

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society  
 Graduate Representative Council

MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 28, 2026, 5-7 PM

**Executive Board Invited (1 vote per member):**

- Chair:** Sarah Roberts
- Director of Internal/University Relations:** Violet Cieslik
- Director of Finance:** Eleanore Todd
- Director of Student Life:** Manuel Centeno Duque
- Director of External Relations:** Victor Marrugat Arnal
- Executive Director (non-voting):** Kyla Turner

**Elected Academic Unit Reps Invited (1 vote per academic unit):**

Anthropology: <b>Semyon Drozdetskii, Zenus Francis</b>	Ed. Psych & Leadership Studies: <b>Annie Wu</b>	Indigenous Education:	Political Science: <b>Max Backhaus; Anna-Elaine Rempel</b>
Art History and Visual Studies: <b>Melody Ray</b>	Electrical & Computer Engineering: <b>Latifa Yusuf</b>	Indigenous Governance:	Psychology: <b>Jessica Li</b>
Biochemistry & Microbiology: <b>Liam Mihalynuk, Sophie Culos</b>	English: <b>Becca Andelyn</b>	Interdisciplinary Studies:	Public Administration: <b>Andrea Sadowski</b>
Biology: <b>Sydney Houston,</b>	Environmental Studies: <b>Lauren Burton</b>	Law: <b>Chidimma Ike</b>	Public Health & Social Policy:
Business: <b>Ross Harray</b>	Exercise Science, Phys. & Health Ed:	Mathematics & Statistics:	Social Dimensions of Health: <b>Marcela Zamudio, Maren Akyurek</b>
Chemistry: <b>Annabel Flint</b>	French and Francophone Studies:	Mechanical Engineering: <b>Bernardo Leite, Ama Ouchen</b>	Social Work:
Child & Youth Care:	Geography: <b>Wyatt Maddox</b>	Medical Sciences/Neuroscience: <b>Frances Armas</b>	Sociology: <b>Jasmine Padam</b>
Civil Engineering:	Germanic & Slavic Studies:	Music: <b>Josie Hill</b>	Theatre:
Computer Science: <b>Chloë Farr</b>	Greek and Roman Studies: <b>Grace Niehaus</b>	Nursing:	Visual Arts: <b>Kylie Fineday</b>
Curriculum & Instruction: <b>Shina Khan</b>	Health Information Science: <b>Astrid Han</b>	Pacific and Asian Studies: <b>Made Caniapasis (Cania) Tatiana Popova</b>	Writing:
Earth & Ocean Science: <b>Nadiya Shore, Lekima Yakuden</b>	Hispanic & Italian Studies:	Philosophy:	CUPE: <b>Cam Thiessen</b>
Languages, Linguistics and Cultures: <b>Rosemary Webb</b>	History: <b>Kiran Gowdar</b>	Physics & Astronomy: <b>Maggie Berube, Laura Dufort-Gagnon</b>	Other Programs:

**Recorder** Irfan Tanveer, Governance Coordinator

**Invited Guests:**

**Regrets Received:**

**Absent without regrets:**

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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND OPENING ITEMS

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### CALL TO ORDER 5:00 PM

Meeting called to order at 5:03pm by ROBERTS.

### 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. She reported that she is attending the CUPE conference this week, including sessions on solidarity with Indigenous knowledge keepers, land protectors and more.

### APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA 5:05

*MOTION: to approve the agenda with an addition of calling the Electoral Appeals Committee.*

*M/S: Executive Board/  
CARRIED*

### TIMEKEEPER VOLUNTEER 5:10

Today's timekeeper was: Rosemary WEBB.

### MEMBERSHIP REPORT, MEETING QUORUM AND ATTENDANCE 5:12

**GSS Membership:** As of January 29, 2026, the GSS has 2896 members

**Meeting Quorum:** With 3 regrets received, quorum for tonight's meeting is 15.

**Welcome to new GRC reps:**

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## REPORTS AND OPEN DIALOGUE

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### CHAIR'S REMARKS 5:15

ROBERTS will update GRC on the goings on of the Executive Board. ROBERTS asked the new board members to introduce themselves to start off our meeting.

