



Biology Graduate Caucus Meeting Minutes

Friday March 23rd, 2007, 3:30 pm

In attendance: Erica Jeffery, Heather Major, Iain Jones, Suzanne Tank, Dawn Cooper, Rana Marab, Nicole Tunbridge, Lina Perez, Geoff Bradley, Dave Redding, Clea Moray, Theingi Aung.

1. Welcome

- Dawn Cooper welcomes all. Keith Tierney is sick and unable to make the meeting.

2. Treasurer's report

- Theingi Aung reports that we have \$1913 in our trust account, \$299 in cash, and \$328 in the core account, which has to be used before April 30th of this year. Some will be used to pay for expenses from the symposium.

3. Social Coordinator's report

- Nicole Tunbridge reports that the symposium was a success. We spent less than expected and came in at around \$1000 under budget (see attached report). Door prizes will be paid by the Dean of Science Office, and \$200 will be applied to the catering costs. The price list for the food was outdated and it was a bit more expensive than expected. There was also a \$97 gratuities fee that was not planned for. The SFSS had agreed to pay for the poster cost. Money to pay for gas mileage and poster-board rentals might be allocated from the money given to us by the department. We budgeted for around \$3850 and we spent \$2656 so far.
- Thanks to everyone who helped out at the symposium. It was a lot of fun. There have been some suggestions that next year we should add a science component and not spend too much on a party. This has been done in previous years and is done by other departments, however concern was expressed about the low turn out that these events bring. Suggestions were put out for maybe having each lab do a small 10-15 minute talk before the poster session. Someone mentioned that the annual retreat was for that, but someone else pointed out that not all labs in the department qualify to go on the retreat. An e-mail will be sent out in the future to see how many people would be interested in adding a more scientific component to the symposium.

5. News from other committees

i. Forum rep

- Clea Moray reports that the budget for September 2008 is about to be approved. One major change is that tuition will be increasing by 2%, which is the highest that it can be raised under new provincial guidelines.
- The school has also decided that starting next year students will be able to pay their tuition fees using credit cards. This service also brings along a 2% merchant fee that the school has to pay and has allocated \$570 000 of the budget for. The school has brought this service in response to student request, however the merchant fee in view of the recent budget cuts seems frivolous. The idea of paying via credit card sounds favorable until we learnt about the merchant's fee. Someone points out that there is an emergency fund in case you can't pay tuition on time. Someone else asks how the university can still find money for large

building projects while under budget, but someone points out those projects are funded by grants that have to be used for those kind of projects only.

<p>Motion by Clea Moray whereas credit card payment of tuition fees has been budgeted as a \$570 000 expense in the 2007-2008 university budget and whereas the university's difficult fiscal situation has required departments to reduce operating budgets and tuition fees to increase, be it resolved that the Biology Grad Caucus opposes the implementation of a credit card tuition payment option at this time. Seconded by Nicole Tunbridge.</p>	<p>Carried</p>
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- Something else that came up was that the school was planning on renting graduation gowns instead of re-using the school gowns and buying the graduation hats to give to the students. There is doubt that this will actually save money.

<p>Motion by Clea Moray whereas campus sustainability and waste reduction are important issues, be it resolved that the Biology Grad Caucus supports the continued use of reusable mortar board hats for graduation. Seconded by Nicole Tunbridge. Some abstains, none opposed, majority for.</p>	<p>Carried</p>
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- Translink now has changed from having elected directors to appointed board directors. How this may affect service is still unknown. However, we do know that Translink will not reduce bus services this summer as much as it has before.
- Election results are up and available online at www.sfss.ca/elections/iecindex.htm. All of the referendum questions have passed, but the question posed only to grad students may not have reached quorum. Someone mentioned that they only got 2 sheets when they went to vote as opposed to the 3 sheets required for grad students. The question voted on by grad students deals with the use of graduate fees. In practice, it is supposed to help make the transition into an independent grad society from the SFSS go smoothly. The services offered by the new grad society will be similar to those offered by the SFSS, so students should not notice a big difference.
- Clea gives notice that she will become the Grad Student At-Large on May 1st and will no longer be able to continue to be forum rep as of April 30th 2007. Therefore, any one interested is asked to see Keith or Clea. The Forum rep position represents the caucus at Forum, which is the link between the SFSS Board of Directors and the general membership. Forum meets once a month for around 2h and it pays \$30 a meeting.

ii. GIC rep

- Raul Ursic is absent, but Clea reports that she heard that the tendering process for the graduate health plan (which was put up for bidding again) is underway and going smoothly.

iii. DGSC rep

- Going on suggestions from the last meeting, Suzanne Tank looked into the options that we have getting our tuition automatically deducted from RA-ships. She found out that this is a dead issue, since the administration is not interested, but that the department itself does have the option of getting a lump sum payment at the beginning of the semester. Discussion shows that the lump sum payment

works just as well as the tuition being taken off your TA-ship. However, this has to be set up in advance. If you have any concerns, talk to Suzanne or Barb.

