



## Biology Graduate Caucus

Friday February 29th, 2008, 3:30 pm

**In attendance:** Nicole Tunbridge, Samantha Franks, Lina Perez, Suzanne Tank, Andreas Steimel, Melanie Hart, Devin Arbuthnott, Nell Hamilton, Stephanie Green, Sean Magee

### 1. Welcome

- Nicole welcomes everyone to the meeting. We have a guest today, Sean Magee, who is here to talk about the upcoming BioBlitz.

### 2. Claim our meeting expenses.

Motion to claim \$50 for meeting expenses by Nicole Tunbridge, seconded by Sam Franks.

Carried

### 3. Sean Magee: BioBlitz

- In the 50's, Wilson did a BioBlitz at SFU to see how many species live on the mountain in 24h. