

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Executive Board
(HYBRID) MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 16, 2026

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

EXECUTIVE INVITED:

Violet CIESLIK, Chair;
Hannah BROWN Director of Internal/University Relations;
Eleanore TODD, Director of Finance;
Victor MARRUGAT, Director of External Relations;
Manuel CENTENO DUQUE, Director of Student Life;
Kyla TURNER, Executive Director (non-voting);

STANDING ITEMS PART 1

A. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 11:41 by CIESLIK.

B. TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Territory Acknowledgement offered by MARRUGAT. He recently gave his territorial acknowledgement during his TA work that reflected on the sites of powerlines across the region. The power production sites were often close to Indigenous communities, while the consumption sites are primarily urban areas, demonstrating the ongoing colonial impacts of resource extraction and development.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: to approve the agenda as presented.
M/S: CENTENO/MARRUGAT
CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

1. AGM REPORTS AND OTHER PREP

Lead: TURNER/CIESLIK
Reference: [Report Template](#), [Link to Prior Reports](#)
For: Discussion

TURNER to provide an overview of the AGM reports. All board members draft reports on their GRC committee(s). Violet ALSO drafts a report from the board as a whole, presents the annual plan (maybe delegate that), and presents any bylaw amendments. Eleanore ALSO reports the results of the audit. The audit is the only item with a later due date, October 19. TURNER drafts a report on services and a report on membership/representation on UVic committees.

Any questions regarding drafting and submitting a report on your committee(s) work in the next month?

TASK Reminder: All board members to draft their committee or other AGM reports and submit to Kyla and Irfy by October 12.

Board to approve AGM agenda at Sept 28 board meeting.

TASK: MARRUGAT to set up Side Project Café space for the AGM on October 27 (set up starting at 3:30-4pm)

CENTENO to assist Irfan with member check in (ensuring all voters are current grad students, noting down all attendees for the minutes, ensuring agendas are circulated in the meeting, assisting any student with an accessibility need)

CENTENO/BROWN to be “on-deck” during AGM for tech support with projector, laptops, etc.

2. MEDIA RELATIONS TRAINING – SCHEDULING

Lead: TURNER

Reference: <https://bright.uvic.ca/d2l/le/discovery/view/course/438930>

For: Discussion

UVIC has opened a BrightSpace Course to all board members for media relations training. From UVic’s Simone Blais: “There is an online Brightspace course that provides a good overview for media relations – it’s geared towards researchers but the principles still apply – and we could have a follow-up session with you to run through some practice scenarios and answer any questions you may have.... The UVic Media Training program is in 2 parts:

- Part 1: Complete the self-paced course on Brightspace. This covers the fundamentals of working with the media, developing key messages and anticipating questions. As Jennifer mentioned, anyone with a netlink ID can self-enroll.
- Part 2: Interview rehearsal workshop, where we connect in-person or virtually to test each other with potential questions. It’s best when there is a use-case or example that folks can practice.”

Part 1 was assigned as a task on Sept 2. Topics submitted to Simone Blais for part 2 were:

The GSS board are specifically preparing for media engagements about the state of funding across the post-secondary sector. Some key points for their media “pitch” include:

- the Province has repeatedly received expert advice that post secondary is underfunded but refused to act. The sector sustainability review lead by Don Avison in 2025 (and the 2022 funding review by Don Wright) were never released and swept under the rug despite indicating a desperate need for a new funding model.
- While the Province delays action, the post secondary sector is weakening through program, faculty, and staffing cuts. The GSS is working with the BC Federation of Students on their Cuts Suck! Fix Education campaign.
 - The Cuts Suck campaign has collated information about cuts from across the sector. However, the data is not... thoroughly reviewed. As an example, they have listed UVic’s Biochemistry and Microbiology programs as being cut, but of course those programs have been renamed molecular life sciences. Any advice on working alongside a campaign where there are some “false positives” in their screening of impacts? We don’t want to undermine other student organizations.

Last thing Kyla needs is to book part 2. Availability will depend on the board’s preferred delivery mode:

- In-person session: I could come to campus on a Monday for an in-person session, potential dates Sept. 28, Oct. 5 or Oct. 19. In terms of time, I'd recommend 1.5 hours and I could accommodate whatever works best for the board.
- Virtual via Teams/Zoom: Monday afternoons, Tuesday afternoons, Wednesday mornings, Friday mornings. Times are somewhat flexible; again, approximately 1.5 hours.