iv. Scholarship reps

- Erica Jeffery reminds everyone that the applications for the graduate fellowships are due on Monday April 16th, 2007. This year we have 41 awards to give out.
- An enquiry about where the money for the new international travel award comes from has been made, but we have no reply to date. The money for these awards comes from the Dean's Office who gets it from our application fees. This money has been used by the department for something else. Possible recipients have to be nominated by the department and enter a competition, therefore the two students nominated by the department this time may or may not get any money. The biology students may not get any of this money in the end.

v. Search committee reps

- Dawn Cooper reports that the microbiology position search is over. We had 3 candidates, 2 of which were not stellar. The other one (Julian Guttman) is now in negotiations with the department.
- Geoff Bradley reports that the search for the biological control candidate begins this Monday. The first two candidates will be here next week, and the last two the week after. The format will be similar to the microbiology search held earlier. There will be a chance to talk to each candidate on his or her first day during lunch, followed by a presentation in the afternoon. This is a chance to get a free lunch and a chance to get to know the candidates on something other than their research level. It is a chance to find out their philosophy and views on issues that affect graduate students, such as lab-size and funding. Geoff will also be giving a campus tour to the candidates if you would like to join him.

5. Other business

- There has been some talk about adding an extra day to PEEC, especially since it is being held at Bamfield this year. People might be interested in staying longer at Bamfield since there are a lot of things to see. There might be an e-mail asking for opinions closer to the event.
- Due to a clerical error, Brendan Connors was omitted from the Travel Awards list. He has now been put back on the B-list and is eligible for an SFSS Travel Award.
- Extra SFSS Travel Awards have been kindly donated by the Biology Student Union. Eligible recipients have been contacted and information has been sent out. Our thanks to the BSU for all of their help.
- The Science Expo is happening concurrently in the West Mall if anyone is interested in going.

6. Adjournment and next meeting

- Next meeting we will go over Steve Stearns' visit.

Motion to adjourn by Dawn Cooper, seconded by Suzanne Tank.	Carried
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Budget

10th Annual Department of Biological Sciences Graduate Research Symposium (2007)

Item

I. Food - SFSS Catering	Quantit y	Price/Unit	Projected Cost	Actual Cost	Funding Agent
Meat and Cheese Platter Tray	1	\$90,00	\$90,00	\$90,00	
Cheese Tray	1	\$36,00	\$36,00	\$36,00	
Sandwiches (Quartered)	40	\$5,25	\$210,00	\$262,50	
Fresh Fruit Tray (Serves 36)	2	\$50,00	\$100,00	\$50,00	
Fresh Vegetable Tray (Serves36)	3	\$45,50	\$136,50	\$136,50	
Dessert Bars (Halved)	50	\$1,45	\$72,50	\$72,50	
Gratuity				\$97,13	
GST			\$38,70	\$38,85	
Sub-total			\$683,70	\$783,48	SFSS-Core \$200.00 SFSS-Grant \$583.48
Snacks/ NonAlcoholic Beverages					
Chips/Dip			\$40,00	\$54,25	
Crackers			\$20,00	\$16,15	
Cookies			\$25,00	\$13,77	
Coffee/Tea			\$35,00	\$22,46	
Juice/Pop			\$30,00	\$15,63	
Sub-total			\$150,00	\$122,26	SFSS-Grant \$122.26
II. Alcohol					
300 Bottles Beer			\$550,00	\$558,52	
78 Bottles Cooler/Cider			\$150,00	\$180,46	
2 Bottles White Wine			\$20,00	\$26,18	
2 Bottles Red Wine			\$20,00	\$26,18	
Lisence			\$25,00	\$25,00	
Projected Drink Sub-total			\$765,00	\$816,34	BISC \$516.34 Dean GS \$300.00
III. Miscellaneous Supplies					
Napkins, Plates, Wine/Beer Glasses			\$100,00	\$26,42	BISC \$26.42
IV. Door Prizes			\$300,00	\$305,50	Dean Sc. \$305.5
V. Vehicle gas/mileage (Supply pick-up)			\$20,00		BISC
VI. Poster Subsidies			\$1,200,00	\$613,00	SFSS-Grant \$613.00
VII. Poster Board Rental (Fac. Man)			\$180,00		BISC
VIII. Miscellaneous			\$150,00	\$0,00	N/A
Grand Total			\$3,510,00	\$2,667,00	

Grant Agent	Funds Allocated	Funds Used
SFSS Core	\$200,00	\$200,00
SFSS Grant	\$1,950,00	\$1,318,74
BISC	\$1,200,00	\$542,76
Dean Science	\$500,00	\$305,50
Dean GS	\$300,00	\$300,00
Total	\$4,150,00	\$2,667,00