*University of Victoria Graduate Students’ Society*

Executive Board

## (Online via Blackboard) MEETING MINUTES

## November 2nd, 2020

**EXECUTIVE PRESENT:** Drake RUSHFORD**,** Chair; Matty CERVANTES, Director of Communications; Jacob HUNT, Director of Finance; Daniel GUDINO, Director of Services; Antoine ROSE, Director of Student Affairs.

**VACANT:** Executive Director (non-voting).

# Standing Items

## CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm with RUSHFORD in the chair.

## Approval of the Agenda

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

*M/S CERVANTES/ROSE*

Amendment to Agenda: ROSE’s item regarding a student’s issue with their supervisor

M/S ROSE/RUSHFORD

CARRIED

CARRIED

## Approval of minutes

*Motion: RESOLVED that the minutes from the October 15th and 19th* [*Executive Board meeting*](https://connect.uvic.ca/sites/vpac/studentaffairs/GSS/GradCouncil/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/sites/vpac/studentaffairs/GSS/GradCouncil/Document/2016-2017%20Grad%20Council%20Documents/2016-17%20Grad%20Council%20Minutes/2017-07-25%20GRC%20Minutes%20DRAFT.docx&action=default) *are approved as presented.*

*M/S ROSE/HUNT*

CARRIED.

Motion: to go in camera at 4:08 pm

M/S RUSHFORD/CERVANTES

CARRIED

The Executive rose from in-camera at 4:12 pm.

Motion: RESOLVED that the in-camera minutes from the October 15th [Executive Board meeting](https://connect.uvic.ca/sites/vpac/studentaffairs/GSS/GradCouncil/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/sites/vpac/studentaffairs/GSS/GradCouncil/Document/2016-2017%20Grad%20Council%20Documents/2016-17%20Grad%20Council%20Minutes/2017-07-25%20GRC%20Minutes%20DRAFT.docx&action=default) are approved as presented.

M/S RUSHFORD/HUNT

CARRIED

## Business arising from previous meetings

**MOTIONS/TASKS noted as completed, or revoked:**

HUNT reviewed Vice-Provost HC TOR, decided not to join committee.

HUNT sent memo to Bookkeeper regarding additional hours for Health and Dental Coordinator.

1. committee appointments

Motion: RESOLVED to elect Harley Gordon as a graduate student representative to the UVic Forest Biology Centre Director Search Committee.

FURTHER RESOLVED to elect Benjamin Wright as the graduate student representative to the UVic VISPA Director Search Committee.

M/S ROSE/GUDINO

CARRIED.

1. correspondence received

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

##### M/S HUNT/ROSE

##### CARRIED.

**TASK: CERVANTES to help with promotion for VP Research Grad Student Session.**

1. Agenda planning, or meeting debrief (GRC, operational relations etc.)
2. Management Hiring Committee

MOTION: RESOLVED that the Management Hiring Policy and Management Hiring Committee Terms of Reference, as recommended by the 2020 Management Hiring Committee, are approved as presented.

M/S HUNT/ROSE

CARRIED

**2. GRC Follow Up**

**Follow-up TASKS assigned:**

CERVANTES tasked with taking lead on statement of Solidarity with Mi’kmaq people.

RUSHFORD to draft letter outlining the GSS’s position regarding VPN use.

CERVANTES tasked with reaching out to Masoud Mokharti regarding status as Grad Councillor.

**3. AGM PLANNING**

**Follow-up TASKS assigned:**

See tasks outlined in the AGM plan (See Minutes Appendix A).

# meeting Business

1. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ORIENTATION

New ED orientation: November 9th – November 13th. More details to come.

Discussion:

Important to give new ED an idea of what the responsibilities and role of the position is, provide a mock calendar of what the typical month looks like.

Staff recommends that more structure is put into a monthly report that the new ED must give to the Board detailing what they’ve done in the month.

Meet n’ Greet with new ED is something that we want to happen, a full one with everyone would have to be online, or a separated, individual basis introduction is also an option.

Rose recommends having distance-based meet n’ greet with new ED (online).

**TASK: HUNT and RUSHFORD will keep board in the loop regarding details of first ED week.**

1. READING BREAK AND HOLIDAY CLOSURES

MOTION:

RESOLVED the GSS will be closed to the public during the November Reading Break, November 9, 10 and 11. Staff may take the Nov. 9 and 10 off if they have lieu time owing. Nov. 11 is a regular statutory holiday.

FURTHER RESOLVED the GSS will be closed to the public December 19 to January 3, inclusive, for the holiday break. Staff may take off Dec. 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, and 30 if they have lieu time owing. Staff are to be paid as usual for Dec. 24, 25, 31 and January 1 for statutory holidays, in-lieu statutory holidays, and as per past practice.

M/S: HUNT/ROSE

Discussion:

GUDINO asked for clarification regarding scope of this motion, and that it only applies to staff members, not executive board. RUSHFORD confirmed that only Staff are affected by this motion.

