

*University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society*  
**Graduate Representative Council**

(ONLINE VIA ZOOM) MEETING MINUTES

DECEMBER 13, 2022, 5-7 PM

**Elected Academic Unit Reps (1 vote per academic unit) Present:**

**Biochemistry & Microbiology:** Ladan Kalani (GSS Electoral Officer)

**Biology:** Sarah Lane

**Curriculum and Instruction:** Lindsay Beal

**Educational Psychology and Leadership**

**Studies:** Weiyi Liu

**English:** Lucie Kotěšovská

**Geography:** Kali McDougall

**Greek and Roman Studies:** Alix Galumbeck

**Health Information Science:** Dee Dee Wong, Evangeline Wagner

**Linguistics:** Rosemary Webb

**Nursing:** Lorilee Scott (part)

**Physics and Astronomy:** Samuel Fielder

**Political Science:** Katy Rosnau

**Psychology:** Cian Dabrowski (part)

**Public Health & Social Policy:** Zackary Derrick (part)

**Sociology:** Tyler Branston

**Theatre:** Barbara Clerihue

**CUPE 4163:** Kaitlyn Diederichs

**GSS Executive Board (1 vote per elected Board member) Invited:**

**Chair:** Summer OKIBE

**Director of Communications:** Greg GAUBE

**Director of Finance:** Bobby BICKLEY

**Director of Services:** Wyatt MADDOX

**Director of Student Affairs:** Nahid SAFARI

**Executive Director:** Kyla TURNER (non-voting)

**Invited Guests:** Dr. Robin Hicks, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

**Recorder:** GSS Governance Coordinator: Karen L. Potts

**Regrets Received:**

**Anthropology:** Rachel Hooton

**Art History and Visual Studies:** Sarah Roberts, Megan Austin

**Computer Science:** Andrea Nguyen

**Environmental Studies:** Lauren Burton

**French:** Cédric Trahan

**Absent:**

**Business:** Ethan Sun

**Civil Engineering:** David Serrano Suarez, Prakriti Raizada

**Earth & Ocean Sciences:** Moronke Harris

**Electrical & Computer Engineering:** Amer Kumar

**Law:** Kirsty Broadhead

**Medical Sciences/Neuroscience:** Kamal Narayana

**Music:** Sean Kiley

**Pacific and Asian Studies:** Ivan Garcimartin Carmona

**Public Administration:** Stephanie Dahling

**Social Dimensions of Health:** Olvie Li

**Writing:** Hana Mason

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**CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 PM, with OKIBE in the chair.

*FURTHER RESOLVED that Wyatt Maddox, Director of Services, is recommended for a \$500.00 top-up and Bobby Bickley, Director of Finance, is recommended for a \$250.00 top-up for exceptional work completed in October and November.*

*M/S CLERIHUE/KALANI*

*APPROVED by Consent.*

No discussion.

#### H. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND INFORMATION SHARING

LEAD: OKIBE AND EXECUTIVE BOARD

No reports.

#### I. GRC STANDING COMMITTEES – APPOINTMENTS

*MOTION: RESOLVED that the following GSS members are excused from the 2022-23 Standing Committees accordingly:*

*Student Affairs: Greg Gaube*

*M/S WEBB/LAWSON*

*APPROVED by Consent*

#### J. GRADUATE REPRESENTATION ON UVIC COMMITTEES – VACANCIES LEAD: POTTS

*MOTION: RESOLVED that the following graduate student representatives are elected to the following UVic committees, accordingly:*

*Bookstore Advisory Committee – Barbara CLERIHUE and Ladan KALANI as co-reps*

*M/S LAWSON/FIELDER*

*APPROVED by Consent.*

## MEETING NEW BUSINESS

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### 1. FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES CURRICULUM REVIEW COMMITTEE

Lead: Tyler Branston

Reference: see Appendix A

BRANSTON reported curriculum changes to Geography, Psychology, Sociology, Public Health, Educational Psychology, Social Dimensions of Health, and larger program changes to the CSPT program. [Details provided in Appendix A].

BRANSTON noted two procedural issues affecting graduate student input and representation on this committee.

1. The committee only meets twice a year, in September and in November. The September meeting goes without graduate student representation due to the GRC start up in September.
2. The course change information (proposed edits, suggestions) are done in a software program that student reps do not have access to. BRANSTON as rep only received notice (summary/no details) of proposed changes the morning of the meeting. There was no time for consultation.

LANE and BRANSTON asked about funding options for degrees that take a longer time. Right now funding is only guaranteed for 2 year masters degrees, 4 years for PhDs. HICKS acknowledged that grad students don't complete because funding stops and recommended TA and sessional work as an opportunity for further funds.