ROBERTS reported that the board has just completed training and still has a few meet-and-greets with UVic officials to get settled into their roles. Each GRC committee has met, so the 2026-27 board has been able to orient themselves to the work of their committees. They have started brainstorming towards an annual plan.

### GRC COMMITTEE, ELECTORAL OFFICER REPORTS, UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS 5:20

- **Advocacy and Campaigns:** MARRUGAT reported that Advocacy and Campaigns met and discussed the ongoing advocacy campaigns, including TA accommodation information and training, improving regional transit and increasing student voices in the Victoria Regional Transit Commission, responding to the provincial university funding review, and encouraging members to sign up for Fair Pharmacare and BC MSP Supplementary Benefits.
- **Appeals:** TODD reported that all submitted appeals were heard and adjudicated.

- **Bylaw & Policy:** ROBERTS reported that BPC met and reviewed ongoing projects for Bylaw 10 on board stipends. They have a forthcoming consultation with the Stipend Review Committee next month to help finalize their work.
- **Events:** CENTENO reported that summer event planning is going well. Puzzle party, planting and painting all went well. The clothing swap today brought in a tonne of donations. The pub crawl this Friday still has a ~15 tickets available and CENTENO encourages folks to come out for those events, as well as calling for more sober volunteers. Also coming up in May are Mother's Day crafts, hiking in PKOLS, a trip to Artcade as well as a trip to Belfry Theatre.
- **Finance:** TODD reported that Finance Committee met and briefly discussed investments in GICs. TODD will present her research on Vancity's GIC policies in a future finance meeting.
- **Stipend Review:** FARR reported that Stipend Review Committee met and reviewed the March board reports. FARR trained the new board on how to fill out their monthly reports with the recently finalized new report template and guidance. SRC is also working on rescheduling their meetings for the summer.
- **Electoral Officer:** FIELDER has adjudicated a complaint from the 2026 Spring Referendum. We will be presenting all elections reports and EO reports at the May GRC meeting.

DROZDETCKII asked to make a report in-camera. TURNER noted that the in-camera policy doesn't apply to GRC, but the board. TURNER recognized that GRC met without the board present in December, however the reason this occurred is because neither TURNER nor TANVEER were there to advise on policy at the December GRC meeting, but there is not an "in-camera" section of GRC meetings. While GRC oversees the board, they do so through monthly reports and the Conduct Committee. Additionally, the Spring 2026 Referendum is not yet finalized, and discussion of the complaint, conduct of board or staff, etc. has the potential to bias the entirety of the pool of the Electoral Appeals Committee. TURNER, FARR, REMPEL, and THIESSEN debated how to approach the lack of policy supporting DROZDETCKII's request. REMPEL noted that there may not have been a shared understanding of the GRC summer meeting schedule, and also called for the meeting to go on break to reduce tensions in the room.

#### GRC STANDING COMMITTEES – APPOINTMENTS 5:30

If anyone wishes to change committees, please raise your hand.

*MOTION: to appoint 2025-26 GRC reps to the GRC Standing Committees as follows:  
 Bylaw and Policy: Rosemary WEBB, Anna-Elaine REMPEL  
 M/S: FARR/RAY  
 CARRIED*

#### OPEN DIALOGUE AND REPORTS 5:35

LEAD: ROBERTS

Open dialogue was replaced with a discussion regarding policies and procedures for GRC meetings and the timing of the Electoral Officer Report presentation to GRC.

WEBB reported that sessional positions were not appropriately posted so that grad students could apply. They noted that a faculty member has advocated for improvements!

