



Biology Graduate Caucus Meeting Minutes
Friday January 26th, 2007, 3:30 pm

In attendance: Keith Tierney, Clea Moray, Nicole Tunbridge, Heather Major, Sarah Jamieson, Raul Ursic, Simon Goring, Marc Travers, Mike Silvergieter, Geoff Bradley, Theingi Aung, Suzanne Tank, Paul Mages, Erica Jeffery, Mel Hart, Rachel Mayberry, Oliver Love, Daniel Duan, Lina Perez.

1. Welcome

- Keith Tierney welcomes all. We have a guest with us this meeting, Agustin Cerani, the SFSS Faculty of Science rep.

2. Claim our meeting expenses

Motioned by Nicole Tunbridge, seconded by Clea Moray.	Carried
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3. Treasurer's report

- We have our \$1500 in trust, plus \$347 that we have made fundraising. We also got the \$400 that we got from the publisher for the grad directory and \$200 in the core account.

4. Social Coordinator's report

- The Grad Symposium is going to be held around the same day as last year. It's scheduled for Friday, March 16th. Every lab is encouraged to submit a funny poster introducing their members and their research. The posters will be once again judged by the department staff. More information will be sent out next week.
- Heather Major has volunteered to coordinate the posters, and Theingi has volunteered to take care of door prizes. We need some one to make some ad posters for the symposium closer to the date, as well as anyone with a smart serve who can bartend during the event. It's expected that the symposium will start at 4pm and might run around 5-6h max.
- The symposium is expected to take place in the SSB atrium again. This is because the space is large, free, available at the time we need it, and we can have our food there. Someone suggested the seminar room in the 7000 level, but last year there were seminars being held until 5pm.
- E-mails asking for volunteers to help with set-up and clean-up will be sent closer to the date. Harassing emails will begin being sent mid-February.
- The Christmas party was a huge success. Everyone seemed to have a good time. Great job everybody ☺.

5. News from other committees

i. Forum rep

- With regards to wrapping-up all of the SFSS problems that occurred last year, we should pass a motion of confidence in the current board as our concerns and issues that caused us to pass a motion of no confidence in the previous board have been resolved.

Whereas seven directors of the SFSS were impeached on October 25 and have been replaced with newly elected directors, and whereas the Board of Directors	
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<p>as currently constituted appears to be functioning in an effective and democratic manner, be it resolved that the Biology Graduate Caucus has confidence in the Simon Fraser Student Society Board of Directors. Motioned by Clea Moray, seconded by Simon Goring.</p>	<p>Carried</p>
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- A letter about the campaign to raise the minimum wage in British Columbia is being passed around. The Raise the Rates letter involves sending a letter to the premier by different organizations and people with titles. The TSSU as well as the SFSS have voted in favor of sending a letter. We as a caucus can also sign a letter and/or approach the department chair about sending one as well.
- Pro's:
 - As Vancouver residents and students in certain economic situations, we have a social responsibility to stand up for those who can't speak up.
 - It won't hurt and it's for a good cause.
- Con's:
 - Some doubts about the legitimacy of this letter.
 - Might not make a difference. Maybe it would be more effective if we sign this individually rather than as a group, especially since TSSU already has signed on.
 - Is it right to speak for all of the biology graduates?
- Discussion about whether we should approach the chair about this and how. If we do decide to sign the letter, Simon Goring has volunteered to approach the chair.

<p>Whereas the Biology Graduate Caucus is in agreement with the contents of the letter to Gordon Campbell that is being circulated by the "Raise the Rates" campaign, be it resolved that the Biology Graduate Caucus will sign the letter; And be it further resolved that the Biology Graduate Caucus, represented by Simon Goring, will ask the Biology Department Chair to consider signing the letter and ask other faculty for support. Motioned by Clea Moray, seconded by Simon Goring. 9 for the motion, 2 opposed, the rest abstained.</p>	<p>Carried</p>
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- Translink has stated that the Production Way Bus Loop will be closed starting the second week of February. Students will have to board the 145 at the corner of Lougheed, like before. The SFSS has requested Translink to come up with some other option. The bus loop is closing because the City of Burnaby has Okayed the building of a new office tower. Feel free to complain to the City of Burnaby about it. More 144's are going to be added, and the 135 might be turned into an express with 4 stops in Burnaby. The federal government has announced that you can get a tax-credit for bus passes effective July 1st 2006. Translink will be having an opened general meeting where you can bring all of your grievances in March. Might be important, since Translink may become privatized. An e-mail will be sent out closer to the date. A number of colleges are trying to get a new U-pass, making the U-pass holders UBC, SFU, and the colleges. This might make the price of the U-pass go up in 2008 around \$1-3. There will be ongoing negotiations between Translink and the SFSS. For more information, contact the External Relations Officer, Sasha Fox (ero@sfss.ca).
- The SFU President's open forum is on January 31st. If anyone wants to go, feel free.

- They are looking for a grad rep for the student's leaning commons articulation committee. You get to monitor, review, and create programs, however the position appears to be more of an overview position. If you are interested, please contact Clea (cmoray@sfu.ca).
 - If you see any porn recruiting posters (yes you read that), please take them down and bring to Clea.
 - Electoral committee elections are coming up. This committee is the one that oversees the SFSS elections. It is a lot of work during the election period, but not so much during the rest of the year. The nominations close next Wednesday, so if you are interested, contact the director.
 - There is an SFSS working group looking at assessing the costs and benefits of CFS membership. If you are interested in helping, contact Clea.
 - The SFU Vice-president of finance in meeting with forum about the SFU budget. Suzanne Tank will talk to the DGSC about what we can bring up, if anything. An apparent issue is more funding for travel awards. If you have any other suggestions, please talk to Suzanne or Jeff Joy.
 - A respond to the January 10th snow emergency closure has been posted up on the caucus website. Someone wondered if it would be possible for security e-mails of this nature to be sent to bisc-grads or bisc-info instead of just the employee list. It was suggested that someone e-mail Brain about this. Keith Tierney volunteered to do so.
- ii. GIC rep
- The grad health plan is expiring in August. The working group has decided to put it to tender instead of renewing it. If you have any feedback from this or other health plans that you have been a part of, please contact Raul (rursicbe@sfu.ca).
 - There is a GIC meeting this Monday. Raul will send an e-mail if something comes up.
- iii. DGSC rep
- Suzanne Tank took over from Suzanne Gray last week. She has not been to any meetings yet. She and Jeff Joy are our DGSC reps.
 - Suzanne Gray mentioned to Suzanne that they are in the process of reforming BISC 800. The DGSC has put together a subcommittee to work on the curriculum. If any one has any suggestions please contact Jeff (jbjoy@sfu.ca), Suzanne Tank (suzanne_tank@sfu.ca), or Suzanne Gray (smgray@sfu.ca).
- iv. Scholarship reps
- Nothing new to report. The committee is meeting to deliberate on the undergrad NSERC awards.
- v. TSSU rep
- The General Membership meeting is this Tuesday at 11:30am in room MBC2290. There is going to be a free lunch. The pink-sheets in the middle of the log-book can also be turned in for a chance to win \$125.
 - Paul also has a number of log-books available for use. A reminder to TA's and TM's that you keep track of your hours this semester to make sure that you don't go over your hours. You should also have or be in the process of filing up your time-use guideline sheets.
 - The log-books are also being in the process of being revamped, so that they can also be used by others as a general agenda.

- Coming up next month, the TSSU donations committee will be deciding on which charitable foundations to give one of 5 \$100 donations to. If you know of any reputable grass-roots environmental organization that you would like supported please contact Paul (pimages@sfu.ca).
- Paul is also planning on stepping down, because he will only be here for 2 more months, before heading of to the field. If anyone is interested in the position, please contact Paul. The position includes forwarding e-mails, and attending meetings. You get a stipend of \$100/semester and usually a free lunch at meetings. You can also join other committees that tend to meet once a month, and help to augment your stipend. It is a worthwhile commitment and Paul had a good time doing it. An e-mail will be circulated with more details and a vote will take place during the next caucus meeting.

vi. Faculty mole

- Issues that were brought up in the external review are being passed up onto the senate, especially the one on whether professors or the department should pay a grad's student's tuition. None of this will be happening soon, but the issue is out there now. Everyone should congratulate themselves for making a difference.
- On a different note, due to budget cuts of 2-5% for the next two years, the molecular toxicologist position had to be put on hold.

vii. Search committee reps

- Geoff reports that the search committee for the biological control position has had their first meeting. They have narrowed it down to 9 applicants for the biological control position from the original 40 that applied. They plan to have the short-list done by next Friday, and have them here for interviews in March. Because the position is for an endowed chair of biological control, the committee is looking for someone in their mid-career, like an upper assistant professor or associate professor. The department will be providing the successful applicant's salary for the first two years until they can generate their own, and lab and office space will be provided by the Dean's office. Once the short-list is made, Geoff will be able to pick up the candidate's CV's and he'll be able look at them and forward them to people.

6. Other business

- Dr. Stearns' visit:
 - Dr. Stearns is this year's caucus hosted seminar speaker. He has contacted us with his travel plans, and unfortunately won't be able to stay so long. He's taking the train from Seattle on Thursday morning and is heading back on Friday after the poster session. We are going to need money for 1 night in a hotel, 1 dinner, and 1 lunch. We decided to allot a maximum of \$500 this year for the visit.

Motion to spend \$500 on Dr. Stearns' visit by Clea Moray, seconded by Erica Jeffery.	Carried
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- Grad Symposium
 - Last year we spent \$200 on the symposium.

Motion to spend \$200 on the Grad poster symposium by Nicole Tunbridge, seconded by Daniel Duan.	Carried
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- Guest Agustin Cerani, SFSS Science Rep

- Let you know that February 7th is the National Day of Action. That day all universities and colleges rally to freeze tuition fees, thereby granting more people access to education. This is more important to us because we are behind in everything relating to funding grants and such when compared to other provinces. More information is available in the National Day of Action leaflets available around campus. If you are interested in taking part, everyone is gathering in the Convo Mall at 11:30am and then heading to the Art Gallery. It's an all day event, there will be students from different places as well as events and food.
- The science expo social is coming up on March 23rd, above the Raven's café in the Westmall. We can bring in our symposium posters as there will be a lot of undergrads present that might be looking for volunteer opportunities. There will be pizza.
- Last semester with all of the SFSS troubles, fewer events took place. Therefore, there is some money to available for events. We can do things like a social in the pub and such.
- If you are interested in healthy foods, there is a new program underway. All of healthy things to eat in SFSS owned establishments will have a little apple beside the product, certified by a dietician. He will bring up concerns about allergies, as well as maybe putting healthier things in vending machines (which might not happen since the vending machines are not owned by the SFSS). We requested that someone also look into providing more food options on Sundays as grad students often work on campus then.
- He thanks us for having him over.
- If anyone is looking for undergraduate volunteers, please send the request to Clea, and she'll send them to the Biology Student Union.

7. Adjournment and next meeting

- Next meeting will be next month.