

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Graduate Representative Council

(HYBRID) MEETING MINUTES

FEB 27, 2024, 5-7 PM

Executive Board PRESENT:**Chair:** Wyatt Maddox**Vice Chair/Director of Communications:** Greg Gaube**Director of Finance:** Samuel Fielder**Director of Services:** Mitch Nascimento**Director of Student Affairs:** Lindsay Beal**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	Public Health and Social Policy:
Art History: Sarah Roberts & Jessica Ziakin Cook	Electrical and Computer Engineering: Jitendra Palaparty	Linguistics: Rosemary Webb	Social Dimensions of Health:
Biochemistry and Microbiology: Sushant Suresh	Environmental Studies: Lauren Burton & Diana Bertuol Garcia	Mathematics and Statistics:	Social Work:
Biology: Maggie Lawton & 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: Nancy Henderson	Visual Arts:
Civil Engineering: Sanaz Ajabshir & Monika Mikhail	Greek and Roman Studies: Ben Watts-Wooldridge	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 Education:	Psychology: Cian Dabrowski & Tara Cooper	Interdisciplinary Studies:

Recorder: Irfan Tanveer, Governance Coordinator**Invited Guests:**

Regrets Received: Olivia Charette, Haopeng Ren, Stacey Edmonson, Rachel Hooton, Samuel Fielder, Nancy Henderson, Ben Watts-Wooldridge

Absent without regrets: Sanaz Ajabshir, Monika Mikhail, Nabila Kazmi, Aleksandra Waliszewska, Abigail Romano, Delaney Johnson, Ivan Garimartin Carmona, Gina Gabel.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND OPENING ITEMS

CALL TO ORDER 5:00 PM

Meeting called to order by MADDUX at 5:01 pm

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 5:01 PM

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 ROBERTS.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA 5:05

MOTION: to approve the agenda as presented.

M/S: Executive Board/LAWTON

TIMEKEEPER VOLUNTEER 5:10

Today's timekeeper was: WEBB.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT, MEETING QUORUM AND ATTENDANCE 5:12

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

Meeting Quorum: With 6 regrets received, quorum for tonight's meeting is 12.

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

Welcome to new GRC reps!

Nursing GRC Rep – Nancy Henderson

REPORTS AND OPEN DIALOGUE

A. CHAIR'S REMARKS 5:13

MADDUX will update GRC on the goings on of the Executive Board.

MADDUX hoped that everyone had an amazing reading break. He discussed preparations for the upcoming election and referendum. MADDUX mentioned that last week there wasn't enough response regarding the referendum, and we are now focusing on encouraging students to participate in the referendum. Additionally, MADDUX expressed a preference for reducing the workload of health coordinators, especially by automating tasks that currently require manual effort.

A. GRC COMMITTEE, ELECTORAL OFFICER REPORTS, UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS 5:18

- Appeals: FIELDER
- Bylaw & Policy: MADDUX

MADDUX said the committee is bringing bylaw revisions to the SAGM. In terms of bigger projects, BPC will be working on them in summer and one of them is creating TOR of

electoral appeals committee. Jitendra asked how often we have electoral appeals happen; MADDOX replied pretty much never.

- Communications: GAUBE
GAUBE mentioned that communication committee doesn't exist anymore and GAUBE is finishing up other couple of tasks before his term ends, including welcome kits.
- Events: NASCIMENTO
Event committee: the current year budget is max out and the committee is planning for the summer.
- Finance: FIELDER (absent)
SURESH mentioned finance committee approved the draft Budget.
- Student Affairs: BEAL
BEAL said the committee is working on the climate action and met the members to plan regularly scheduled climate action events.
- Stipend Review: FISCHER
TURNER – reported SRC met as usual.
- Electoral Officer: BURTON
BURTON mention the nomination for the board. Four of the positions are uncontested.
 1. Director of Internal/University Relations – ROSEMARY WEBB
 2. Director of External Relations – JITENDRA PALAPARTY
 3. Director of Student Life – MAGGIE LAWTON
 4. Director of Finance – SAM FIELDER
 5. Chair – WYATT MADDOX and ALI HAMZA MALHI

MADDOX – said how his journey begin with an undergraduate degree at UVic and move to graduate school. MADDOX didn't form strong attachments and relationships during his undergrad and wanted to focus on community building in grad school. MADDOX started his journey with GRC and then MADDOX nominated himself and got elected for Director of Services in 2022-23 and last year he got elected for chair of the GSS. MADDOX said working at the GSS helped him a lot to achieve society's and his own goals.

MALHI – Mentioned he is an international student. He would like to gain many experiences and his motive to run for the position comes from helping international student for housing and further focus on social integration of international students.

B. OPEN DIALOGUE AND REPORTS 5:32

LEAD: MADDOX AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

ROBERTS mentioned that she went to Global Community, and they are looking for new students for their mentor program. Global Community would love to have all type of students. Further, ROBERTS said you will be matched up with another student and you can study and spend quality time together. Jitendra remarks that Global Community will match you based upon your interests, degree, etc. Further PALAPARTY added its informal.