BREAK – 5 MINUTES –5:55 PM

## MEETING NEW BUSINESS

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### 1. CALLING THE ELECTORAL APPEALS COMMITTEE 6:15

Lead: ROBERTS

Reference doc: Electoral Appeals Committee Terms of Reference

Per the Electoral Appeals Committee Terms of Reference, the Committee shall consist of the Electoral Officer and two full society members as selected by the GRC. The selected members cannot be (or have been in the most recent election/referendum) a candidate for the board or a referendum campaign member. In light of a recent decision by the Electoral Officer, which was published last Friday, we are seeking to establish an Electoral Appeals Committee now.

The GSS Board will present the final results of the Spring 2026 referendum and all required Electoral Officer Reports at the May GRC meeting. Until the appeals period for the current EO's decisions ends (on Friday, May 1), the results of the referendum cannot be deemed finalized.

*Motion: to elect the following members to the Electoral Appeals Committee:*

*Melody K...*

*Tatiana Popov*

*Moved/seconded: WEBB/REMPEL*

*CARRIED*

### 2. GRC SEATS: SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF HEALTH AND "FACULTY OF HEALTH" 6:00

Lead: ROBERTS

For: Decision

*Motion: Recognizing that the Social Dimensions of Health academic unit was granted a seat on GRC at the June 2025 GRC meeting in compliance with existing policies and procedures;*

*Further recognizing that UVic has ceased listing "Social Dimensions of Health" as an academic unit on their registration system after the June 2025 GRC meeting;*

*Further recognizing that the Social Dimensions of Health GRC reps were duly elected in Fall 2025;*

*RESOLVED to maintain a GRC seat for the Social Dimensions of Health program until August 31, 2026.*

*Moved: FARR Seconded: BACKHAUS*

*CARRIED*

*Motion: Recognizing that only academic units accepting graduate students as announced by UVic in summer 2025 were granted a seat on GRC for September 2025-August 22026;*

*Further recognizing that 30 graduate students have been coded on UVic registration system, Viewcat, as being registered only to the "Faculty of Health" without a department recognized by GRC at the June 2025 meeting;*

*RESOLVED to create a GRC seat for students who are registered only in the Faculty of Health until August 31, 2026.*

*Moved: WEBB Seconded: POPOVA*

*CARRIED*

*Motion: to recommend to the 2026-27 Graduate Representative Council that seats for the Social Dimensions of Health program and Faculty of Health "academic unit" be included on the 2026-27 UVic Departments Eligible for a GRC Seat list.*

*Moved: FARR Seconded: POPOVA*

*CARRIED*

### 3. BUILDING TEMPERATURE SAFETY CAMPAIGN 6:15

Lead: Sophie CULOS

Reference:

For: Discussion

Sophie CULOS has done amazing work gathering data that has already compelled UVic to take action to reduce temperature safety related issues in lab buildings. However, they are graduating in August (congrats!) and needs to find several advocates to continue their work. This has been discussed at Advocacy and Campaigns Committee but we want to make sure we are giving this campaign every resource we can to support and continue Sophie's successes.

CULOS presented the history of their advocacy work, including taking issues to the Martlet, which prompted UVic Campus Planning and Health and Safety Committees across campus to connect with them, and further advocacy to control high temperatures in some campus buildings. CULOS reported that window coatings are expected by the end of Summer on some buildings that should reduce the immediate crisis once installed for the spaces in which they are installed. CULOS noted that they are seeking a grad student to take up their work in holding UVic accountable and continuing their great work.

MARRUGAT said this issue fits well within the mandate of Advocacy and Campaigns, particularly through a working group. MARRUGAT is also interested in climate resilience and tips for working in extreme heat/extreme heat safety protocols. FARR is interested in joining the working group and including undergrads in our advocacy work. DROZDETCKII noted that their lab students in Cornett face similar issues. REMPEL asked if any information had been collected for Residence buildings. Numerous members noted that the lack of climate resiliency at the "#1 University in Canada for Climate Action" is not in line with UVic's stated strategic goals.