GAUBE asked "awards are great for students who receive them, what is being done to benefit graduate students as a whole? For example, lowering tuition would put more money into ALL graduate student's pockets." HICKS acknowledged that international students are excluded from key award opportunities. However, domestic tuition is set by the province. UVic is one of lower International tuition. HICKS acknowledged high tuition combined with high living costs of UVic is difficult.

BRANSTON asked about improving funding for part-time grad studies, meaning longer completion times, because students have to work at other jobs. Part-time students pay part time fees, but have to look at re-registration fees and longer completion times. HICKS noted that UVic is looking at policy changes around part-time enrolment happening Fall 2023.

HICKS acknowledged that decades ago grad students could support their families, and now can't.

FIELDER: "From a recent departmental meeting, I understand that there is a funding shortfall university wide (due to low enrolment rates across the board), and many faculties are being asked about cutting costs wherever possible to help alleviate this (with some departments being asked to cut more than others, etc). What is the FGS doing to help protect the livelihood of graduate students as a whole? Is it that the best case is for the FGS to further try to lobby the government to get the funding increase on that front (like you've been mentioning), or are the other options being explored by the FGS specifically?" HICKS explained that universities are not allowed legally to run a deficit. UVic has to come up with \$17 million this fall due to enrolment shortfall. UVic has committed to protected money going to direct to students and will find money

HICKS also noted that he would like to see the Capital Campaign is looking at housing for graduate students as well as places for graduate students to work, desks and office spaces.

TURNER noted the Executive Board is sending a letter advocating for BC Graduate Scholarship continuation and expansion, and letters to mayors and councils regarding housing for graduate students.

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## CLOSING ITEMS

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### A. REPORTS FROM GRAD REPS ON UVIC COMMITTEES:

None.

### B. GRC COMMITTEE, ELECTORAL OFFICER REPORTS AND UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- Appeals: MADDUX continues to hear appeals. Excited about upcoming referenda question.
- Bylaw & Policy: OKIBE reported the committee has not met in December.
- Communications: GAUBE reported that he has gotten up to speed and will be reaching out to the committee next week.
- Events: MADDUX Wednesday coffee going well, and will have a pancake breakfast and gift swap in the new year. All events posted in bi-weekly eBulletin.

## APPENDIX A: BRANSTON REPORT ON FSS GRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

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Update on the Social Sciences Graduate Curriculum Committee, November 2 cycle 2 meeting.

There were a few course changes and eliminations, along with changes in programs affiliated with CSPT in regard to the master's program. I will go over them quickly. If you have questions or want more details about the specific changes, let me know, and I can fill you in or point you to the right person for that information.

Changes came for the following departments: Geography, Psychology, Educational Psychology, Sociology, English, Political Science, Public Health, History, and Social dimensions of health. I will cover some of these but will address the cspt changes last.

The changes, in brief, are as follows:

- Geography 500A, 500B: Change in the wording of the course description to better reflect the courses and program.
- Psychology 556: Clarification around the presence of the lab component.
- Sociology: Elimination of SOCI 608 (Advanced quantitative/Stats) Has not been run since 2017, can be satisfied with courses in other departments (psych, math)
- Public Health: Removal of PHSP540, 541
- Educational Psychology: GRE is not a requirement but was listed to be one, thus it has been eliminated.
- SDH: Elimination of ED-D519D
- CSPT: Sociology, History, Political Science, English.

The CSPT program requirements for the MA have been changed to allow the completion of a Major Research Project/Paper to satisfy the written component rather than only the thesis option. This would allow the completion of the MA in one year and address the low completion rates of the CSPT component because of it being drawn into two years of work in programs which may only fund one year.

Role of the GSS Rep:

This committee only meets twice per year. Their cycle 1 meeting occurs in September and cycle 2 occurs in November. There is no longer a cycle 3 which would have occurred in the summer. The placement of the first meeting in September is before a GRC appointment would normally be made and therefore occurs without GRC representation. I was informed there is little that normally happens at that meeting. However, we should figure out a way to have a representative there.

Additionally, the course change information is through a system called Kuali, and I was informed we (students) do not have access to it this year because of changes in the system (we used to have access to it). Not having access to kuali prohibits our feedback from being considered and limits our ability to communicate changes. I was not provided with the details of the course changes until the morning of the meeting, restricting my ability to communicate them to the respective reps and their departments.

Additionally, I was provided with summaries and could not see the details of the actual changes (such as the geography course descriptions), until the meeting itself. If Kuali access is not permitted, I requested that an early detailed report be sent to the GRC on the proposed changes with enough time to ensure communication with the representatives of the relevant departments. If there is no time to communicate the changes, there is no point in us having a representative there. In short, we need to address the missing rep at the cycle one meeting in September and communicate with the office of the dean to ensure we are provided with kuali access and/or an early report so that we can communicate the changes to others.

-Tyler Branston