TASK: TURNER to book Media Relations Training in-person on September 28.

3. THIRD PARTY ELECTIONS ADVERTISING

Lead: TURNER

Reference:

For: Discussion/Decision

Municipal elections: The GSS is a registered third party advertiser for the local elections happening on October 17. All materials produced by the GSS MUST contain a highly visible note reading "*Authorized by, University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society, registered sponsor under LECFA, (250) 472-5163*" All campaign materials need to come down on October 16 (yes, I do mean running around campus tearing down posters). We must not accept money, goods, services, etc. in order to advertise for elections. Per our own bylaws, we may not endorse, support, or oppose any political party or candidate. We may educate our members and spread awareness of voting rights, encourage active participation in elections, so long as we do so in an impartial manner, without political bias or favour towards any candidate/party.

We are ONLY registered for the local elections. Any other election activities (by-elections, etc.) require separate registration.

4. DEBATE PLANNING CHECK IN

Lead: MARRUGAT

For: Discussion

The UVSS is hosting a municipal debate on Oct 6. The UVSS will manage the debate and the Martlet provides a moderator.

Victor to provide an overview of current plans. MARRUGAT is currently working on gathering information about what questions to ask that are relevant to grad students. He suggested a suggestion box. CIESLIK and MARRUGAT could set up an online form to gather further questions ahead of Sept 29. CENTENO wanted advertisement through our socials and bulletin to direct people to come to the GSS to drop off suggestions.

TASK: MARRUGAT to create a survey and poster for collecting student feedback for questions to ask during the municipal debate.

5. POLICY AMENDMENTS

Lead: CIESLIK

Reference: Policy 7 amendment.docx, Policy 45 amendment.docx, GSSBPC Tracking Elections Complaint Form Draft.docx

For: Decision

Motion: to approve the amendments to Policy 7 (Executive Board Elections and Referenda), 45 (Elections Committee), and approve new Election Complaint Form.

M/S: TODD/BROWN

CARRIED

TASK: CIESLIK to provide final copy of policies 7 and 45 and the new elections compliant form to the Governance Coordinator for inclusion in the Policy Manual.

STANDING ITEMS PART 2

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: to approve the minutes from the September 2, 2026 Executive Board Meeting as presented.

M/S: TODD/MARRUGAT

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: CIESLIK to review BPC training slidedecks and, if this training is desired this Fall, send feedback/requests for edits to TURNER by September 8 and book TURNER to provide training.

TODD to review Appeals training slidedecks and send feedback/requests for edits to TURNER by September 8. TODD to review Finance 101 training slide deck and, if desired, book TURNER to provide said training to Finance Committee.

BROWN and MARRUGAT to review Advocacy 101 and Advocacy letter writing slidedecks and determine if they wish to host this training for Advocacy and Campaigns Committee this Fall, if so, booked TURNER to provide said training.

CENTENO to review GRC training slidedecks and send feedback/requests for edits to TURNER by September 8.

TASK: TODD and CIESLIK to meet with Vancity on September 9th, 4:00 PM (Appointment already made). The topic of this meeting will include an initiation of the investment process as described in the motion.

TASK: TURNER to provide a review of the AGM report templates at the September 16 board meeting.

Tasks revoked or abandoned:

F. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

No committee appointments made.

G. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED (APPENDIX C)

Item 1: UPASS Contract Renewal Request from UVSS (Violet, Victor and Kyla to report on the results of the Sept 4 meeting)

Motion: to receive the correspondence.

M/S: TODD/MARRUGAT

CARRIED

H. AGENDA PLANNING, OR MEETING DEBRIEF

Reference: Meeting Debrief Template

1. Meeting debrief: Operational Relations – Sept 16. How'd it go?
 - i. Questions arose re: CAL accommodations for research. BROWN clarified process. TURNER gave a brief history of the change to the accommodation policy and the attendant procedures, which are still under development with FGS.
2. Meeting agenda planning: None.

I. LOBBYING REPORTS

Reports due at the first meeting of every month.

J. ANNUAL PLAN CHECK-IN

CLOSING ITEMS

EXECUTIVE INFORMAL DISCUSSION/UPDATES/QUESTIONS

Chair: CIESLIK attended FGS Executive. There is a question about the duration of time between program start date and the creation of a complete supervision committee.

