UVIC GRADUATE STUDENTS' SOCIETY

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, October 27, 2026, 5 pm – 7 pm

Food provided (Dinner, member verification and registration 4:30-4:55 pm)

Location: Halpern Centre (GSS Building) or Zoom

Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

Executive Board Attending:

Chair: Violet Cieslik (she/her)

Director of Internal/University Relations: Hannah Brown (they/them)

Director of Finance: Eleanore Todd (she/her)

Director of Student Life: Manuel Centeno Duque (he/him)

Director of External Relations: Victor Marrugat Arnal (he/him)

Executive Director (non-voting): Kyla Turner (she or they)

Elected Academic Unit Reps Attending (one vote per member):

Anthropology: **Alex Campbell & Matt Johnson**	Earth & Ocean Science: **Kristyn Lang**	Medical Sciences/Neuroscience**: Frances Armas**
Art History and Visual Studies: **Sarah Roberts**	English: **Megan Sundberg**	Physics & Astronomy: **Laura Dufort-Gagnon**
School of Molecular Life Sciences: **Jonah Ma & Silas Porter Crenna**	Environmental Studies**: Justine Keefer & Spenser Morouney**	Political Science: **Olivia Labelle**
Biology: **Emily Jewett**	Greek and Roman Studies: **Emma Bolzonello**	Psychology**: Sammi Wong**
Chemistry: **Annabel Flint & Brianna Olynyk**	History: **Moira Dann**	Public Administration: **Aaron Levy & Kaysha Lee**
Computer Science: **Reia Drucker**	Languages, Linguistics and Cultures: **Rosemary Webb**	Social Dimensions of Health: **Olivia Connor**
Curriculum & Instruction: **Stephanie Puddister**	Law: **Olivia Fonseca Maraston**	Sociology: **Jasmine Padam**

Recorder (non-voting): Irfan Tanveer, Governance Coordinator (he/him)

Society Members (voting): Lewis Wilson, Public Admin; Wyatt Maddox, Geography; Bernardo Leite, Mechanical Engineering; Rebekah Stuive, English; Olivia Druxerman, English; Maggie Berube, Physics and Astronomy; Keona Gingras, SLLC;

Guests (non-voting): Ali Versi, Alumo representative

~ Emergency preparedness: In the event a major power or technology failure disrupts the October 27 meeting, the SAGM will be reconvened on October 28 at 5 pm.

DRAFT

Chair: Violet Cieslik

5:00 1. Call to order – Violet Cieslik, Chair

CIESLIK called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

5:05 2. Land acknowledgement

Territorial acknowledgement offered by CIESLIK.

5:07 3. AGM Quorum Report – Kyla Turner, Executive Director

At 5:05pm, TURNER reported that the meeting was quorate with at least 25 voting members present.

5:08 4. Approval of the agenda

Motion: to approve the Agenda of the October 27, 2026 GSS Annual General Meeting as presented.
Moved: Executive Board Seconded: DRUCKER
CARRIED

5:10 5. Approval of Minutes
REF DOC: 2026-03-24 Semi-Annual General Meeting Minutes

Motion: to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2026 GSS Semi-Annual General Meeting as presented.
Moved: Executive Board Seconded: WEBB
CARRIED

5:15 6. Presentation of the 2025-26 Audit – Eleanore Todd, Director of Finance
REF DOC: 2025-26 GSS Audited Financial Statements

Motion: to approve the 2025-26 Audited Financial Statements as presented.
Moved: Executive Board Seconded: DRUCKER

Discussion:

TODD presented the audit, beginning with definitions of terms, the reason we receive annual audits (as required by the Society's Act), and the standards by which the auditors assess the Society. The auditors found that accounting principles have been consistently applied and presented a clean audit.

TODD reviewed the statement of revenues and expenses in some detail. She noted that we had a deficit of approximately 2.5% of the annual budget, or $63K. Variances from previous years include: switching services to Alumo, increased restaurant sales (which required more staffing to make and serve the food), board turn over, reduced need for repairs, etc.

DRAFT

~ Emergency preparedness: In the event a major power or technology failure disrupts the October 27 meeting, the SAGM will be reconvened on October 28 at 5 pm.

Questions: None.

