

UVIC GRADUATE STUDENTS' SOCIETY
Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, October 24, 2023, 5 pm – 7 pm
Meeting Minutes

Voting Members Present:

Executive Board:	Environmental Studies: Lauren Burton & Diana Bertuol Garcia	(One member whose name was illegible on sign in sheet)
Wyatt Maddox, Chair	Greek & Roman Studies: Ben Watts-Wooldridge	Sabrina Guzman Skotnitsky
Greg Gaube, D. Communications	Health Information Science: Haopeng Ren	Ladan Kalani (O)
Maggie Lawton, Interim D. Services	History: Abby Romano (O)	Petranella Daviel
Samuel Fielder, D. Finance	Law: Katarina Sawchuk (O)	Mary Stuart (O)
Lindsay Beal, D. Student Affairs	Music: Olivia Hancinsky-Charette (O)	Linda Nartley (O)
GRC Reps:	Pacific and Asian Studies: Delaney Johnson	Stepan Kopytov
Art History: Sarah Roberts (O)	Philosophy: Gina Gaebel	Dhwani Sura (O)
Biology: Dominique Maucieri (O)	Sociology: Iman Fadaei & Jasmine Padam (O)	Jitendra Palaparty
Civil Engineering: Sanaz Ajabshir	GSS Members:	
Curriculum & Instruction: Nabila Kazmi (O)	Mohad Ghadiri	

(30 total voting members present, 12 online) *(O) designates members who joined online.

Staff, Non-voting attendees:

Executive Director: Kyla TURNER (Recorder)
Office Coordinator, Governance: Irfan Tanveer (O)
Operations and Services Manager: Neil Barney

Regrets:

Mitch Nascimento, Director of Services;
Katie Jamson, Earth and Ocean Sciences;
Rosemary Webb, Linguistics;

1. Call to order – Wyatt Maddox, Chair

Meeting called to order at 5:02pm with Wyatt Maddox in the Chair.

2. Land acknowledgement

Territorial acknowledgement offered by Wyatt Maddox with particular thanks to the nations that allow him to conduct research on their lands.

3. AGM Quorum Report – Kyla Turner, Executive Director

As of 5:02pm, the meeting was quorate with 26 voting members attending as of 5:03pm.

4. Approval of the agenda

Motion: to approve the Agenda of the October 24, 2023 GSS Annual General Meeting as presented.

Moved: Executive Board Seconded: FISCHER

CARRIED

5. Approval of Minutes

REF DOC: 2023-03-21 Semi-Annual General Meeting Minutes

Motion: to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2023 GSS Semi-Annual General Meeting as presented.

Moved: Executive Board Seconded: JOHNSON

CARRIED

6. Presentation of the 2022-23 Audit – Sam Fielder, Director of Finance

REF DOC: 2022-23 GSS Audited Financial Statements

Motion: to approve the 2022-23 Audited Financial Statements as presented.

Moved: Executive Board Seconded: ROMANO

Discussion: Questions included:

How does one apply for a Department Grant? (Deferred to the Executive Director Report. Follow up email was circulated to all GRC reps by the end of the meeting with application links.)

What long-term debt are we holding and why did we not pay it down with a previous year's surplus? Our debt relates to a 2017 building renovation. We followed existing policy in putting surpluses into long term savings. Policies were provided to all members on our website.

Where did we record the donations to the food bank? Grants.

Who is covered under our insurance plan and for how long? Roughly 2000 graduate students and coverage lasts one year, September 1-August 31.

CARRIED

7. Re-Appointment of the Auditors

Motion: to appoint Clarke Trowsdale LLP as the 2023-24 financial auditors.

Moved: Executive Board Seconded: FISCHER

Discussion:

Why have we not moved to a request for proposals for a new audit? Primarily, we have a long-standing and highly beneficial relationship with Clarke Trowsdale LLP. Cost for the RFP process, onboarding duration and difficulties related to our complex fund accounting processes have prevented us from going to RFP. We are looking to reduce the complexity of our financial structures this year, which would make future RFPs simpler. However, as noted, our relationship with Clarke Trowsdale allows for our auditors to make substantive recommendations for the financial organization of the GSS.

