

University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Executive Board

(HYBRID) MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 28, 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 10:00 by CIESLIK.

(Congrats on reaching the halfway mark in your board terms y'all!)

B. TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CIESLIK offered a territory acknowledge and issued this invitation: Please consider coming out to the South Island Powwow in Royal Athletic Park on National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Full event schedule [available here](#).

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: to approve the agenda as presented.

M/S: CENTENO/BROWN

CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

1. AGM AGENDA APPROVAL

Lead: CIESLIK

Reference: 2026-10-27 AGM Agenda

For: Decision

Motion: to approve the 2026-10-27 AGM agenda with minor amendments noted.

M/S: BROWN/CENTENO

CARRIED

Reminder: please upload your reports to Teams by October 12. (Congrats Manuel for being the first board member to submit. Well done!)

We will vote on the motions that the board is moving (i.e. approving minutes, audited statements, auditor re-appointment, reports) at the next board meeting once reports and audit are finished.

2. FGS POLICY DISCUSSIONS RE COMMITTEE FORMATION

Lead: CIESLIK

For: Discussion

CIESLIK gave an overview of the issue: at the last FGS Council meeting, Dean Hicks brought forward a possible procedural change that would require all PhD students to form their full committees within a year of entry to the program (i.e. 12 months).

CIESLIK's concerns are around time of completion and scope drift with new committee members, particularly in line of FGS's insistence that students could still change their committees after the 12 month deadline. TURNER noted that this is also a potential difficulty for students whose PhD program starts with a year of coursework and those admitted directly to a PhD who are completing their master's degree prior to initiating a PhD. BROWN flagged students registered with CAL, who may need additional time to complete coursework. TODD noted that Phys&Astro students sign up for a specific research project when initiating a program. Despite this, there is a lot of confusion about forming committees within her department and timelines.

An FGS concern flagged was that non-STEM programs don't require a supervisor to start a program and there is an assumption that the lack of supervision at the start of program is directly resulting in programs running long. BROWN recommended committee formation before candidacy exams. CENTENO asked after committee meeting norms outside STEM.

TURNER recommended committee meetings are synchronous, verbally delivered to ensure that the entire committee shares an understanding of scope and what has been asked of the student.

3. GRC QUESTION RE: RESEARCH TOOLS

Lead: CIESLIK

Reference: <https://www.uvic.ca/systems/researchcomputing/about-us/index.php>

For: Discussion

A GRC member raised a question about IBM SPSS. I can see two ways of bringing this back to GRC - we can start with a "consultation" (i.e. ask GRC reps to outline their current issues with research computing services so we get a sense of what exactly is lacking and which departments are facing the greatest challenge). Alternatively, I can reach out the Research Computing Services at UVic and ask them to come in to give us an introduction to their services and leave time for a Q&A. What is the board's preference?

CENTENO asked if it is a licensing issue. TURNER confirmed it was. TURNER recommended looking at this issue systemically – tackle research tools more generally. BROWN recommended pushing for UVic to expand their research tools to align with their stated goal of being a research focused university. CENTENO offered to bring in Research Computing to Wednesday Coffee to information share with grad students. MARRUGAT said he needed more information on the scope of issue to know how to bring this forward. TODD noted that in her department that some tools are not available for research. Wyatt MADDOX outside this meeting also noted that grad students do not have access all tools (Digital Research Alliance) off-campus.

Decision: Bring the issue of research tools and research computing to GRC. Ask GRC reps to ask their constituents about their research tool needs and access to data off campus (noting that further information will likely come in during the November GRC). Then bring the issue (with full scope well documented) to UVic Research Computing.

4. PROVINCIAL ELECTION AND MUNICIPAL DEBATE (ALL ELECTIONS UPDATE!)

Lead: TURNER

For: Discussion

- Do we register as a third-party advertiser for the provincial election as well? We can still use our social media and bulletin to put out a message to “get out the vote” without registering.
- Updates for municipal debate planning – how is it going?

Re: Snap provincial election: MARRUGAT and BROWN noted there is some voter burn out already noted between the municipal and provincial elections scheduled one week apart.

Decision: Do not register as a third-party advertiser for the provincial election. Circulate only how-to-vote information on unpaid platforms.

Re: Municipal debate – **TASK: MARRUGAT to reach out the Martlet with any questions submitted to the survey for municipal election all-candidate debate.**

5. FRYER REPLACEMENT

Lead: TURNER/TODD

Reference: Final fryer quote

For: Decision

Motion: to allot an addition \$2000 from the Capital Fund to the replacement of the Grad House fryers.

M/S: MARRUGAT/CENTENO

CARRIED

6. ED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW FORTHCOMING

Lead: TURNER

Reference:

For: Information

Kyla’s anniversary of hire is Nov 9. The GSS offers performance reviews around anniversaries of hire. In October, Eleanore and Violet will be leading Kyla’s annual performance review. All board members will be asked to submit feedback through a review template. Violet and Eleanore will gather feedback from board, staff and Kyla and anonymize/collate it. The board will need to go in camera without the ED present generally twice: once to review the final collated staff/board/self-assessment feedback received and reach board solidarity around the feedback to verbally deliver to Kyla and what goals to set for her seventh year of service. After this in-camera session, Eleanore and Violet meet with Kyla to deliver her review. There is always a discussion in this process and the goals for the next year may change. After the review is delivered to Kyla (i.e. in a meeting), the board goes in-camera without Kyla again to briefly discuss the results of that meeting and any changes that arose in goals during that conversation.

