeatedly listed as an event that is a concern by health authorities. This is different than a gathering of 10 people who are in the same social bubble.

RUSHFORD noted the timing of the event is difficult as the events may include students arriving and still in quarantine. Events may need to wait until the quarantine period is passed. We would need to ensure those attending are not violating quarantine.

CHAPPEL stated that risk is the specific duty of the Executive Board and the Executive Board should be setting clear parameters for GSS activities. She also noted AVP Student Affairs Jim Dunsdon has offered to assist with any events that include in-person components.

ROSE noted that the GSS has had success with online events.

RUSHFORD agreed the GSS should continue to build community with online events.

Motion: RESOLVED the GSS will not host or sponsor in-person events and meetings until further notice.

RUSHFORD/GUDINO

CARRIED

4. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

In the absence of an Executive Director, RUSHFORD noted he would bring in POTTS to take minutes at the August 18 meeting.

CLOSING ITEMS

EXECUTIVE INFORMAL DISCUSSION/UPDATES/QUESTIONS

Chair: RUSHFORD had nothing further to report than items already covered in the meeting.

Director of Communications: CERVANTES reminded members to send their photos for the handbook.

Director of Finance: HUNT reporting he has initiated the hiring committee process. He had provided the finance updated to Grad Council, and is preparing for the first Finance Committee meeting in September.

Director of Services: GUDIÑO had nothing to report.

Director of Student Affairs: ROSE had nothing to report.

Executive Director: CHAPPEL reported staff is returning to the office, each working one day per week. Office staff can arrange to let Board members in to use the meeting rooms and back office for their work. She reported the signing authority changes had been initiated, and most parties at the university had been notified of the change.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS, TABLED AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETING

TABLED from July 21: discussion on clarifying the definition of member in the bylaws (See Governance Coordinator report to Executive).

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND IMPORTANT DATES

Next Executive Meeting: August 18

ADJOURNMENT

*Motion: RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting.
M/S CERVANTES/ROSE
CARRIED.*

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.

sc/klp/dtr

X 

Drake Rushford
Chair

X 

Stacy Chappel
Executive Director

APPENDIX 1

ANNUAL PLAN NEXT STEPS

Financial Security		
RA Legal Status*	Student Affairs - ROSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult SFU Formally request UVic amend HR6305 Follow-up with CUPE regarding RA union drive
BC Graduate Scholarship*	Chair – RUSHFORD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby Ministry of Adv. Edu & Provincial Gov't with GSS BC
Graduate Co-Op Housing*	Finance – HUNT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult existing student housing Co-Ops in Canada Consult BC Housing Co-Ops & Co-Ops Canada
Community Engagement		
Events in a new Environment	Services - GUDIÑO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess current online events Develop an online event strategy (Seminar series?) Regularly review Health Authority Advisory
Communication Strategy	Communications – CERVANTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish E-Handbook
Equity		
Charter of Graduate Student Rights*	Student Affairs – ROSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form GRC Ad-hoc Committee Identify principles and draft COR (UofA) Convince UVic to accept COR Create campaign to spread word about COR
Anti-Racism Campaign*	Chair – RUSHFORD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual EQHR anti-racism training for GSS Exec and GRC Reps Support Have a Heart Campaign Submit formal proposal to President requesting annual reporting on EQHR complaints, resolutions, and recommendations Campaign for a UVic funded Award for Excellence in Black and Indigenous Grad Scholarship Campaign for a UVic multi-disciplinary grant to support departments wishing to amplify the work of Black and Indigenous scholars through speaking events/publications Support the campaign for a VP Equity
Representation		
Compensation for Graduate Representatives on UVic Committees	Chair – RUSHFORD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present to AVPSA (2019-2020) Follow-up with AVPSA regarding Honoraria for high intensity committees and credit for service learning in governance
COVID-19 Student Needs	Finance or Services – HUNT or GUDIÑO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Halls Brief to UVic Follow-up Personal Storage (server)
Internal Governance		

ED Transition & Emergency Operations Plan	Finance or Chair – HUNT or RUSHFORD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write EOP for approval • Hiring management committee TOR • Guidelines for starting a new ED • Transitional plan (financial, operational, legal, board role, staff role)
Policy Manual Update*	Chair- RUSHFORD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates at B&P • Recommend updates to GRC or Exec
Communication Style Guide	Communications – CERVANTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set standard for GSS branding and communications material

EXAMPLE:

ADVOCACY GRADUATE STUDENT ADVOCACY PROGRAMME

The Graduate Student Advocacy Programme (formerly referred to as the Office of Graduate Student Advocacy) was a major item from the 2016-2017 strategic plan. Due to unforeseen circumstances, there was a delay in addressing this item. The need for stable graduate student advocacy remains, and the number of cases that arise are increasing every year. In short, the GSS currently addresses graduate student advocacy issues where a neutral party - the Ombudsperson - might not be sufficient. Several factors affecting the ability of the GSS to address these issues include limited resources (people and time, advocacy and confidentiality training) and that students often seek GSS assistance as a last resort. To mitigate these issues, the aim of the Graduate Student Advocacy Programme will be to provide trained advocates to assist students in difficult situations. Advocates will represent an individual student's interests by directing students through university policies, available options, and being present at meetings or proceedings.

Thus far, past research on student advocacy models at similar Canadian institutions has been conducted and the Student Affairs Committee is in the process of analysing two models of student advocacy programmes.

NEXT STEPS

- Identify specific duties, roles, and purposes of the student advocate;
- Consult with university administration, other student unions, and other community members as required;
- In coordination with the relevant GSS Executive, develop a proposal for the establishment of the Graduate Student Advocacy Programme.