CARRIED

8. Reports to the Membership

- a. Report of the 2023-24 Executive Board
- b. Membership and representation report
- c. Report of the Executive Director
- d. Reports of GRC Standing Committees
 - i. Appeals – Samuel FIELDER, on behalf of the Director of Services
 - ii. Bylaw and Policy – Wyatt MADDOX, Chair
 - iii. Communications – Greg GAUBE, Director of Communications
 - iv. Events – Greg GAUBE, on behalf of the Director of Services
 - v. Finance – Samuel FIELDER, Director of Finance
 - vi. Stipend Review – TBD, Chair, Stipend Review Committee
 - vii. Student Affairs – Lindsay BEAL, Director of Student Affairs
- e. Extended health and dental insurance plan update

Discussion:

TURNER provided a brief overview of the work of Stipend Review Committee as the prior chairs have both graduated, with thanks to previous chairs Alix Galumbeck and Evangeline Wagner for all their work during their terms.

Questions asked: This year the UVSS announced that they were increasing coverage for gender affirming care. Does the GSS insurance plan cover this care and if not, will it in future and when? The UVSS insurance provider, StudentCare is a national insurance plan, and a lot of the increases in coverage for gender-affirming care within StudentCare equalize coverage across provinces and territories in Canada, as each province covers differing levels of gender affirming care and procedures. BC, through TransCareBC, has some of the most comprehensive gender affirming care coverage in Canada. We are aware that there is a gap in coverage specifically for facial feminization, tracheal reduction, and electrolysis on the GSS plan as compared to the UVSS plan this year. We have brought this forward to our insurance provider, Pacific Blue Cross, as a priority for next year's renewal.

9. Bylaw Amendments (Appendix A)

Motion: to approve the amendments to the GSS bylaws as presented.

Moved: Executive Board/Bylaw and Policy Committee Seconded: QUALTER

Discussion:

MADDOX provided an overview of the proposed bylaw changes, with a particular focus on the revised board positions and Roberts Rules of Order.

Questions asked included:

Where would the Appeals Committee move to? Finance because they work most closely with Operations.

BEAL provided a typographical correction. FIELDER clarified that GRC maintains rights to set procedures for how general memberships meetings are run.

What is the distinction between the Council (GRC) and Board? MADDOX provided an overview of our organizational/governance structure.

Are part-time students included in full membership? Yes. Full membership includes all currently registered graduate students.

We had additional questions regarding health and dental opt-ins and opt-outs which were answered.

We had additional questions around the differences between bylaw and policies and we will provide a presentation on this at the November GRC meeting.

CARRIED

10. Other Business (with notice of agenda item) and announcements

None noted.

11. Adjournment

Motion: to adjourned the meeting at 7:00pm

Moved: QUALTER Seconded: FISCHER

CARRIED

X

Wyatt MADDUX
GSS Chair 2023-24

X

Kyla Turner
GSS Executive Director

Appendix A: Bylaw amendments

Note: Additions to the existing bylaws are in yellow highlight. Deletions are struck through. Numbering changes, where required are in yellow highlight.

2.1 Full members of the Society shall be all students enrolled in the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University.

~~b. Students previously enrolled in the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University who are on approved leave from their studies and choose to opt in to membership in the Society.~~

2.2 Affiliated membership:

a. Affiliated membership may be granted to students previously enrolled in the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University who are on approved leave from their studies and choose to opt-in to membership in the Society.

b. Affiliated members shall have all privileges enjoyed by full members except that no affiliate member shall have voting privileges, count as a member for quorum, or hold office.

2.3 Associate membership:

a. Associate membership may be granted by an ordinary resolution of Grad Council upon receipt of written application.

b. Associate members shall have all privileges enjoyed by full members except that no associate member shall have voting privileges, count as a member for quorum, or hold office.

2.4 Honorary membership:

a. Upon receipt of written nomination by three ~~active~~ full members, honorary membership may be accorded in recognition of significant contributions to the Society by majority vote of the membership at a General Meeting or by unanimous affirmative vote of the Grad Council.

b. Honorary members shall have all privileges enjoyed by full members except that no honorary member shall have voting privileges, count as a member for quorum, or hold office.