CARRIED

5:35 7. Re-Appointment of the Auditors

Motion: to appoint Clarke Trowsdale LLP as the 2025-26 financial auditors.
Moved: Executive Board Seconded: CONNOR

Discussion:

DANN asked how it was to deal with Clarke Trowsdale. TODD noted their patience and the depth of understanding. Aaron asked how long we've been working with the same accountants. TURNER noted that our bookkeeper changed over in 2022-23 while our auditors have been long-standing partners for the GSS. Aaron further asked about best practices with seeking a new quotes for auditors every five years. TURNER noted that the GSS is "an odd beast" financially being a member-based non-profit with major revenues only come in four times per year, a subsidized social enterprise etc. It took about 2 years to fully onboard our bookkeepers to the GSS finances, which indicates it would be an extensive process to get a new auditor onboarded to the organization. Additionally, we have sought feedback from the new bookkeepers The benefit of our longstanding relationship with Clark Trowsdale is that they understand our business in detail and make specific, actionable recommendations for improvements to our financial policies and practices.

CARRIED

DRUCKER, LEITE abstained and WILSON opposed.

5:40 Break

5:45 8. Presentation of the 2026-27 Annual Plan – Hannah BROWN, Director of Internal/University Relations

REF DOC: 2026-27 GSS Annual Plan

5:55 9. Reports to the Membership

a. Report of the 2025-26 Executive Board
b. Membership and representation report
c. Report of the Executive Director
d. Reports of GRC Standing Committees
    i. Advocacy and Campaigns – Victor MARRUGAT, Director of External Relations
    ii. Appeals – Hannah BROWN, Director of Internal/University Relations
    iii. Bylaw and Policy – Violet CIESLIK, Chair
    iv. Events – Manuel CENTENO DUQUE, Director of Student Life
    v. Finance – Eleanore TODD, Director of Finance

DRAFT

Motion: to approve the 2026-27 reports to membership as presented.
Moved: ROBERTS Seconded: LEITE

Discussion:

BERUBE asked why the investments were made at Vancity. TODD and TURNER clarified that we bank with Vancity, they offer excellent GIC rates, and strong ethical investment policies and practices.

CIESLIK, BROWN, and CENTENO DUQUE noted ongoing advocacy work to the Province in light of the recent election.

CARRIED

6:15 10. Extended health & dental insurance update – Ali Versi, Alumo Representative

There were significant audio issues throughout Alumo's presentation. The presentation will be made available after the AGM meeting for all members on the GSS website: gss.uvic.ca/agm.

VERSI gave an overview of the Alumo rebrand (previously called StudentCare), as well as the how the plan works, the rationale of a group plan. VERSI gave an overview of the rates of coverage and noted that the UVic GSS offers some of the most comprehensive and extensive coverage for student plans across Canada.

VERSI noted the provider network savings options, opt in/out deadlines, and lastly cost. He gave some definitions for financial terms and then went over the financials for our plan for the last year as well as the need to increase fees for the next academic year due to high rates of claims.

BROWN asked about the per-person costs and the amount we pay over claims. VERSI responded that 5-7% for inflation, plus administrative expenses, gender affirmation care and the student assistance plan. BROWN asked after a pre-authorized debit agreement for paying premiums. VERSI stated that tuition payments requirements are set by the school. TURNER and BROWN clarified that they were asking if Alumo would implement a pre-authorized debit agreement. VERSI offered to bring this to Alumo's attention.

VERSI was called away due to a flight and his presentation ended.

TODD advertised the pre-referendum survey on our health and dental benefits.

6:35 11. Bylaw Amendments (Appendix A below)

Motion: to approve the amendments to the GSS bylaws as presented.
Moved: Executive Board/Bylaw and Policy Committee Seconded: MA
Discussion:

CIESLIK gave a verbal overview of the rationale for all bylaw amendments.

BERUBE asked why the word “appeal” was removed. TURNER clarified that complaints will now be reviewed by the Elections Committee and decisions will be final.

CARRIED

6:50 12. Other Business (with notice of agenda item) and announcements

7:00 13. Adjournment

Motion: to adjourned the meeting at 7:01pm.
Moved: LEITE Seconded: DANN

DRAFT

~ Emergency preparedness: In the event a major power or technology failure disrupts the October 27 meeting, the SAGM will be reconvened on October 28 at 5 pm.

