University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Executive Board

(HYBRID) MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 28, 2026

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

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

REGRETS: Eleanore TODD, Director of Finance;

STANDING ITEMS PART 1

A. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 11:02 by CIESLIK.

B. TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Territory acknowledgment offered by CIESLIK. CIESLIK was recently in Lhtako Dene in what is colonially referred to as Quesnel. She spoke about her outreach and engagement with the Lhtako nation.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

NEW BUSINESS

1. CHECK IN ON EGRS PLANNING AND SUPPORT NEEDS

Lead: CENTENO, BROWN
Reference: Volunteer sign up: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/16v-4DMGyU-DmM-fhp1Fq2XR2XdZHSakBBy52YMBbvwA/edit?gid=454227851#gid=454227851
For: Discussion

CENTENO reviewed the current volunteer needs for EGRS. He is still looking for:
Set up on Tuesday evening, moving furniture (3 openings) – Violet, Victor
Chairing the sessions in the board room on Wednesday (2 openings) –
Moving furniture on Wednesday evening (3 openings) – Violet,
Chairing the sessions in the board room on Thursday (1 opening) - Violet
Closing remarks (1 opening) –

CENTENO gave an overview of the schedule for the two days, starting with opening remarks with the new UVic President. On Wednesday, there will be concurrent posters and presentations. On Thursdays, there will be presentations, FGS funding session and a social event.

BROWN updated on their work with arranging judges. We should have sufficient judges. BROWN has developed and delivered the judging template to GSS staff for printing.

2. DATA ACCESSIBILITY FOR GRAD STUDENTS

Lead: CIESLIK
For: Discussion

From GRC draft minutes: "Last meeting, a GRC rep mentioned that they lack access to IBM SPSS. Are there other datasets/research tools that grad students are lacking access on? Where are the "pain points" for research computing?

Discussion: BRUBACHER – remote access is a theme for using UVic tools off-campus as there is currently only temporary access available. Also losing access as grad students move between being staff (TA, especially) and student roles at the university. Other system to note: Chrome River.

WEBB – Adobe Acrobat to create properly formatted pdfs.

FLINT – seconded the Adobe Acrobat issue, as a Mac user.

DRUCKER noted the wide range of open-source alternatives available. CENTENO noted that we can gather the full scope of issues, we can bring in resources from across campus, such as the Libraries' open source workshop.

BROWN uses STATA statistical analysis tool, but it was only available on some campus computers."

CIESLIK asked if the board wanted to bring in the Library to give GRC information about open-source alternatives or if we want to have a further discussion with GRC and ask the GRC reps to consult with their members.

CENTENO followed up with DRUCKER to investigate some of the open-source alternatives. For the open-source PDF editor software, the alternative is less user friendly and doesn't have identical functions to Adobe. CENTENO recommended adding data access, analysis, etc. information to forthcoming Library presentations open to all GSS members. He noted that it would be more effective to host workshops open to all GSS members.

MARRUGAT noted that some labs use propriety software and/or have exceptionally strong preferences to use software that the faculty are comfortable with. Some labs are not funding access to software for grad students – CIESLIK noted Chrome River is only available to faculty. MARRUGAT recommended addressing the advocacy issue here of granting grad students better access to software, data analysis tools, etc.

CIESLIK was in favour of having library workshops open to all grad students and not just GRC, simultaneously asking GRC reps to do more consultations with their colleagues to document the scope of the issue to be presented to UVic (Jim Dunsdon?) to ask for improved access. CENTENO asked if we could partner with FGS to ask for faculty to provide more training to grad students on open-source resources. BROWN pivoted the UVic official to target this campaign to the Vice President Research and Innovation

and to connect with the Faculty Association regarding engaging faculty in increasing open-source resource uptake.

TASK: CIESLIK create a survey/Microsoft form regarding data management/analysis tools and other software access issues to circulate to GRC reps to send to their constituents. On November 4, CIESLIK to circulate survey through GRC listserv with instructions and deadlines for seeking feedback of Nov 18. BROWN to create a report based on survey results.

TASK: BROWN to bring the data access survey results to VP Research and Innovation upon completion of the report by December 9.

TASK: CENTENO to connect with the Library (Digital Scholarship Commons) to run their open-source/data management and analysis workshops at the GSS for grad students.

TASK: CIESLIK to meet with FGS Dean to request that the supervision policy include a statement on open-access resources and data management tools available to their supervisees.