2.5 Cessation of membership:

a. Membership in the Society shall cease when a member is no longer registered in the Faculty of Graduate Studies, with the exception of:

i. Members under Bylaw 2.2;

ii. Members registered under a completion postponement fee adjustment, who shall continue to be members until the end of the term in which they are registered;

- iii. Students enrolled in concurrent graduate/undergraduate programs, who shall continue to be members during undergraduate terms; and
 - iv. Members of the Executive Board, who shall continue to be members of the Society until expiry of their current term of office, provided that they are registered in the Faculty of Graduate Studies or in a concurrent graduate/undergraduate program or are members under Bylaw 2.2 for the first nine months of their term of office.
- b. Membership may be revoked by special resolution at a General Meeting.
 - c. Associate membership shall normally cease after one (1) year, upon non-payment of associate membership fees, or by Bylaw 2.5 b. If necessary, Grad Council may renew associate membership.
 - d. Honorary membership shall cease according to Bylaw 2.5 b.
- 2.6 Where membership is revoked, the member may appeal the revocation to another General Meeting by notice in writing to the Executive Board within thirty (30) days of the revocation.
- 2.7 The number of non-voting members shall not exceed the number of full members of the Society.
- 4.3 a The committee shall consist of three (3) Society full members appointed by Grad Council.
- ...
- c Annual appointments shall occur in September or October, and committee members shall not be a nominee for any elected office nor be a registered member of any referendum side. Grad Council may make interim appointments to ensure that the committee has three (3) full members of the Society.
- 4.4 a iii. a petition signed by at least ten percent (10%) of the full members of the Society.
- 4.5 c Quorum for referenda shall be five percent (5%) of the full membership.
- 4.8 a Nominees must be full members of the Society. The Electoral Officer cannot stand for election during their term of office. Members of the Electoral Appeals Committee and the Stipend Review Committee cannot stand for election during the term of the Graduate Representative Council in which they were appointed.
- 4.12 c. If a position is contested, all Society full members present at the meeting will vote by secret ballot to decide the winner.
- 4.12 d. If the position is not contested, all Society full members present will vote by secret ballot to acclaim the candidate.

5.4 c A petition by at least ten percent (10%) of the full members of the Society according to the provisions of the *Societies Act, SBC 2015*, c. 75.

5.5 Notice of a General Meeting:

- a. At least fourteen (14) days' written notice of a General Meeting must be given. Notice shall consist of advertisement on one or more of the Society's public-facing media platforms and website; a poster-format notice sent to each academic unit; an electronic message sent to the entire Society membership; and notification sent to each Grad Council Representative. Notice shall specify the place, time and date of the meeting. ~~ii. The agenda of business to be transacted~~
- b. Notice for a General Meeting where the audited financial statements or budgets are to be reviewed and approved shall also include the availability of copies of the financial statements and budgets for no less than seven (7) days before the meeting.
- c. Notice for a General Meeting shall also include the availability of the agenda of business to be conducted no less than seven (7) days before the meeting.

5.6 b. Quorum for all General Meetings shall be twenty-five (25) full members. In the event that attendance at a General Meeting is above fifteen (15) but below twenty-five (25) full members, the meeting will continue for the purposes of fulfilling the *Societies Act, SBC 2015*, c. 71...

f. General meetings shall be conducted ~~according to Robert's Rules of Order latest edition~~ in a manner that fosters open communication and respectful dialogue. Grad Council may set formal meeting structures for general meetings for the academic year in September.

6.3 g. Where ~~no~~ a voting member of the Grad Council, whether Grad Rep, Co-Rep, or proxy, from an academic unit ~~attends~~ fails to attend two (2) consecutive meetings of the Grad Council or a General Meeting of the Society, the Grad Rep(s) shall, upon the direction of the Executive Board, cease to be member(s) of the Grad Council. The Executive Board shall notify the academic unit in question that its place on the Grad Council has become vacant.

6.5 Procedures of the Grad Council:

- b. Meetings of the Grad Council shall be run ~~according to Robert's Rules of Order~~ in a manner that fosters open communication and respectful dialogue. Grad Council may set formal meeting structures for meetings of the Grad Council for the academic year in September.
- f. Each academic unit has one vote at meetings of Grad Council, regardless of numbers of Reps. This vote may be exercised in person, by a show of hands, or electronically.

- l. All members of the Society may attend Grad Council meetings and participate in discussions, although only Grad Council members may vote. ~~Voting by electronic means will be permitted.~~

7.1 b. Petition:

A petition calling for a referendum on the question of whether the Society should join a national or provincial student organization shall be signed by no less than ten percent (10%) of the Society full members and sent to the Society executive.

7.1 d. Administering the Campaign and Voting:

Within three months of the receipt of notice, a Referendum Organizing Committee (ROC) composed of...

- 7.1 g ii. Only full members of the Society shall be permitted to participate in the campaign.

7.1. h. Quorum:

Quorum for the referendum vote shall be twenty-five per cent (25%) of Society full members as determined by current enrolment figures.