Appendix A: Bylaw amendments

Note: Additions to the existing bylaws are in **bold**. Deletions are struck through (~~like so~~). Numbering changes, where required are in **bold**.

Bylaw 4: Elections and Referenda

4.1 The Electoral Officer shall:

a. Be appointed by membership at the ~~Semi-~~Annual General Meeting ~~for a term of office from April 1 to March 30 the following year~~. **The term of office shall be from November 1 to October 31 the following year;**

b. Not be a nominee for any elected office of the Society nor be a current voting member of the Executive Board nor be a registered member of any referendum side;

c. Be responsible for the operation of all elections, by-elections and referenda according to the Bylaws of the Society ~~and ensure the integrity of Grad Council elections~~;

d. Oversee implementation of electronic voting platforms;

e. Notify all candidates/**referendum sides** of the Schedule of Elections **and Referenda**; and

f. Work with the **Elections** ~~Electoral Appeals~~ Committee.

4.2 Electoral Officer Vacancy:

a. Should the office of Electoral Officer become vacant, a replacement **Interim Electoral Officer** shall be elected at the next Grad Council meeting or General Meeting who shall hold office for the remainder of the former Electoral Officer's term.

4.3 The **Elections** ~~Electoral Appeals~~ Committee:

a. The committee shall consist of **five (5)** ~~three (3)~~ Society full members, **four (4) Society full** general members appointed by Grad Council, **and the Electoral Officer**.

b. Members of the Committee cannot be a nominee for election to the Executive Board or be a registered member of any referendum side.

c. Annual appointments shall occur in **the Graduate Representative Council Meeting following the Annual General Meeting** September or October and committee members shall not be a nominee for any elected office nor be a registered member of

~ Emergency preparedness: In the event a major power or technology failure disrupts the October 27 meeting, the SAGM will be reconvened on October 28 at 5 pm.

DRAFT

any referendum side. Grad Council may make interim appointments to ensure that the committee has **five (5)** ~~three (3)~~ full members of the Society.

d. Committee members may be removed only by Special Resolution by Grad Council.

e. The committee shall be responsible for reviewing any and all **complaints** ~~appeals~~ regarding the integrity and fairness of elections and referenda. If necessary, it may require any reasonable remedy to rectify the situation, including the ultimate remedies of disqualifying a candidate/referendum side or requiring new elections/referendum.

f. **The final deadline to submit complaints** ~~Appeals must be filed~~ **is** seven (7) **calendar** days after the release of preliminary results.

g. The committee's decisions shall be final, **in writing and made available on one or more of the Society's public-facing platforms within two (2) business days of the decision.** ~~be in writing and final.~~

4.4 Referenda:

a. Referenda shall be initiated by:

   i. a resolution of the Executive Board; or

   ii. a resolution passed by two-thirds (2/3) of Grad Council; or

   iii. a petition signed by at least ten percent (10%) of the full members of the Society.

b. Referenda questions shall be phrased by the Executive Board. However, where a referendum is initiated by petition, the phrasing shall not alter the original intent of the petition.

   i. Where a referendum question creates or revises a membership fee, the text of the referendum question shall include whether or not the fee shall increase by the Consumer Price Index annually.

   ii. ii. Where a referendum on GSS fees would necessitate alterations of bylaw 14.3 Membership Fees, the revised bylaw text shall be presented in the referendum.

c. Where the referendum is initiated by the Executive Board, the Graduate Representative Council will be notified within 48 hours of the Executive Board Meeting.

4.5 Procedure for Elections and Referenda:

~ Emergency preparedness: In the event a major power or technology failure disrupts the October 27 meeting, the SAGM will be reconvened on October 28 at 5 pm.

DRAFT

a. Elections shall be scheduled every year in February or March. Referenda shall normally be held concurrent with scheduled elections.

b. Elections and referenda shall be conducted by secret ballot**;** using the plurality system **(i.e., the largest number of votes)**.

c. Quorum for referenda shall be five percent (5%) of the full membership.

4.6 Notice of Elections and Referenda:

a. At least twenty-one (21) days' notice of an election and/or a referendum shall be given to members, specifying the schedule of elections and referenda.

b. At minimum, notice shall consist of:

i. A highly noticeable advertisement in one or more forms of independent campus media if their publication schedule permits;

ii. A poster-format notice sent to each academic unit;

iii. An electronic message sent to every eligible member; and

iv. Notice to all Grad Reps.