3. IN CAMERA SESSION - LABOUR

Lead: CIESLIK
Reference:
For: Discussion

Motion: to go in-camera at 11:42 to review feedback submitted for the Executive Director annual performance review.
M/S:
CARRIED

Reminders: in-camera sessions are minuted separately. No motions may be passed in-camera (there shouldn't be a motion to my knowledge this year. Next year's board gets to do salary negotiations with me and will need to motion to approve a new contract). All in-camera minutes should be submitted EXCLUSIVELY to Irfy upon their approval. He has access to board meeting minutes where Kyla's performance is discussed so that they stay confidential from Kyla.

Meeting went out of camera at 12:12.

STANDING ITEMS PART 2

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: to approve the minutes from the October 14, 2026 Executive Board Meeting as presented.
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 Reminder: All board members to draft their committee or other AGM reports and submit to Kyla and Irfy by October 12.

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.

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.

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.

TASKS: All board members to complete their relevant ED performance review by October 22. To be reviewed at the October 28 board meeting in-camera.

TASK: Include EGRS volunteer check in on next board meeting.

Item 1: All board members to review the updated equity action plan at their leisure.
Item 2: Manuel and Hannah are on top of the EGRS invite. Can we check availability for Feb 22 and Kyla will respond to confirm the date.

Tasks revoked or abandoned:

F. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

No committee appointments made.

G. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Item 1:

No correspondence received.

Kyla's suggested TASKS:
Item 1:

H. AGENDA PLANNING, OR MEETING DEBRIEF

Reference: Meeting Debrief Template

1. Meeting agenda planning! (We don't have another board meeting before this!): **Nov 18 Operational Relations**
    i. Reminders of last Ops. Rel. Meeting agenda:
        1. Accommodation support presentation from CAL
        2. Planned power outage – notice to GSS

3. Annual Plan Presentation
4. Building Heat Campaign

ii. New agenda items:

1. Requesting partnership with UVic on two Provincial advocacy campaigns: one regarding the re-starting of the UVic grad dorm building and another on Provincial Funding for the sector. Requesting that the Don Avison review to be published. Requesting representatives from Government Relations attend meeting.
2. Seeking updates on accessibility – Where are we in the process of developing and finalizing the policies for accessibility and accommodations for grad students
3. Seeking updates on FGS supervision policy - Where are we in the process of developing and finalizing the policies for accessibility and accommodations for grad students

2. Meeting agenda planning! (We don't have another board meeting before this!): **Nov 24 GRC**

i. Agenda item: Building heat consult with UVic – confirmed
ii. Agenda item: Data survey – preliminary results of survey
iii. Agenda item: Debrief EGRS during committee reports

3. Meeting agenda planning: Strategy planning for Nov 2 Exec to Exec
4. Meeting debrief: October 20 GRC
   i. Busy but went well!
5. Meeting debrief: Oct 27 AGM
   i. Our parts went great! Alumo's presentation was difficulty to hear, poorly focused, and went significantly over time.

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 reported on a recent meeting with Robin Hicks re: the supervision policy updates.

Motion: to call a board meeting on Tuesday, November 10, 10-11:30.
M/S: CENTENO/MARRUGAT
CARRIED

Director of Finance: TODD no report.

Director of Internal/University Relations: BROWN asked if TURNER had an update from Security re: Safe Walk. TURNER reached out to Jen Cawsey, Personal Safety Lead, and is expecting to hear back next week.

Director of External Relations: MARRUGAT reported he is meeting with a Saanich councillor soon. Transit advocacy is ongoing.

Director of Student Life: CENTENO DUQUE is in EGRS prep and planning mode. He and MARRUGAT are still meeting with BCFS on the CutsSuck campaign.

Executive Director: TURNER is getting ready to switch to budget preparation work. She will be out of office Monday morning.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS, AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETING

November 10:

Go in-camera to review results of Kyla's performance review

Check in on board after we've gotten through the heaviest work period of the year!

November 25:

Go in-camera again: Labour

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND IMPORTANT DATES

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

Next Executive Meetings: November 25, 2026

Next GRC Meeting: November 24, 2026

SAGM: March 23, 2027

Office, Staff Scheduling: Grad House closed

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: to adjourn the meeting at 12:35.
M/S: BROWN/CENTENO
CARRIED

X

Violet CIESLIK
GSS Interim Chair 2026-27

X

Kyla Turner
GSS Executive Director