BURTON said she had a difficulty booking rooms for her department's graduate student association.

TURNER mentioned that department specific associations have gone through many iterations of relationship with UVic and GSS. We are revising our position to better provide support as necessary. BRAVO - Running a survey for students on mental health issues in his department.

GUABE said Chemistry department have a graduate student's events day. Chemistry students presented at their town hall.

BEAL – Lactation friendly group will be putting a survey through GSS listserv. BEAL further said Mech Eng department will be able to access but asked if the Mech Eng department can access it as well and if the survey is similar.

PALAPARTY mentioned that Student Wellness Centre has a graduate wellness circle and its confidential circle but you can join if there is an availability and SSD can provide help in developing in survey.

PALAPARTY further added that she also volunteers at UVSS's peer support for students.

ROBERTS said that 'Dawn Schell' at health and wellness centre is wonderful for getting connected.

FAIDEI – Mentioned some dark moment within peers in sociology. Further he discussed that the peers talked about role of GSS, and focus was on how we can advocate more effectively.

FAIDEI mentioned that graduate students are a small percent of the department students. In sociology funding packages have been really limited along with difficulty of housing. How can GSS help the graduate students and support interdisciplinary departments.

GUABE mentioned that his past 3 years reaching out to people and having more and more people on board improved our advocacy work. GUABE mentioned that housing is a complicated situation but graduate students alone are not able to solve this problem but having some sort of advocacy regarding such matter will help.

TURNER – discussed about the GSS ability to build advocacy had weaken over time but the GSS has restructured the board and have two advocacy board positions and board strategic planning includes advocacy as one its top priority.

MADDOX agrees with TUNER and GUABE. Past year has been recovery from covid but before that we did not even have a full board working. But now after board restructuring helped reduce board's blurred vision.

BEAL added that its time to do things differently. Things are moving fast and bouncing off not just on campus but across the globe. BEAL shared the story of how Kevin Hall (UVic president) received his eagle feather and it was passed on undetected from Brazil to Canada and the chief asserted that this feather was meant to reach your hands.

ROBERTS – encouraged folks to sit on and participate in the committee.

TURNER – Praised ROBERTS' participation and emphasized on participating in committees.

GAUBE said his department students repeatedly mentioned that they are too busy to participate.

PALAPARTY – Said few people are trying to do a lot and we need to increase our membership and have more people onboard such as having co-reps if your department has a representative this will help in having more people onboard and involved in advocacy matter. Jitendra further added that having more work study position students would help.

FEIDEI added that it will be more fruitful only if we have people to do the work.

QUALTER mentioned that getting people involved by advertise committees more. Further Jono said they are enough spots available for everyone to take on this work.

MADDOX said Katrina brought up issue in their unit and student who applied for FGS grant but due to the nature of the FGS travel grant language and policies the student got rejected, they were able to get it later but MADDOX added that he discussed with HICKS to sort this matter and reduce barriers for the students to access FGS Grants

BREAK – 5 MINUTES – 5:55 PM

MEETING NEW BUSINESS

1. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT UPDATES - IRCC 1 6:00

Lead: MADDOX

Reference: Fed changes student visas, work permit restriction for student spouses do not apply for graduate students. Study permit caps targeted to BC and Ontario university and college. CAP will be effectively administered. MADDOX said most of the GARO changes won't impact graduate students. Work limits are being reduced back from 20hrs per week.

PALAPARTY – mentioned that currently the hrs to work for international student is unlimited until April 30th. But IRCC is considering that graduate students work hour might increase to 30 but still its under review. Further add on this is only restricted to off-campus work. Student can work unlimited number of hours.

MADDOX added minimum fund that needed will increase roughly from 10 grand to above 20 grand. GARO is having issue with recruiting in international graduate students and HICKS has been working hard on get graduate student stipend to be increased.

TURNER added this something that board and ED has been in touch with UVic and what advocacy work has been done furthermore unfortunately this is also the reason for budget cut. Most of the domestic graduate student are funded by provincial government and province has restricted number of students seats.

2. CUPE

SYDNEY – National rep with CUPE

CIAN DABROWSKI – PHD student in psychology

CUPE Campaign and who can sign GRA. CUPE says if you are working student on campus and UVic will be eligible to sign the card.

What is union and what is CUPE 4163 is the union on campus.

DABROWSKI further went into the stages of campaign.

SYDNEY discussed that main goal is signing the union cards. Once we get enough union cards then they can submit to the Labour board of BC. Cards do expire after 6 months.

IN BC there are 2 options to file certifications

In BC if 55% of work signed for union card then its auto certification and if 45 to 54.9 % of worker sign then there will be a vote and of the majority asks for unionization then the labour board will accept certification.

DABROWSKI asked the GRC members to attend action hub meeting so that you can aware of leaders in community and department.

3. GRAD SUPERVISION POLICY DEVELOPMENT 6:10

Lead: MADDOX

Reference: [Grad Supervision Policy](#)

For: Discussion

MADDOX said the policy is reopen for revision this morning, we can't make any changes unless from feedback and most of the feedback would be great if it comes from grad students. MADDOX said students can send feedback via email or in-person.