4.7 Schedule of Elections and Referenda:

a. Election Nomination Period

i. Nominations shall open at least fourteen (14) days prior to an election and be open for at least seven (7) days.

ii. Nominations shall close at least seven (7) days prior to an election.

b. **Referenda Registration Period**

i. **Registration for referendum sides shall open at least fourteen (14) days prior to an election and be open for at least seven (7) days.**

c. Campaign Period

i. Campaigns shall open when the nomination**/referendum registration** period ends.

d. Polling Period

~ Emergency preparedness: In the event a major power or technology failure disrupts the October 27 meeting, the SAGM will be reconvened on October 28 at 5 pm.

DRAFT

i. Polling shall begin no less than twenty-one (21) days after notice of an election**/referendum** has been given.

ii. Polling must take place over at least two (2) business days.

e. Counting of Ballots

i. The counting of ballots must take place within one (1) business day after the close of polls.

4.8 Election Nominations and Referendum Sides:

a. Nominees must be full members of the Society. The Electoral Officer cannot stand for election during their term of office. Members of the **Elections** ~~Electoral Appeals~~ Committee and the Stipend Review Committee cannot stand for election during the term of the Graduate Representative Council in which they were appointed.

b. Nominations must be signed by the nominee, and ten nominators, who must be members of the Society.

c. Nominations must be returned to the Electoral Officer no later than the close of nominations.

d. People wishing to campaign for a referendum side must register with the Electoral Officer prior to beginning to campaign for that referendum side.

4.9 Voting and Ballots:

a. Both physical and electronic ballots shall contain the name of the nominees, the positions that they are nominated for, and a place to register a vote. Voting by electronic means will be permitted.

b. Referenda ballots shall contain the question to be decided and provision for the member to record their vote.

c. Voting by proxy is not permitted.

d. The candidate or referendum side that receives **a plurality of votes (i.e**., the largest number of votes**) shall be declared elected or deemed passed.**

e. Candidates or referendum sides may select a scrutineer to attend the counting of ballots for all voting platforms where this is permitted.

a.10 Preliminary Election and Referendum Results

~ Emergency preparedness: In the event a major power or technology failure disrupts the October 27 meeting, the SAGM will be reconvened on October 28 at 5 pm.

DRAFT

a. Preliminary results shall be posted on one or more of the Society's public-facing media platforms and made available to the membership electronically within two (2) business days of the close of polling**.**

b. Official results shall be posted on one or more of the Society's public-facing media platforms and made available to the membership electronically upon the disposition of any **complaints** ~~appeals~~ **or after the closing of the complaint period.**

4.11 Acclamations:

a. When a nominee runs unopposed, the acclamation shall be approved through an ordinary resolution of Grad Council or a General Meeting.

b. In the event of a tie vote, the Electoral Officer shall call for a runoff vote during the same meeting, until such time that plurality is reached.

4.12 In the event that no nomination is received for an Executive Board position during the electoral nomination procedures as outlined in Bylaws 4.1 through 4.10, the following elections procedures will be followed:

a. The Electoral Officer will issue a call for candidates for any Executive Board positions for which there is no nominee. The call for candidates will be issued via electronic message to all members of the Society and a poster-format notice sent to each academic unit stipulating the process as outlined in Bylaw 4.**12**~~1~~.b.

b. Candidates can nominate themselves at the Semi-Annual General Meeting or submit a written statement of candidacy to the Electoral Officer at least one day prior to the Semi-Annual General Meeting.

c. If a position is contested, all Society **full** members present at the meeting will vote by secret ballot to decide the winner. **In the event of a tie vote, the Electoral Officer shall call for a runoff vote during the same meeting, until such time that plurality is reached.**

d. If the position is not contested, all Society full members present will vote by secret ballot to acclaim the candidate. **In the event of a tie vote, the Electoral Officer shall call for a runoff vote during the same meeting, until such time that plurality is reached.**

e. Bylaw 4.1**2**~~1~~ shall only be enacted in cases where one (1) weeks' notice can be provided before the Semi-Annual General Meeting.

~ Emergency preparedness: In the event a major power or technology failure disrupts the October 27 meeting, the SAGM will be reconvened on October 28 at 5 pm.

DRAFT