

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Graduate Representative Council

MEETING MINUTES

LOCATION: GSS BOARD ROOMS OR ZOOM: [LINK](#)

JULY 22, 2025, 5-7 PM

Executive Board Invited (1 vote per member):**Chair:** Rosemary Webb**Director of Internal/University Relations:** Sarah Roberts**Director of Finance:** Maggie Lawton**Director of Student Life:** Asma Noureen**Executive Director (non-voting):** Kyla Turner**Elected Academic Unit Reps Invited (1 vote per academic unit):**

Anthropology: Semyon Drozdetsckii	Electrical & Computer Engineering: Victor Marrugat Arnal & Mahmoud Chick Zaouali	Interdisciplinary Studies:	Public Health & Social Policy:
Art History and Visual Studies:	English: Kerri Li	Law: Katarina Sawchuk	Social Dimensions of Health: Luiza Costa & Kathryn Stone
Biochemistry & Microbiology: Gillian Leach / Liam Mihalynuk	Environmental Studies: Lauren Burton	Mathematics and Statistics: Khai Quigley	Social Work:
Biology: Muskan Karmani	Exercise Science, Phys. & Health Ed: Isaac Barss & Maryam Sheikhi	Mechanical Engineering: Maziyar Khadivi & Bernardo Leite	Sociology: Neve Sugars-Keen & Jasmine Padam
Business: Jenna Mahlmann	French and Francophone Studies: Jacqueline Rutherford	Medical Sciences/Neuroscience: Dhwani Sura	Theatre:
Chemistry: Jesse Delmage & Phillip Jurek	Geography: Adam Regier & Hazim Ismail	Music: Talietha Sangha	Visual Arts:
Child & Youth Care:	Germanic & Slavic Studies:	Nursing:	Writing:
Civil Engineering: Fereshteh Hassani	Greek and Roman Studies: Luke Montgomery	Pacific and Asian Studies: Bryce Bartsch & Delaney Johnson	CUPE:
Computer Science:	Health Information Science: Marian Kaine & Ghita Hajjami	Philosophy: Yukio Jamieson-Burns	Other Programs:
Curriculum & Instruction: Iram Zahra & Samim Nikbakht	Hispanic & Italian Studies:	Physics and Astronomy: Olivia Moluchi & Nathan Clements	
Earth & Ocean Science: Stacy Edmonson & Nadiya Shore	History: Joan Kelly	Political Science:	
Economics:	Indigenous Education:	Psychology: Nazanin Babaei	
Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies:	Indigenous Governance:	Public Administration: Jeremy Perkins & Marry Ann Sing	

Recorder: Irfan Tanveer, Governance Coordinator

Invited Guests: Wyatt Maddox, Geography;

Regrets Received: Director of External Relations: Jitendra Palaparty, Chemistry: Jesse Delmage & Phillip Jurek; Curriculum & Instruction: Iram Zahra; Earth & Ocean Science: Nadiya Shore; French and Francophone Studies: Jacqueline Rutherford; Medical Sciences/Neuroscience: Dhvani Sura; Public Administration: Jeremy Perkins & Marry Ann Sing

Absent without regrets: Muskan Karmani; Jenna Mehlmann; Jingyi Lu; Isaac Barss/Maryam Sheikhi; Adam Regier/Hazim Ismail; Marian Kaine/Ghita Hajjami; Joan Kelly; Katarina Sawchuk; Talietha Sangha; Nazanin Babaei; Luiza Costa/Kythryn Stone;

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND OPENING ITEMS

CALL TO ORDER 5:00 PM

Meeting called to order at 5:00pm by LAWTON.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 5:01 PM

Councillors are asked 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/ARNAL

CARRIED

TIMEKEEPER VOLUNTEER 5:10

Today's timekeeper was: MOLUCHI

MEMBERSHIP REPORT, MEETING QUORUM AND ATTENDANCE 5:12

GSS Membership: As of May 27, 2025 the GSS has 2525 members.

Meeting Quorum: With 9 regrets received, quorum for tonight's meeting is 12.5.

REPORTS AND OPEN DIALOGUE

CHAIR'S REMARKS 5:13

WEBB/LAWTON to update on the goings on of the Board. The Board is wrapping up their annual planning for presentation to the membership and GRC in the Fall.

- Lots of Board member conference travel and vacations!
- Surviving with no supervision while Kyla was enjoying their time off
- Preparing for Board volunteering at August/September events
- Finalizing Annual Plan
- Planning onboarding for the interim D. External

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

- Advocacy and Campaigns: ROBERTS reported that A&C has met for the last planned session of the academic year, however they may re-convene in August to on-board the interim Director of External Relations. ARNAL – discussed CARSA and the Field House. The

committee began a conversation about the usage of CARSA by UVic students and is inquiring further into the available facilities. Additionally, the committee has reached out to the District of Saanich for community input.

There was also discussion about the City of Victoria's involvement in the Crystal Pool decision. Another area of advocacy involves Teaching Assistants (TAs), specifically regarding student accommodations and ensuring that existing policies are effectively communicated to students.