Suggested timeline: Discussion in an open board session on October 14 – Kyla to bring in templates, overview process and duties, set tasks and deadlines, etc.

Oct 14-28: Violet and Eleanore seek feedback from board and staff

Maybe Oct 28 if all feedback submitted otherwise November 25 (no board meeting Nov 11 due to stat):

In-camera session to review feedback and reach board solidarity on what to present to Kyla

Oct 28-Nov 25: Eleanore and Violet meet with Kyla to deliver feedback

November 25: In-camera session to review the results of Kyla's performance review

(Alternative timeline: Oct 15-Nov 18 seek feedback, Nov 18-25: Violet and Eleanore collate feedback, Nov 25, in-camera session 1. Nov 26-Dec 8 meet with Kyla for the review itself, Dec 9, in-camera session 2)

STANDING ITEMS PART 2

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: to approve the minutes from the September 16, 2026 Executive Board Meeting with minor amendments

M/S: CENTENO/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:

TASK: TURNER to correspond with Dale Robertson about joint training in media and government relations for the UVSS and GSS boards in May or later.

TURNER to book media relations training with UVSS and UVic (circulate whentomeet in advance)

TASK: TURNER to have the annual plan posted online.

Board to approve AGM agenda at Sept 28 board meeting.

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

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

TASKS: BROWN to share media contacts for the BC-FS Cuts Suck campaign.

TASK: BROWN to correspond with USEC asking for immediate inclusion in any policy review committees re: At-Risk Policy.

TASK: BROWN to propose a joint event with SSD for a disability in post-secondary conference in March to the Events Committee. CENTENO to correspond with the event planner with SSD (Bella Jacobs is the correct staff member) for more details on the same.

TASK: BROWN to respond to the announcement of another commercial housing venture.

MARRUGAT and CENTENO follow up with the BC-FS on the Cuts Suck campaign.

CIESLIK to check in with UBC on grad funding re: PSI review

MARRUGAT to check in with D. External with UBC AMS, UBC-O GSA, and SFU GSS regarding PSI release and advocacy.

Tasks revoked or abandoned:

TURNER to reach out to Sunner's office to request a mid-October meeting date.

F. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

No committee to make

G. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Item 1:

No correspondence to receive.

Kyla's suggested TASKS:

Item 1:

H. AGENDA PLANNING, OR MEETING DEBRIEF

Reference: Meeting Debrief Template

1. Meeting debrief: GRC
 - i. What do we need to re-iterate or clarify in the next meeting to support GRC rep onboarding?
 - ii. Kyla requesting feedback – what can I cut from training?
 1. **TASK: Board to review GRC training ppt and provide feedback to TURNER for what could be cut.**
2. Meeting agenda planning: Exec-to-Exec on November 2 (Kim requested the agenda items by **Oct 13** due to staffing limits in Jimmy D's office in October/November)
 - i. Suggested items:
 - ii. Welcome new UVic president –
 1. GSS invites Dr. Rhonda McEwan to attend Wednesday Coffee or another formal GSS meet and greet? What are your top goals for your first five year term as the new UVic President?
 - iii. Present Annual Plan (overlapping reps between Op Rel and Exec-to-Exec are Robin and Jim)
 1. Focus on external campaigns and urge the University to resolve bargaining with CUPE 4163.

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 - ED annual review is forthcoming. BPC first meeting is Oct 8 and will provide training and introduce ongoing projects.

Director of Finance: TODD - Operational Oversight committee meeting will be next week for training. The audit draft has been delivered and she will review it with the auditors tomorrow along with Neil and Kyla.

Director of Internal/University Relations: BROWN will be circulating the A&C agenda soon. They also raised a department culture issue within Bio around ableism.

Director of External Relations: MARRUGAT working on elections, BC transit (there's now a whatsapp group for the student societies and a rep from the drivers' union).

Director of Student Life: CENTENO DUQUE pub crawl was well-attended and sold out early. Welcome Back BBQ only sold out on the day-of, but we expanded how many tickets were available in the last few years. Orientation went well this year. EGRS planning is underway and CENTENO will record tasks for future years planning progress. CIESLIK asked for a schedule of events to sign up for volunteer sign up. CENTENO confirmed that will be circulated later once confirmed.

Executive Director: TURNER reminder that Neil will be out of office Oct 12-16.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS, AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETING

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
- Update from FGS re: supervision policy

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)

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: October 14, 2026

Next GRC Meeting: October 20, 2026

AGM: October 27, 2026

Office, Staff Scheduling: Neil out of office Oct 12-16.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: to adjourn the meeting at 11:27.

M/S: BROWN/TODD

CARRIED

X 

Violet CIESLIK
GSS Interim Chair 2026-27

X 

Kyla Turner
GSS Executive Director

