

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Executive Board

(HYBRID) MEETING AGENDA - DRAFT

MARCH 18, 2025

Zoom Link: <https://uvic.zoom.us/j/2244264481>

EXECUTIVE INVITED:

Wyatt MADDUX, Chair;
Samuel FIELDER, Director of Finance;
Rosemary WEBB, Director of Internal/University Relations;
Jitendra PALAPARTY, Director of External Relations;
Maggie LAWTON, Director of Student Life;
Kyla TURNER, Executive Director (non-voting);

GUESTS: Greg Melnechuk, President of CUPE 4163;
Abby Fleck, GSS Health and Dental Coordinator

STANDING ITEMS PART 1

A. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 9:16 by MADDUX.

B. TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Territorial acknowledgement offered by TURNER. She brought up the statements made by Terry Teegee, the Chief of the BC Assembly of First Nations, and a resident of the Lheidli T'enneh territory where Kyla is from. Teegee has brought up the need to engage our First Nations within international trade negotiations in a recent public statement (due to the USA-initiated trade war). This engagement and decision making authority within those negotiations are needed for decolonization and reconciliation.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: to approve the agenda as presented.

M/S: LAWTON/WEBB

CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

1. ADVOCACY LETTER APPROVAL

Lead: TURNER

For: Discussion:

Turner be Turnering again and wrote an overly verbose letter one day when she got bored. Can she send it off to UVic and the Province?

TASK: TURNER to edit for typos and length, add in a request for double beds, then send the letter off.

2. CUPE 4163 UPDATE

Lead: MELNECHUK

For: Discussion

CUPE 4163 is in a bargaining year. CUPE 4163 is awaiting the budget from the Provincial government. Given other political uncertainties impacting budgets, MELNECHUK is expecting a hard round of bargaining. Sessional pay, workload, and job security are seen as acute issues. The TA bargaining survey should be out soon. CUPE 4163 will soon be recruiting bargaining team members. Executive compensation continues to be the biggest budgetary issue CUPE 4163 takes with UVic.

MELNECHUK also brought up the University's plan to change the academic writing courses (AWR?) to be a modules or other presentation formats. CUPE 4163 is worried it will impact the ATWP sessionals, who have also not been consulted on this issue.

Regarding organizing, MELNECHUK mentioned that a lot of the member organizers to other commitments. CUPE National is still supporting the drive. The PEA is also organizing the administrative RAs. PEA did a FOI request for the impacted positions, which has been shared with CUPE. CUPE and PEA are also looking at other areas which could use union support to achieve employment fairness, safety, and security.

3. REFERENDUM RESULTS AND NEXT STEPS

Lead: FIELDER/TURNER

For: Discussion

Kyla emailed and spoke with Harrison, our Aon representative until September 1, on March 10 regarding the results. Our Aon contract will terminate on August 31, 2025. Sam and Kyla met with Studentcare on March 12 to discuss the transition plan. FIELDER to update.

Kyla's notes: There are several services or coverage improvements we MAY be able to add. We can't be able to afford all of them. Sam, Abby and I have created four packages based on what is affordability that we want the board to choose between. We've labeled them by the "value" we feel they indicate to our members:

1. Legal focus: Add in Empower Me (short-term mental health support), Legal Support (tele-legal advice for tenancy, intellectual property, employment, etc.), add both occupational therapists and dieticians to paramedicals, increase dental coverage from \$750/year to \$850, remove the late registration dental coverage decrease. Total savings: \$41.49 or 5.19%
2. Mental Health focus: Add in Empower Me, add Masters of Social Work counsellors to mental health providers, add both occupational therapists and dieticians to paramedicals, increase dental coverage from \$750/year to \$850, remove the late registration dental coverage decrease. Total savings: \$65.21 or 8.16%.
3. Healthcare access focus: Add in Empower Me, add in Studentcare's Virtual Health Care service. No other plan additions. Total savings: \$55.73 or 6.97%
4. Savings focus: Add in Empower Me, add both occupational therapists and dieticians to paramedicals, increase dental coverage from \$750/year to \$850, remove the late registration dental coverage decrease. Total savings: \$74.93 or 9.37%.

TURNER provided a brief overview of the referendum results implementation completed thus far. TURNER gave an overview of the service packages that FIELDER, FLECK, and TURNER created. FLECK answered questions about the Studentcare in depth, including access limitations, service limits, differing service levels, access across Canada.

WEBB brought up their recent experiences dealing with residential tenancy law to help the board think through the package they would like the GSS to offer next year. MADDOX recommended A&C Committee put together a list of local, low-cost legal supports.