Director of Finance: TODD went to Vancity and invested in GICs and got fantastic rates. We took some odd terms to take advantage of current Vancity offerings. TODD has also communicated with a grad student about forming a grad student department association for Molecular Life Sciences.

Director of Internal/University Relations: BROWN has been very busy with orientations and EGRS planning. We've received more judges for EGRS. The Accessibility Committee will meet before the next board meeting. A key agenda item will be accessible accommodations in student residences.

Director of External Relations: MARRUGAT updated on the Cuts Suck campaign. There will be a representative from BCFS to table next Wednesday. CENTENO has worked out the logistics with Petri. BCFS has Lobbying Week coming up shortly and we should aim to provide the signed postcards to BCFS in October and consider a second tabling event. SFU-GSS met with head of staff for the Ministry and they indicated that the review may be released in the Fall. There is a letter from SFU-GSS and UBC-GSS that can be produced shortly after the release.

Director of Student Life: CENTENO DUQUE is also busy with orientation and tabling. There was a lack of clarity about who was facilitating the ICS-GSS board game night as we only had one volunteer and the ICS volunteers were primarily playing games rather than assisting with actual event logistics.

MARRUGAT noted that in his role as an ICS volunteer the instructions provided are often simply “make everyone feel welcome.” CENTENO will be delegating the review of EGRS applications to another Event Committee member. Pub crawl is coming up this weekend.

Executive Director: TURNER is sick.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS, AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETING

September 22 GRC:

- Board introductions
- Quick review of GRC agenda norms during approval of agenda (five minutes)
- Welcome to GRC (five minutes)
- Training (20 minutes)
- Vote on establishing seats for French, Linguistics, Social Dimensions of Health, Faculty of Health
- Vote on Democratic Rules of Order
- Brief advertisement for EGRS
- Brief verbal overview of committees
- Committee placements – GRC
- Committee placements – UVic

September 28 board meeting (early due to stat)

- Approve AGM agenda (must be approved and posted by Oct 13, we’ll approve reports, etc. Oct 14)
- Likely check in on Health and Dental Referendum Planning?
- Heads Up: Kyla’s Annual Performance Review Forthcoming

October 14 Board Meeting:

- Vote to approve all motions on AGM agenda (since we won’t have reports or audit when we approve the agenda)
- Confirm in-meeting AGM tasks
- Introduce ED Performance Review, review templates, assign deadlines
- EGRS Check In – Support Needs

October 20 GRC:

- GRC Rep Introductions!
- Committee placements – late comers and those who want to swap committees
- Welcome to FGS by Robin Hicks
- (Often a special funding topic selected by Robin)
- Democratic Rules of Order Training

October 27 AGM:

- Present Audit and Re-Appointment of Auditors
- Present Annual Plan
- Present GRC Committee Reports, Board Report, ED Report, Health and Dental Report
- Bylaw Amendments

October 28 Board Meeting:

- Go in-camera to review board/staff feedback for Kyla’s performance review?
- Any actual new topics or ongoing advocacy campaigns!

November 25:

- Go in-camera to review results of Kyla’s performance review?

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND IMPORTANT DATES

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

Next Executive Meetings: September 2, 2026

Next GRC Meeting: September 22, 2026

AGM: October 27, 2026

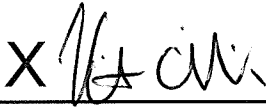
Office, Staff Scheduling:

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: to adjourn the meeting.

M/S: TODD/MARRUGAT

CARRIED

X 

Violet CIESLIK
GSS Interim Chair 2026-27

X 

Kyla Turner
GSS Executive Director

APPENDIX C – CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Item 1 UPASS Contract Renewal Request from UVSS

From: Dale Robertson - UVSS General Manager <uvssgm@uvss.ca>

Sent: Friday, August 21, 2026 10:00 PM

To: Kyla Turner <kylaturner@uvic.ca>

Subject: Transit contract discussion

Hope you are doing well and are ready for September.

Sounds like a date is yet to be confirmed but our Director at Large that is interested in updating the contract is trying to set-up a meeting with your Director of Outreach and was not sure if you were in the loop.

Once a date/time is confirmed I will let you know but just wanted to give you a heads-up that they are continuing to push.

Have a great weekend!

Dale