8.2 The Executive Board shall be comprised of:

- a. Chair;

~~Director of Communications;~~

- b. Director University/Internal Relations

- c. Director of External Relations

- d. Director of Finance;

- e. Director of ~~Services~~ Student Life;

~~Director of Student Affairs;~~ and

- f. Executive Director (ex-officio, non-voting)

8.3 b. The Executive must be members of the Society upon their election and during their term of office, subject to the provisions of Bylaw 2.5 a iv.

9.1 The Executive Board, in addition to any duties imposed by the *Societies Act*, SBC 2015, c. 18 shall:

- a. Uphold the constitution, bylaws, and policy of the Society;
- b. Attend all Executive Board, Graduate Representative Council, and General Meetings;

- c. Attend meetings with senior university administrators;
- d. Report to the Graduate Representative Council and all General Meetings;
- e. Maintain a list of current Graduate Representative Council members and ensure that sufficient notice of all Graduate Representative Council meetings is provided to all Graduate Representatives;
- f. Hire and supervise ~~management staff~~ the Executive Director of the Society;
- g. Not concurrently be an employee of the Society;
- h. Coordinate and ensure Society representation on university committees;
- i. Represent the Society on search committees for senior university positions;
- j. Represent the Society on external bodies;
- k. Form committees as necessary;
- l. Appoint an Executive Board member to liaise with UVSS;
- m. Appoint an Executive Board member to chair the Society ~~Health and Dental Appeals~~ Committee;
- n. Appoint an Executive Board member to sit on the University Grad Fee Reduction Appeals Committee;
- o. Be aware and accountable for the financial position of the Society;
- p. Ensure the maintenance of the Society's records;
- q. Ensure institutional memory for each Executive Board portfolio, campaign and committee is maintained;
- r. Individual duties as outlined in the Governance Manual;
- s. Advocate on behalf of graduate student interests; and
- t. Other duties as assigned by the Executive Board

~~9.2 The Chair shall:~~

- ~~a. Regularly chair meetings of the Executive Board and the Grad Council except where another meeting chair is appointed by the Executive Board for the Grad Council meeting;~~
- ~~b. Act as the primary spokesperson of the Society;~~
- ~~c. Be responsible for coordinating the activities of the Executive Board and Graduate Representative Council;~~
- ~~d. Be responsible for coordinating campaigns as directed by the Executive Board;~~
- ~~e. Act as the primary liaison with members of the university administration;~~
- ~~f. Act as the primary liaison between the Executive Board and the University's Senate and the Board of Governors, Faculty of Graduate Studies, and Graduate Executive Committee; and~~
- ~~g. Be responsible for other duties as agreed upon and assigned by the Executive Board.~~

~~9.3 The Director of Communications shall:~~

- a. ~~Publicize and promote the activities of the Society in cooperation with the Executive Board;~~
- b. ~~Oversee the Society's publications and digital and print media;~~
- c. ~~Work with Executive Board and other committees of the Society to develop consistent messaging and communications for Society campaigns;~~
- d. ~~Assume the role of Chair in his or her absence; and~~
- e. ~~Be responsible for other duties as agreed upon and assigned by the Executive Board.~~

~~9.4 The Director of Finance shall:~~

- a. ~~Present budgets and audited financial statements to General Meetings for ratification by the members;~~
- b. ~~Report on the financial status of the extended health and dental plan at General Meetings;~~
- c. ~~Be responsible for development and negotiation of staff and external contracts in conjunction with Executive Board;~~
- d. ~~Act as primary signing authority for the Society;~~
- e. ~~Normally act as the Personnel Officer for the Society; and~~
- f. ~~Be responsible for other duties as agreed upon and assigned by the Executive Board.~~

~~9.5 The Director of Services shall:~~

- a. ~~Represent the Executive Board on matters related to the services of the Society~~
- b. ~~Be responsible for planning Society-sponsored social activities;~~
- c. ~~Sit on Clubs' Council;~~
- d. ~~Sit on the University's Orientation Committee; and~~
- e. ~~Be responsible for other duties as agreed upon and assigned by the Executive Board.~~

~~9.6 The Director of Student Affairs shall:~~

- a. ~~Sit on the University's Orientation Committee;~~
- b. ~~Sit on the Ombudsperson Advisory Committee;~~
- c. ~~Coordinate advocacy on behalf of individual students;~~
- d. ~~Represent the interests of international graduate students;~~
- e. ~~Represent the interests of distance graduate students; and~~
- f. ~~Be responsible for other duties as agreed upon and assigned by the Executive Board.~~

16.2 c. A petition signed by at least ten percent (10%) of the full members of the Society.