CARRIED

1. UVSS WELCOME LETTER TO PRESIDENT HALL – DIVESTMENT

Motion: RESOLVED that the GSS will sign the UVSS' welcome letter to President Hall with a focus on divestment.

M/S: CERVANTES/ROSE

Discussion:

GUDINO asked about relationship between divestment project brought up at Operational Relations meeting and the main subject of UVSS letter being sent to incoming President Hall. GUDINO asked for clarification and if that project has anything to do with what is being discussed in this letter.

RUSHFORD touched on the past relationship between investments made by university, and how they go to student scholarships, and are primarily based in fossil fuels. RUSHFORD noted the argument that these investments contribute to climate change, and the divestment campaign argues for investing funds in green technologies, and non-fossil fuel investments.

ROSE emphasized the impact that pulling funds would have on student funding and scholarships and investment needs to be done in a way that is advantageous to the university, and the students.

RUSHFORD mentioned the nature of new investments, something that should be forward thinking. RUSHFORD asked about the possibility of writing our own letter to the president.

HUNT suggested that we could sign UVSS’ letter, as well as write our own.

GUDINO asked to weigh the pros/cons of not signing this letter and writing our own.

RUSHFORD stated support for the general idea of divestment and signing the UVSS’s drafted letter.

CARRIED

**TASK: RUSHFORD to draft a GSS welcome letter to new President highlighting our own plans and points of importance for the GSS.**

1. **VANTAGE POINT MEMBERSHIP**

**Vantage Point, a non-profit leadership and support organization whose resources are frequently used by the Governance Coordinator, is currently offering a 1 year free membership to non-profit societies. Membership provides access to discounts and copyright restricted resources. https://www.thevantagepoint.ca/membership**

##### **Motion: RESOLVED that that GSS takes advantage of the 1-year free membership offered by Vantage Point, and becomes a member for 1 year.**

##### **M/S: HUNT/ROSE**

**Discussion: HUNT comments that Vantage Point is super useful and we should talk advantage of it, if only for the sake of the new incoming Board and ED.**

##### **CARRIED**

1. **DEPARTMENT GRANTS**

**The annual process to determine eligibility criteria for department grants and grant amounts was not completed in March 2020 due to COVID. Grants were not offered during the Summer 2020 due to the financial uncertainties facing GSS. With the new academic/governance year now underway, and with GSS having a degree of financial certainty regarding the remainder of 2020-21, the Governance Coordinator recommends the following:**

* **That the Executive task the GSS Chair, Director of Finance, incoming Executive Director and Governance Coordinator with drafting eligibility criteria and grant amounts for a limited grant cycle of Jan 1-March 31, 2021.**
* **That the proposed criteria and grant amounts be taken to the December GRC meeting for review and approval.**
* **In the interim, the GSS website states that currently department grant applications are not be accepted, that due to COVID and restrictions on in-person gatherings and other events usually supported by department grant funding, the GSS Department Grant fund will be undergoing a review in November, and that any member with feedback or input should provide this to their GRC academic unit rep.**

##### **Motion: RESOLVED that department grants are suspended through December 2020.**

##### **M/S: CERVANTES/GUDINO**

##### **Amendment:** RESOLVED department grants are suspended until new eligibility criteria and grant amounts can be drafted and approved.

##### M/S RUSHFORD/HUNT

##### **CARRIED**

##### **FAILED**

##### **Abstention on amendment: Cervantes.**

**Discussion:**

**CERVANTES is skeptical about suspending the grants for the rest of the term, given recent dialogue with some members.**

**RUSHFORD notes that we don’t have criteria to share with Grad Councillors about how to apply for grants, which needs to be drafted.**

**GUDINO notes a recent request made from some departments regarding grants, proposes the case by case decisions be made on grant requests being made until the end of the term/ new terms of reference are drafted.**

**RUSHFORD notes issues of fairness that might be present in case by case assessment.**

**CERVANTES asks about what criteria are being used, RUSHFORD confirms that we don’t currently have any. CERVANTES asks that we reflect on our decision, and how it looks when compared to decisions the university has made, and our reaction to it.**

**HUNT suggests using GSS criteria for current grant requests, RUSHFORD notes that we also have no criteria set for amounts, and that there are a lot of other things going on.**

**CERVANTES offers to work with Karen on interim criteria for grants.**

**RUSHFORD notes that any changes need to be approved by Grad Council, and that the outline provided by Karen is the best we can do.**

**GUDINO asks what happens in the motion fails, RUSHFORD notes all the other stuff going on, and that a bunch of tasks will have to be assigned to figure out the details of the new criteria.**

**RUSHFORD expressed frustration with the decision of the board on this motion.**

**CERVANTES notes that we are all here to work together, and we will all need to make time and work around getting this done.**

**There was a general discussion regarding the idea of fairness, being able to support students in this time, as well as the determination of being able to ensure that we are able to continue offering department grants into the next semester, as well as accountability to our membership.**

**GUDINO offers to vote again on this motion, but asks that the use of the word “suspended” is a possible point of hesitancy.**

##### **Motion:** RESOLVED department grants will be under revision until new eligibility criteria and grant amounts can be drafted and approved by GRC and no decision on any grants received before the new eligibility criteria are approved will be made.

