

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Graduate Representative Council

MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 23, 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**Director of External Relations:** Jitendra Palaparty**Executive Director (non-voting):** Kyla Turner**Elected Academic Unit Reps Invited (1 vote per academic unit):**

Anthropology: Semyon Drozdetskii Zenus Francis	Electrical & Computer Engineering: Victor Marrugat Arnald, Latifa Yusuf	Interdisciplinary Studies:	Public Health & Social Policy:
Art History and Visual Studies: Melody Ray	English: Emma Dove	Law: Chidimma Ike	Social Dimensions of Health: Marcela Zamudio, Maren Akyürek
Biochemistry & Microbiology: Liam Mihalynuk, Sophie Culos	Environmental Studies:	Mathematics and Statistics:	Social Work:
Biology: Sydney Houston, Manuel Centeno Duque	Exercise Science, Phys. & Health Ed:	Mechanical Engineering: Bernardo Leite, Ama Ouchen	Sociology:
Business: Ross Harhry	French and Francophone Studies:	Medical Sciences/Neuroscience: Frances Armas	Theatre:
Chemistry: Amelie Cazelaïs	Geography: Wyatt Maddox	Music:	Visual Arts: Kylie Fineday
Child & Youth Care:	Germanic & Slavic Studies:	Nursing:	Writing:
Civil Engineering:	Greek and Roman Studies:	Pacific and Asian Studies: Curran Chapman, Ruyan Wang	CUPE:
Computer Science:	Health Information Science: Astrid Han	Philosophy:	Other Programs:
Curriculum & Instruction: Shina Khan, Cherrie Paniamogan	Hispanic & Italian Studies:	Physics and Astronomy:	Social Work: Amaru Hidalgo Vela, Clara Troje
Earth & Ocean Science: Nadiya Shore, Lekima Yakuden	History:	Political Science: Max Backhaus	Sociology: Jasmine Padam
Economics:	Indigenous Education:	Psychology: Jessica Li	Theatre:
Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies: Annie Wu,	Indigenous Governance:	Public Administration: Andrea Sadowski	Visual Arts:

Recorder: Irfan Tanveer, Governance Coordinator

Regrets Received: Wyatt Maddox, Geography; Astrid Han, Health Information Science;
Absent without regrets:

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND OPENING ITEMS

CALL TO ORDER 5:00 PM

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 WEBB.

(Today's special: Board introduction – we'll do GRC rep introductions next month when our late-comers are all elected)

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA 5:05

(LAWTON to provide a brief overview of the format of GRC meetings, agendas, standing agenda items)

MOTION: to approve the agenda as presented.

M/S: Executive Board/BURTON

CARRIED

TIMEKEEPER VOLUNTEER 5:10

Today's timekeeper was: LEITE.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT, MEETING QUORUM AND ATTENDANCE 5:12

GSS Membership: As of September 23, 2025, the GSS has 3025 members.

Meeting Quorum: With 2 regrets received, quorum for tonight's meeting is 15.

Welcome to new GRC reps: Everyone!

MEETING NEW BUSINESS

1. WELCOME TO GRC! 5:15

Lead: WEBB

Reference: Introduction of the GSS Board. WEBB empathised the crucial role GRC member play in students' life on campus.

2. HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE GRC REP! 5:20

Lead: TURNER

Reference: TURNER provided an overview of the first three meetings. Feedback from previous years indicated that GRC members were mostly interested in understanding what a GRC member does. TURNER noted that since meetings are limited to two hours, the content must be divided into three separate sessions.

In October, the GRC will receive a welcome from the Faculty of Graduate Studies. TURNER highlighted the importance of territorial acknowledgment. TURNER also explained the role of the GSS, its structure, and the duties of the committee. They emphasized that the GSS is a separate

entity from UVic, particularly in its advocacy work. The GSS is a non-profit society that provides space for students and operates under the Societies Act of BC. TURNER further elaborated on the organizational structure.

TURNER mentioned that the GSS regularly connects with UVic officials. They also addressed GRC attendance expectations and clarified to VELA that co-reps may attend periodically.

Board members presented their respective GSS committees and described the potential work involved. TURNER and the board shared tips and tricks with council members, and TURNER provided further explanation about GRC committees.

TURNER also emphasized that GRC members play an important role in holding the GSS Board accountable for its work.

WEBB gave a demonstration of MS teams to the Council members.

GRAD STUDENT APPRECIATION WEEK – JOINT PROJECT WITH FGS 5:55

Lead: ROBERTS/NOUREEN

Reference: ROBERTS mentioned that the Appreciation Week events are a joint project funded by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. ROBERTS also provided details about upcoming events and workshops taking place at the GSS. They highlighted the Graduate Research Symposium and reminded members of the October 3 application deadline. Applicants can have their posters printed for free at the UVic Library.

3. GRC DEPARTMENT 6:05

Lead: TURNER/WEBB

Reference: [2025-26 UVic Depts Eligible for GRC.xlsx](#)

For: Decision

Background information: The GRC includes a seat for every UVic-recognized Academic Unit (Department, School, or Faculty depending on the unit. E.g. Department of Chemistry, School of Earth and Ocean Sciences, Faculty of Business), as well as a representative from CUPE 4163. GRC has the right to create additional seats for a single academic year.

In 2024, UVic combined four departments into a single mega-department. The Departments of French, Germanic and Slavic Studies, Hispanic and Italian Studies, and Linguistics became the School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures (SLLC). When the merger happened, GRC lost 3 seats. We've historically had very strong representation from French and Linguistics (though the last time we had Germanic and Slavic Studies or Hispanic and Italian Studies reps was in 2018). In order to maintain strong representation from these productive departments, GRC voted to create additional seats for each former department in 2024-25. We did not fill the Germanic and Slavic Studies or Hispanic and Italian Studies seats. French and Linguistics remained heavy hitters for GRC involvement. Based on this, we're recommending the following motion:

MOTION: to create GRC seats for French and Linguistics in addition to the Languages, Linguistics, and Cultures seat.