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### STANDING ITEMS 6:35 PM

#### APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (APPENDIX A) 6:35

*MOTION: to approve the Minutes of the February 24, 2026 GRC meeting approved with minor corrections as provided.*

M/S: FARR/REMPEL  
 CARRIED

EXECUTIVE BOARD STIPEND REPORTS – QUESTIONS ARISING AND MOTION TO ACCEPT – 6:40

LEAD: LEITE

REF DOCS: [2025-26 Board Reports](#)

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

*MOTION: to approve the February and March board reports as presented.*

*M/S: Stipend Review Committee / RAY*

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:

LEITE mentioned

Senate Committee on Libraries - Update (March 25th)

The main point relevant to Graduate Students was a call to participate in and implement ORCID identifiers across university (faculty and grad students).

University librarians have been working on ORCID adoption across campus for the past three years and they are now offering workshops to help faculty and grad students set up their ORCID profile and make the most out of its platform/features. As one example, ORCID profiles can now be used for some grant applications.

What does this mean for the Grad Student Reps (all of us in GRC)?

Please reach out and coordinate with your department’s librarian to arrange a session for the grad students in your department. The ideal venue would be an existing seminar course, with the instructor's permission to dedicate one class to this workshop. If your department does not have/offer a seminar course, then you can work out an alternative solution directly with your department’s librarian.

- Faculty of Graduate Studies Council:
- Previously appointed committees:

Committee	Appointment Date	Rep Name
Senate Committee on Libraries		Bernardo Leite

Reps are encouraged to submit short written reports to [gssgov@uvic.ca](mailto:gssgov@uvic.ca) for inclusion in the minutes.

FARR reported that UVic's academic integrity policies is under review. A major issue has been the right from UVic to use AI checkers on student assignments.

MARRUGAT reported that the UVic Senate Committee on Awards is reviewing the enrolment criteria on some awards, particularly for undergrad enrolment in specific courses within specific academic units.

ROBERTS reported FGS is also considering part-time enrolment for graduate students policies this year.

ROBERTS reported that the Presidential Hiring Committee has made hiring recommendations to the Board of Governors.

CIESLIK reported that FGS discussed the Federal "Look West" program that would allow UVic to offer training programs to naval officers as the navy expands locally, as well as other professional programs to take advantage of Federal budget. REMPEL asked for further information on the Look West policy.

#### 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: Dean of Education Appointment Committee  
Member: Sonam Dema (took on role in February after GRC)*

*Committee: Fine Arts Dean Re-appointment Committee  
Member: Koby Springsteen (took on role in February after GRC)*

*Committee: Anti-Violence Project Committee  
Member: Geneva Mason (took on role in February after GRC)*

*M/S: RAY/REMPEL  
CARRIED*

#### REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT/ADVOCACY/PARTICIPATION 6:55

LEAD: ROBERTS

WEBB reported that their CARSA locker renewal needed to be approved by CARSA management due to the gender marker on their student accounts at UVic. They are taking this issue up with CARSA directly, but MARRUGAT will also present this matter through the Access to Inclusive Recreation committee.

A student discussed significant supervisory abuse issues. TURNER showed GRC reps where to find the contact information for the Faculty of Graduate Studies Associate Deans, who are responsible for confidential consultations with any graduate students. TURNER clarified that the Associate Deans operate at arms length, i.e. they are not permitted to oversee the faculty in which they teach. The FGS is the most appropriate venue to report these concerns. TURNER can also provide individual case management for students and provided her business cards for the impacted student.

NOTICES OF AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING (APPENDIX C)

LEAD: ROBERTS

IMPORTANT DATE REMINDERS:

LEAD: ROBERTS

Next GRC Meeting: May 26, 2026

- Please have any potential agenda items, with supporting materials, to the Executive Board for consideration, in advance of May 12, 2026
- Agenda to be posted: May 19, 2026

Next General Membership Meeting: GSS Semi-Annual General Meeting! March 24, 2026

- Agenda to be posted: March 10, 2026

Office, Staff Scheduling Notes:

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: to adjourn the meeting at 6:48pm.

M/S: FARR/POPOVA

CARRIED

*Roberts*

Sarah Roberts  
Chair

*KT*

Kyla Turner  
Exec. Director