##### **M/S HUNT/CERVANTES**

##### **CARRIED**

**TASK: CERVANTES and GUDINO volunteer to draft new criteria for departmental grants, and to work with Karen regarding departmental grants prior to the next GRC. HUNT to assist with determining department grant amounts.**

1. Student’s phd supervisor concerns

**ROSE discussed a student that reached out to him regarding concerns with their supervisor and his intent to bring the issue to the Student Affairs Committee.**

**RUSHFORD expressed confusion why the Student Affairs Committee needed to be involved given that it is an individual student having issues with a supervisor not following university policies.**

**ROSE mentioned that the issues relate to university policies.**

**RUSHFORD explained that the role of the Student Affairs Committee is to deal with systemic issues that effect many students and since there is no broader issue in this situation the role of the Director of Student Affairs is to help the individual student through the university channels already in place to resolve these types of concerns. RUSHFORD offered to help ROSE work through those channels.**

**CERVANTES echoed statements of what is appropriate.**

# Closing Items

## Executive informal discussion/updates/questions

Chair: RUSHFORD started Meet the Chair sessions again.

Director of Communications: CERVANTES reported the new social media LinkedIn page is going well, needs more subscribers.

Director of Finance: HUNT reported that the audit is chugging along, and visa bill is getting sorted.

Director of Services: Appeals is doing a great job getting through appeals, there are lots.

Director of Student Affairs: ROSE had nothing to report.

Notice of motions, tabled agenda items for next executive meeting

Possible criteria for department grants.

## Upcoming meetings and important dates

Next Executive Meetings: Nov 16th

adjournment

##### Motion: RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting.

##### M/S HUNT/GUDINO

##### CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 6:38pm.

JH/klp



APPENDIX A: AGM TASKS

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DATE** | **Time** | **Item** | **Who** |
| October |  | Outdoor signage | Matty |
| October |  | Call for agenda items to GRC | Drake |
|  |  | Decisions re: raffle ‘door’ prizes, guest speaker (Stacy? Reflections on past GSS success and role for the future?) | Probably not |
|  |  | Decision who will prepare (coordinate, format, augment with graphics) AGM PPT presentation | Drake & Matty |
| Nov. 10 |  | Notice to members – mass email, poster to gradsec listserve, post on website, eBulletin, social media | Karen, Drake, Neil |
|  |  | Find member to make the personal land acknowledgement | ? |
|  |  | Find volunteers to act as parliamentarian, timekeeper | ? |
|  |  | Confirm who will present on VIPIRG and SRC motions | VIPIRG - Jake  SRC - Nick? |
| Nov. 17 |  | Full motions and meeting materials available to all members – posted on website, GRC listserve | Neil  Karen |
| Nov. 16 |  | Executive PPT presentation materials sent to Drake & Matty for compilation | All Executive |
|  |  | Prepare rotating slides, music for 5 minute break? (e.g. slide with GRC vacancies, promoting CML committee participation, list of upcoming GSS events, photos of GSS events etc.) | Vacancies - Drake  Events/photos - Daniel |
| Nov. 24 | Noon | Upload final PPT presentation to Z drive for Karen prep/minute taking access | Drake & Matty |
| Nov. 24 | Noon | All presenters email Karen with text of their speaking notes | All Executive plus ? |
| 4:30 | 5:00 | Welcoming, referring to instructions, pushing registration | ? |
| 4:30 | 5:00 | Registration | Karen |
| 5:00 | 7:30 | Minutes | Karen |
| 5:00 | 7:30 | Late registration | ? |
| 5:00 | 7:00 | Preparing polls for voting | ? Electoral officer? |
| 5:00 | 7:00 | Monitoring chat, turning off stray microphones | Daniel |
| 5:00 | 7:00 | Keeping speaker’s list | ? |
| 5:00 | 7:00 |  | ? |
| **\*\* Executive need to review and confirm meeting timing** | | |  |
| 5:00 |  | 1. Call to order |  |
| 5:05 |  | 2. Land acknowledgement | ?  backup - Antoine |
| 5:10 |  | 3. Approval of the agenda |  |
|  |  | 4. Approval of minutes |  |
| 5:15 |  | 5. Membership report, AGM quorum | Matty |
| 5:20 |  | 6. Presentation of the audited statements | Jake |
|  |  | 7. Reappointment of the auditors | Jake |
| 5:30 |  | 8. Decision: GRC recommendation regarding VIPIRG fees | Jake |
| 5:45 |  | 9. Decision: Executive Board Stipend | Stipend Review Committee |
| 5:55 | 5 min BREAK | |  |
| 6:00 |  | 11. Reports to the membership   * Of the Executive Board * Society Committees * Extended Health and Dental Plan update | * RUSHFORD * Committee Chairs * ExecDirector? |
| 6:50 |  | 14. Other Business - Motions received with notice | ? |
| 6:55 |  | 15. Announcements |  |
| 7:00 |  | 16. Adjournment |  |