M/S: BURTON/SHORE

CARRIED

BREAK – 5 MINUTES –6:10 PM

REPORTS AND OPEN DIALOGUE

CHAIR'S REMARKS 6:15

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

Board has been working on welcoming events and department orientation.

GRC COMMITTEE, ELECTORAL OFFICER REPORTS, UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS 6:20

Committee chairs to provide an overview of work planned for the next year.

- Advocacy and Campaigns: PALAPARTY
- Appeals: LAWTON
- Bylaw & Policy: WEBB
- Events: NOUREEN
- Finance: LAWTON
- Stipend Review: TBD
- Electoral Officer: DROZDETCKII

GRC STANDING COMMITTEES – APPOINTMENTS 6:30

MOTION: to appoint 2025-26 GRC reps to the GRC Standing Committees as follows:
Advocacy and Campaigns: Victor Marrugat, Latifa Yusuf, Clara Troje

Bylaw and Policy: Melody Ray, Ruyan Wang, Jasmine Padam, Annie Wu, Chidimma Ike, Maren Akyürek, Andrea Sadowski

Events: Semyon Drozdetckii, Sydney Houston, Curran Chapman, Zenus Francis, Lekima Yakuden, Ama Ouchen, Nadiya Shore, Manuel Centeno Duque, Lauren Burton, Kylie Fineday, Bernardo Leite, Maggie Berube, Laura Dufort-Gagnon, Daniel Boyea

Checks and Balances (Appeals, Finance, Stipend Review): Cherrie Paniamogan, Wyatt Maddox, Amélie Cazalais, Bernardo Leite, Amaru Hidalgo Vela, Jessica Li, Marcela Zamudio, Zenus Francis, Chloë Farr, Liam Mihalynuk

M/S: LIET/ DROZDETCKII
CARRIED

STANDING ITEMS 6:35 PM

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (APPENDIX A) 6:35

MOTION: to approve the Minutes of the July 22, GRC meeting as presented [OR approved with minor corrections as provided].

M/S: LIET/MARRUGAT
CARRIED

REPORTS FROM GRAD REPS ON UVIC COMMITTEES 6:45

LEAD: WEBB

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

- Board of Governors:
- Senate: DROZDETCKII, learning teaching and The Senate is considering exam accommodations for students with disabilities, focusing on the concept of Universal Extended Time (UET). Key questions include whether UET is effective, appropriate, fair, and equitable. To explore this, a working group will be established that incorporates perspectives from educational psychology, legal experts, implementation staff, instructors, graduate and undergraduate students, as well as Student Services for Disabilities (SSD) and the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL). The discussion also noted that 26% of students with disabilities do not request formal accommodations, raising concerns about accessibility and equity. Additionally, the group will examine whether standard 50-minute classes are sufficient when extra time is needed.
- Faculty of Graduate Studies Council: ROBERTS Uvic is revising the language with research assistant academic where students get stipend and clarify that Uvic introduce RA employment position which will be contractual. Maren: asked when will this takes in effect? ROBERTS replied saying that UVic is going to update the website but haven't provided any deadline but over all reach out to
- DUQUE what happened if you are not a student and therefore would you fall under academic or employee?
- TURNER emphasis that GSS has been working with CUPE 4164 can answer questions regarding this matter.
- SHORE asked what universal extended time is. TURNER answered that universal time related to the time accommodated not only just to students who request but give this time to everyone in the class
- Previously appointed committees:

Committee	Appointment Date	Rep Name
Dean of humanities Appointment Committee	2025-06-05	Rosemary Webb
Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching	2025-05-27	Semyon Drozdetskii

Dean of humanities Appointment Committee

The committee has finalized the Dean of Humanities position criteria, which was revised from the last time an appointment committee was convened 5 years ago. Should the incumbent, Annalee Lepp, wish to put herself up as candidate in consideration of the revised criteria, the committee will communicate this to the University community. The committee will continue to update on the appointment procedure as necessary.

Faculty of Graduate Studies.

The University is moving to a dual classification model for research assistantships, distinguishing between RA (academic) and RA (employment). RA (academic) involves work typically with the student's

supervisor, linked to academic goals such as dissertation research, and is paid as a stipend; this is not treated like an employer/employee relationship. RA (employment) is waged or hourly, with set duties and an employer-employee framework, not necessarily tied to the student's program, and the payment is through payroll, not necessarily a stipend/grant. UVic is looking to update funding offers, handbooks, and calendars so that this distinction is clarified.

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 serve on one or more UVic committee(s) to ensure grad student interests are represented.

MOTION: to elect graduate student representatives to the following UVic committees:

Committee: Appointment Committee – Dean of Social Science (Must be student within the faculty)

Member: LAUREN BURTON

Committee: Senate Committee on Academic Standards

Member: Chloë Farr

M/S: LIETE/MARRUGAT

CARRIED

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!

NOTICES OF AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING (APPENDIX C)

LEAD: WEBB

IMPORTANT DATE REMINDERS:

LEAD: WEBB

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

- Agenda to be posted: October 14, 2025

Next GRC Meeting: October 21, 2025

- Please have any potential agenda items, with supporting materials, to the Executive Board for consideration, in advance of October 8, 2025
- Agenda to be posted: October 14, 2025

Office, Staff Scheduling Notes: The GSS will be closed Monday, September 30 along with the University for National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: to adjourn the meeting.

M/S: BURTON/LIETE

CARRIED

X 

Rosemary WEBB
GSS Chair 2025-26

X 

Kyla Turner
GSS Executive Director