PALAPARTY and FIELDER expressed support for the mental health focused option. PALAPARTY pointed out that MSWs can diagnosis gender incongruence, which may increase access to our gender affirming care options. TURNER brought up that she hadn't looked at the availability of MSWs locally. FLECK and FIELDER mentioned that they've observed better availability for MSWs than clinical psychologists.

TASK: Action the mental health focus option.

STANDING ITEMS PART 2

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: to approve the minutes from the April 4, 2025 Executive Board Meeting as presented.

M/S: LAWTON/WEBB

CARRIED

E. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Lead: TURNER

Note: To ensure motion log is updated, ensure completed items are reported in the minutes.

Items assigned to board members that Kyla thinks are complete or abandoned will be listed below and highlighted in yellow. If there's an item you were assigned below highlighted in yellow, please confirm if the task was completed, revoked, or abandoned!

Tasks Completed/Decisions fully acted upon:

Tasks revoked or abandoned:

F. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

No committee appointments made.

G. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

No correspondence received.

H. AGENDA PLANNING, OR MEETING DEBRIEF

Reference: [Meeting Debrief Template](#)

1. Meeting debrief: Mar 4 Operational Relations
2. Meeting agenda planning: SAGM prep – final check! (thanks everyone for getting your reports in on time! Have you made yourself and your committee a slide on the [powerpoint slide deck](#)? Who plans to help with set up? Tech help during the event? Welcoming attendees and/or taking attendance?)

I. LOBBYING REPORTS

Reports due at the first meeting of every month.

J. ANNUAL PLAN CHECK-IN:

1. FOSTERING STUDENT-CENTRIC PARTNERSHIPS

December notes on discussion points for further growth: Maggie's plan to connect with Indigenous student groups; career advising services; community associations regarding the next UVic dorm

WEBB recommended requesting a formal seat on the AIR committee for GSS reps.

FIELDER recommended supporting graduate student associations at a department level.

MADDOX noted that our new partnership with Studentcare is a great service both in this section and in the second priority area.

2. ADVOCATING FOR GRADUATE STUDENT SUPPORT AND WELL-BEING

Discussion points for further growth (December): telehealth access for students and communications with our members (guide on how to use these services – task for A&C)

MADDOX noted that the SWC is still going through growing pains and further supports and information sharing materials are still required.

FIELDER recommended continued GRC utilization and feedback on our health plans.

MADDOX noted that our events are an important wellness support.

3. FACILITATING PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Discussion points for further growth (December): Board transition preparedness; career educator; wellness events

LAWTON noted that Wendy from the SWC has hosted two workshops at the GSS, but didn't have significant uptake. Uptake has been the biggest issue for SWC workshops.

Sam from Career Education and the Libraries have been exceptionally well connected this year to the board and GRC. FIELDER recommended the continuation of these partnerships as there is not yet internal capacity to conduct all the work these other UVic offices do.

MADDOX recommended seeking grants for further training and personal development workshops.

LAWTON recommended continuing to foster crafting events as personal development.

4. PROVIDING ACCESS TO ON AND OFF-CAMPUS RESOURCES

Discussion points for further growth (December): Food security list made public facing; GSAW supervision panel restructuring to workshop on creating supervisory relationship agreements

TURNER and WEBB discussed the successes of GSAW and planning for next year.

LAWTON noted that the Food Bank Working Group has been a strong connection.

CLOSING ITEMS

EXECUTIVE INFORMAL DISCUSSION/UPDATES/QUESTIONS

Chair: MADDOX spoke about transition planning and his availability to provide the GSS with assistance after April 1.

Director of Finance: FIELDER is looking forward to volunteering for GRC committees.

Director of Internal/University Relations: WEBB is planning to get louder about their need for an accommodated meetings for all the accessibility committees they sit on.

Director of External Relations: PALAPARTY no report.

Director of Student Life: LAWTON no report.

Executive Director: TURNER is focused on HR this week: a formal notice to the union re: the referendum change has been given; Irfan's performance review will take place tomorrow; Sarah's onboarding will take Thursday; and Labour Management Committee will take place on Friday to discuss both the organizational change related to the referendum and the tip item in the Collective Agreement through an LOU.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS, AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETING

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND IMPORTANT DATES

****Task Reminder: Please be sure your meetings and events are up to date on OUTLOOK CALENDAR****

Next Executive Meetings: March 28, 2025

Next GRC Meeting: April 22, 2025

AGM: March 25, 2025

Office, Staff Scheduling:

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: to adjourn the meeting.

M/S: LAWTON/MADDOX

CARRIED

X

Wyatt MADDOX
GSS Chair 2024-25

X

Kyla Turner
GSS Executive Director

