University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society

Executive Board

(HYBRID) MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 13, 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 8:37am by CIESLIK

B. TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Territory acknowledgement offered by CIESLIK.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

D. EXECUTIVE INFORMAL DISCUSSION/UPDATES/QUESTIONS

Chair: CIESLIK mostly busy with Management Hiring Committee (MHC) that is meeting weekly. BPC met yesterday and started going through the Electoral Officer's job description and establishing it as new policy. TURNER is prepping information briefing notes for BPC for stipends and board leaves of absence.

Director of Finance: TODD since the AGM, we've successfully completed the audit presentation and now there are many more projects for Finance. These include MHC, the ED performance review, the budget preparations and setting up for the consultations, and referendum prep. Finance Committee is working on the latter to review questions in December. TURNER noted that Jacqui Rutherford, Finance and Benefits, is working on a few additional referendum questions about the assessment criteria for health and dental insurance, the differential fee rates for co-op students, and Operating fee.

Director of Internal/University Relations: BROWN is looping back into the add/drop date discussion, Safe Walk program, research software report, and letter writing in Advocacy and Campaigns.

Director of External Relations: MARRUGAT A&C met yesterday for the letter writing workshop BROWN mentioned. A&C will produce welcome letters for mayors, Minister for Post-Secondary, and

thank you letters for IRCC and federal Minister of Industry. He is meeting with BC Transit today to advocate for a voting seat on the VRTC for students. The provincial GSS group is struggling a bit with communication and looking to formalize the group. TURNER noted that we cannot federate unless our bylaw regulations are met and that MARRUGAT should look into GSSBC as it included SFU, UBC, UNBC, and UVic GSSes but ran into the same issues with communication and continuity.

Director of Student Life: CENTENO DUQUE is working on GSAW planning, which will be the second week of January (11-14), so we have a bit of time to advertise in the new semester before we launch into the event series. CENTENO connected events committee members with BCFS to do some reels with BCFS and GSS might need to approve the reels before they are posted.

GSAW schedule: Monday Morning Coffee Jan 11

Scarf knitting, Jan 11

Skating, Jan 12

Pancake Breakfast, Jan 13

Board games and brownies, Jan 13

AI in Grad School library workshop, Jan 14

Pub crawl, Jan 15

CIESLIK noted that the referendum prep Town Hall is coming up and she is advertising it across the Grad Secretary listserv.

Executive Director: TURNER is preparing the budget, as well as working with Jacqui on the overall fee structure and areas that could improve revenue, including health and dental fee assessment criteria (TURNER recommends changing criteria to "students in any on-campus courses" to align that assessment with the UPASS), ending the special co-op fee rate, and increasing the Operating Fee by up to $5. Additionally, outside referenda, the Grad House may need to raise prices over summer.

NEW BUSINESS

1. EGRS DEBRIEF

Lead: Everybody!
For: Discussion
It went great! How did everyone feel about it?

Everything went well! The social was a little under-attended, but CENTENO will report on recommendations for improvement for his successor. BROWN noted judging went well, there was one last minute cancellation that was filled by staff and one no-show, but judging still met all our expectations. MARRUGAT noted that people seemed happy. CIESLIK surveyed staff, who agreed that it was well-run and less stress than prior years.

2. FEDERAL LEVEL ADVOCACY – ERASMUS AND HORIZON

Lead: CIESLIK/MARRUGAT
Reference: Erasmus Info, Horizon Europe Info

For: Discussion
The federal government is moving Canada towards more cooperation with the EU, including two international student programs listed above. How can the GSS capitalize on this political movement to support our members?

In Exec-to-Exec, UVic President Rhonda McEwen noted that she is focusing on federal level advocacy to capitalize on the current political movement that Prime Minister Carney is leading to bring Canada closer to the EU. There are two student freedom of movement/study/research programs, Erasmus and Horizon, that could bring in more funding and graduate students to UVic. CIESLIK wants to write to the Feds to advocate for these programs. MARRUGAT noted that writing a letter to the Minister of Industry is on the list of letters that A&C is prepping.

TURNER noted that the letter should focus on the unique research opportunities that happen at UVic (Pacific coastal research, environmental research, observatories, CISUR, plant research centre, etc.) to encourage the money to come to UVic specifically. CENTENO preferred a collaborative approach, but still noted that we should make the uniqueness of UVic should still be noted while still taking a All-BC approach. BROWN wanted to send the board letter first to ensure timeliness.

TASK: By next board meeting, all board members look up current UVic collaborations with EU, and the unique research opportunities for Vancouver Island, and include this information in the letter to the Minister of Industry.

3. IN CAMERA SESSION - LABOUR

Lead: CIESLIK AND TODD
Reference:
For: Discussion

Motion: to go in-camera at 9:19 to discuss labour.
M/S: MARRUGAT/CENTENO
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.

STANDING ITEMS PART 2

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: to approve the minutes from the October 28, 2026 Executive Board Meeting as presented.
M/S: CENTENO/MARRUGAT
CARRIED

F. 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: 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: 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.