- Bylaw & Policy: WEBB reported BPC has been: Finalizing Governance Manual revisions – will have an updated version for September. Recommending amendment to the "Attendance of out-of-town conferences" bylaw – per diem amounts for food are wildly out of date! Headed to the Board on August 11, GRC will see it in September. Recapped how the summer went, giving WEBB valuable feedback for the new committee term!
- Events: NOUREEN reported that August and September events are planned. She reminded GRC reps to continue advertising the Patio Hop coming up THIS THURSDAY as there are still tickets available. The Beach Day, BYO Book Club, and Music Bingo in July all went well. NOUREEN mentioned a few planned events for August. The committee has nearly finalized the list of volunteers for the event scheduled on August 28th from 5:00 to 8:30 PM. A sign-up sheet was circulated to GRC students, but Noureen can share it again if students reach out to her.
- Finance: LAWTON reported that Finance Committee has received the updates available for planning the Spring 2026 fee referendum. LAWTON spoke about the fee referendum, including the amount being paid to constituency groups. He also mentioned the initiation of a 2026 referendum to redirect the fee currently allocated to university 101, which is shutting down.
- Stipend Review: JAMIESON-BURNS reported that all June board reports have been reviewed.
- Electoral Officer: DROZDETCKII completed training and preparations for the election of the interim D. External with Irfan Tanveer, Governance Coordinator, and will be overseeing tonight's processes.

GRC STANDING COMMITTEES – APPOINTMENTS 5:28

It's the last GRC meeting of the year. We'll do GRC committee appointments again in September.

OPEN DIALOGUE AND REPORTS 5:30

LEAD: LAWTON

MADDOX mentioned about career panel does not have much diversity of graduate students from different faculties, currently the panel has majority of graduate students from Social Science.

BREAK – 5 MINUTES – 5:45 PM

MEETING NEW BUSINESS

1. ELECTION OF INTERIM DIRECTOR OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS 5:50

Lead: DROZDETCKII

Reference:

For: Approval

Jitendra is taking leave of absence for July and August. We will be electing an interim Director of External Relations tonight. Semyon will be calling for nominations from the floor.

DROZDETCKII opened the floor for nominations.

Nominees:

1. Wyatt Maddox
2. Victor Murrugat Arnal
3. Lauren Burton

DROZDETCKII asked the candidates to present their 1 min speech to the council

MADDOX spoke about his previous experience as Chair and his involvement with the board. He has also been assisting the current Director of External Relations and expressed interest in taking on the role.

VICTOR highlighted his experience as a representative for Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, as well as his active participation in the Advocacy Committee. He has been involved in communications related to advocacy and committee work.

LAUREN mentioned that she is a GRC representative for Environmental Studies and has previously volunteered with the Communications Committee. She expressed her willingness to step up and take on the role.

Ballot:

- Wyatt MADDOX – 6 votes
- Victor – 4 votes
- Lauren – 3 votes
- Rosemary and Sarah Abstain from voting.

Wyatt Maddox was declared the Interim Director of External Relations.

2. GRAD ACCOMMODATION PLANNING TOOL 6:10

Lead: ROBERTS

Reference: [Grad Student Accommodation Planning Document](#)

For: Discussion

New UVic policy dictates that grad students negotiate full accommodation plans with their direct supervisor (or grad advisor if the program does not require an academic supervisor), similar to how employment accommodation planning occurs with employers. CAL is still there to consult and provide documentation to students who register with them. However, neither grad students nor faculty receive training on accommodation planning. To provide the minor amount of assistance that the GSS can provide, we've prepared this conversation guiding tool to prompt grad students and supervisors to discuss accommodation. What feedback does GRC have on this document?

- SARAH described the accommodation planning document is introduced to the graduate students so that there can be clear communications and expectation regarding accommodation between the student and the supervisor. Although some of the accommodations are not going to be provided by CAL and those ones are particularly between the student and supervisor to sought out but supervisor always encourages that path follow must be via CAL.
- SARAH mentioned that FGS is not taken on this tool and have mentioned that the FGS is open for discussion about supervisory and accommodation issues under the supervisory committee.
- SARAH seeking advice from the council:
- VICTOR – may facilitate this communication with the supervisory but would be more effective if its binding where the supervisors aren't paying sufficient attention or are not well experienced. KYLA commented by saying that that's where is FGS will be taking a role in the document creation but most importantly the accommodation will be primarily discussed between the students and supervisor
- WYATT asked if there is a space on the documents where a student can have a record of agreements and Sarah replied to the document does have.
- WYATT added that based on the supervisory committee discuss many universities have a contract in the graduate hand book of Canadian universities. KYLA replied the accommodation such as timeline for reports and this documents cannot replace that.
- SARAH added this tool should not be seen as academic planning tool and uvic already has that developed.
- KYLA mentioned that this documents will guide fgs to info regarding the accommodations that aren't provided by CAL and so far the comments have been regarding binding agreement between the students and supervisor and what are other feedback?
- Bernardo mentioned about that there is some concerns their legal accommodation to students up to their legal empowerment.
- SARAH mentioned that we are helping the grad students going in with armed with what the students are entitled to when they ask their supervisor and that's where uvic indicates based on their policy and supervisor must follow but the ground reality different significantly.
- WYATT mentioned that graduate advisor to be part of the communication.
- JILLIAN asked sarah if this document must be a guide or a contract? Like signing is it an acknowledgement or binding.
- KYLA replied that since FGS mentioned that they will be creating their own such documents and they have rejected in accepting this but Kyla further reiterates with the council that the feedback when the board takes to the FGS for discussions.
- JILLIAN a contract might be a barrier and tool such as guiding the conversation but some people to require that contract and advisor be present but that could be barriers to some students.
- KYLA mentioned that there will always be available where more or less formal arrangements exist.

3. REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK 6:20

Lead: WEBB

Reference:

For: Discussion

What advice do you have for the Board to make GRC even better next year? What worked for you? What didn't?

Food feedback:

Tofu stir fry was the best.

Multiple options for different background of food allergies

Quesadillas were great.

GSS Committee:

Victor mentioned that the committee members who join at least have more committee students. Advocacy and campaign committee did not enforce well.

Kyla asked would it possible if we introduced the new committee in January and mentioned about, Kyla mentioned that the board will be more diligent about the attendance and commitments of the committee members for the GRC

Maggie mentioned that if the chairs of the GRC committee could also be cc'd when a grc rep departures.

Maggie added that combining three committee into one large committee works well in terms of sharing of work.

Maggie asked the council about events and advocacy committee which can have higher work and lower turnout. Lauren replied that the work load difference significantly and she finds events easier than advocacy and campaign where there is home work.

Bottom line more students are required for advocacy and campaign

Members can email Sarah feedback for advocacy and campaign.

STANDING ITEMS 6:25 PM

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (APPENDIX A) 6:30

MOTION: BIRT the Minutes of the June 24, 2025 GRC meeting are approved as presented [OR approved with minor corrections as provided].

M/S: Semyon/Victor

CARRIED

EXECUTIVE BOARD STIPEND REPORTS – QUESTIONS ARISING AND MOTION TO ACCEPT – 6:35

LEAD: JAMIESON-BURNS

REF DOCS: Executive Board Reports Folder

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

MOTION: To Approve the June reports as presented.

M/S: Stipend Review Committee/Lauren

CARRIED

REPORTS FROM GRAD REPS ON UVIC COMMITTEES 6:40

LEAD: WEBB

Open Floor to hear any reports from graduate student representatives on:

- Board of Governors:
- Senate:
- Faculty of Graduate Studies Council:
- Previously appointed committees:

Committee	Appointment Date	Rep Name
Faculty of Science EDI Council	Sept 2024	Stacy Edmonson
Childcare Advisory Committee	Oct 2024	Iram Zahara and Luiza Costa
Appointment Committee – AVP Research	Oct 2024	Maggie Lawton
Society for Students with a Disability Graduate Student Representative	Nov 2024	Jitendra Palaparty
Appointment Committee Associate Dean, FGS	Jan 2025	Iram Zahra
Residence Dining Advisory Committee	Jan 2025	Jitendra Palaparty
Working Group on Islamophobia and Anti-Palestinian Racism	Feb 2025	Iram Zahra

ROBERTS met with Shawn Steele from Gordon Head Community Association last week. The association is interested in connecting with grad students, possibly formalizing a student seat at their meetings and/or coming in to speak with the council, and sharing more about events/opportunities for feedback.

The association is currently focused on the Lambrick Park campus redevelopment (incl. plans for an ice rink) and Quadra McKenzie corridor plans.

Reps are encouraged to submit short written reports to gssgov@uvic.ca for inclusion in the minutes.

GRADUATE REPRESENTATION ON UVIC COMMITTEES (APPENDIX B) 6:50

LEAD: TANVEER

Reps are asked to sit on a UVic committee(s) to ensure grad student interests are represented.

No committee appointments made.

REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT/ADVOCACY/PARTICIPATION 6:55

LEAD: WEBB

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!

Victor mentioned that tomorrow at 1:30 CUPW 4163 summer meeting in A129 in Cornett building.

NOTICES OF AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING (APPENDIX C)

LEAD: WEBB

IMPORTANT DATE REMINDERS:

LEAD: WEBB

Next General Meeting: GSS Annual General Meeting October 28, 2025

- Agenda to be posted: October 14, 2025

Next GRC Meeting: September 23, 2025

- Please have any potential agenda items, with supporting materials, to the Executive Board for consideration, in advance of September 9, 2025
- Agenda to be posted: September 16, 2025

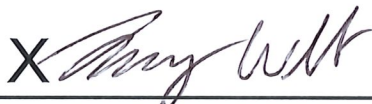
Office, Staff Scheduling Notes:

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: BIRT the meeting is adjourned.

M/S: Lauren/Bernardo

CARRIED

X 

Rosemary WEBB
GSS Chair 2025-26

X 

Kyla Turner
GSS Executive Director