ROBERTS mentioned ongoing issue with a particular supervisor with issues of harassing and force talks and abusive behavior and there has been situation where department could support the student but instead of that the department completely turns it back and gangs up on the students. ROBERTS also said students should have access to third party neutral support.

GUABE suggested that there should be a system where supervisor should get matrix to evaluate the supervisor and after like 12 unsatisfactory reviews the department must have let the supervisor go.

MADDOX added that each department should have a graduate student handbook and it should include these timelines.

BURTON mentioned that their department graduate handbook is still in draft stages for over the past 3 years.

TURNER said that academia moves slow and takes a lot of unnecessary time to complete.

MADDOX mentioned that the handbook review will be absolutely a part of the revision of graduate supervisor policy.

PALAPARTY mentioned that a graduate student handbook must also be considered with a departmental level as well.

STANDING ITEMS 6:40 PM

C. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (APPENDIX A) 6:40

MOTION: to approve the Minutes of the January 23, 2024, GRC meeting as presented [with minor corrections as provided].

Moved: SAWCHUK/PALAPARTY

CARRIED

D. EXECUTIVE BOARD STIPEND REPORTS – QUESTIONS ARISING AND MOTION TO ACCEPT – 6:42

LEAD:

REF DOCS: Executive Board Reports Folder

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

MOTION: to approve the December Executive Board Reports.

Moved: Stipend Review Committee/ROBERTS

CARRIED

E. GRADUATE REPRESENTATION ON UVIC COMMITTEES – VACANCIES (APPENDIX B) 6:50

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: Faculty of Graduate Studies Council – Faculty of Engineering & Comp Sci or Faculty of Science

Member: JONOTHAN QUALTER

Committee: Faculty of Graduate Studies Council – Faculty of Business, Education, or Law

Member: KATRINA SAWCHUK

Committee: Faculty of Graduate Studies Council – Faculty of Fine Arts, Humanities, or Social Science

Member: LAUREN BURTON

Committee: Faculty of Graduate Studies Council – Faculty of Human and Social Development or Division of Medical Sciences

Member: DHWANI SURA

M/S:MADDOX/SAWCHUK

B. REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT/ADVOCACY/PARTICIPATION 6:55

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!

TURNER mentioned that science and
GUABE

C. NOTICES OF AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

LEAD: MADDOX

D. IMPORTANT DATE REMINDERS:

LEAD: MADDOX

Next Meeting: GSS Annual General Meeting! March 19, 2024

- Agenda to be posted: March 5, 2024

Next GRC Meeting: April 23, 2024

- Please have any potential agenda items, with supporting materials, to the Executive Board for consideration, in advance of April 9
- Agenda to be posted: April 16

Office, Staff Scheduling Notes:

E. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: to adjourn the meeting.

M/S: BURTON/QUALTER

X

Wyatt MADDOX
GSS Chair 2023-24

X

Kyla Turner
GSS Executive Director

APPENDIX A: UVIC COMMITTEE VACANCIES

More information on each of these Committees is available on our website: <https://gss.uvic.ca/about-gss/get-involved/committees/grad-representation-at-uvic>

From: Michelle Monsell - Assistant to the Dean of Graduate Studies <fgsadmin@uvic.ca>

Sent: January 31, 2024 3:28 PM

To: Kyla Turner - Executive Director, Graduate Students' Society <gssmgr@uvic.ca>

Subject: GSS representation for FGS Council

Hi Kyla,

Recently, the Faculty of Graduate Studies council (and senate) voted in favor of update our constitution and bylaws (attached). Previously, the GSS representatives (with voting rights) on FGS council were: 1 member of GSS executive, 2MA and 2PhD students. For the remainder of this term, we have only 2 members of GSS Wyatt Maddox from GSS executive and Gina Gababl as after 2 calls out there were no other GSS students that came forward.

The new bylaws are as follows:

Five graduate students, appointed on recommendation from the UVic Graduate Student Society (GSS)

a. One member of the GSS executive

b. One student in a graduate program in Faculty of Engineering & Computer Science or the Faculty of Science

c. One student in a graduate program in the Faculty of Business, Faculty of Education, or Faculty of Law

d. One student in a graduate program in the Faculty of Fine Arts, The Faculty of Humanities, or Faculty of Social Sciences

e. One student in a graduate program in the Faculty of Human and Social Development or the Division of Medical Sciences.

Student representatives must be registered for the duration of their appointment to FGS Council.

Please let me know if you would like membership to continue as it began in September with Wyatt and Gina for the remaining Feb, March and April 2024 meetings or if you will be putting a call out to the GSS to structure representatives as above.

The other GSS representatives that are ex-officio non-voting members of FGS council are members from Senate: Jade Fisher, Jeffrey Bruton, Sarah Roberts, Nahid Pourdolat Safari and Samuel Fielder.

Robin supports either decision.

Thank you,

Michelle



Michelle Monsell

Assistant to the Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

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I acknowledge and respect the ləkʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSANEC peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.