Tasks revoked or abandoned:

G. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

No committee appointments made

H. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED (APPENDIX C) 9:45

Item 1: Giving Tuesday
Item 2: UVic Ice Rink closure

I. AGENDA PLANNING, OR MEETING DEBRIEF 9:50

Reference: Meeting Debrief Template

1. Meeting debrief: Exec-to-Exec Nov 2
    i. Went well! CENTENO noted we should use the framework for letters to the Feds (we see you, we thank you) that Dr. McEwen recommended.
2. Meeting agenda planning:

J. LOBBYING REPORTS 9:58

Reports due at the first meeting of every month.

K. ANNUAL PLAN CHECK-IN: 9:58

CLOSING ITEMS

NOTICE OF MOTIONS, AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETING

Confirm Jan-March board meeting schedule
Go in-camera one last time - 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, then December 15, 2026

AGM: March 23, 2027

Office, Staff Scheduling:

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: to adjourn the meeting at 9:57.
M/S:
CARRIED

X

Violet CIESLIK
GSS Interim Chair 2026-27

X

Kyla Turner
GSS Executive Director

APPENDIX C – CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Item 1 Giving Tuesday
From: Cortney Baldwin <cortneybaldwin@uvic.ca>
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2026 10:57 AM
To: Neil Barney <nob@uvic.ca>
Subject: The sprinkles are coming: UVic Giving Tuesday
Hi Neil,

I hope you're doing well and enjoying the fall semester!

I'm reaching out because **Giving Tuesday is coming up on Tuesday, December 1**, and we're excited to once again bring the sprinkles back to campus in celebration of this global day of giving. As a former member of the GRC, I thought the GSS would be into the idea of supporting an initiative like Giving Tuesday, and wanted to run it by you

At UVic, Giving Tuesday is about more than fundraising. It's an opportunity to engage students, faculty, staff, alum, and community members in a shared conversation about generosity, community, and the impact that giving can have on the student experience. Every gift made on Giving Tuesday supports students and programs across campus, while helping raise awareness of the many ways our community comes together to create opportunities for current and future students.

Given the important role the Grad House plays in student life, we'd love to partner with you to help spread the word. Specifically, we're wondering if you would be willing to:

- Display Giving Tuesday tent cards in your space during the week leading up to Giving Tuesday and on the day itself.
- Share one or two Giving Tuesday posts on your social media channels to help encourage participation and build excitement.

We'll provide all of the materials and social media content, making participation as easy as possible.

We know students care deeply about supporting one another, and your partnership helps us connect Giving Tuesday directly to the student experience while encouraging a culture of community and philanthropy at UVic.

Thank you for considering this request. We'd be grateful for your support and are happy to answer any questions.

Thanks oodles,
Cortney
Cortney Baldwin (she/they)
Annual Giving Officer, Campus Community
University of Victoria T: 250-472-4498

As a settler and uninvited visitor to these lands, I express my gratitude and respect to the lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ nations whose rights, title and relationship with the land continue to this day.

Item 2: UVic Ice Rink closure
From: Jim Dunsdon - AVP Student Affairs <jdunsdon@uvic.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2026 4:00 PM
To: Dale Robertson - UVSS General Manager <uvssgm@uvss.ca>; Kyla Turner <kylaturner@uvic.ca>
Subject: Update on the Ian Stewart Ice Rink

HI to both.
I'm writing to provide an important update about the ice rink at the Ian Stewart Complex.
In 2023, the university made the difficult decision to permanently close the rink, recognizing that given its age, the ongoing operational and capital costs were no longer sustainable. UVic took deliberate steps to extend the lifespan of the facility, first committing to maintain operations through March 2026 to support the rink users to transition to other facilities.
Following interim repairs completed in 2024, the university invested additional effort and resources to extend operations for a further year, reducing disruption and providing users with greater flexibility to plan their next steps.
Despite ongoing maintenance and repairs over the years, the ice rink has reached the end of its life span and will be closed, as scheduled, on March 31, 2027.
We recognize the challenges associated with this closure given the need for more ice surfaces in the region and potential impacts to student clubs who may use the rink.
In terms of next steps, the university is planning to enter an agreement with UVic Properties to transfer management of the site to them. Over the shorter term, UVic Properties will work to identify lease opportunities for the facility. Over the longer term, the university plans to redevelop the Ian Stewart Complex to create a new mixed-use University District.

We will keep you updated as more details become available and would use time at an Operational Relations meeting to do so.
Please pass this update along to your respective Executives and, if questions arise, don't hesitate to contact me directly.

Thanks,

Jim

Jim Dunsdon (*he/him/his)*
Associate Vice-President Student Affairs
Division of Student Affairs
Vice-President Academic and Provost
University of Victoria
250-721-8024
uvic.ca/studentaffairs
Together, we transform students' lives.

We acknowledge and respect the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Songhees and Xʷsepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.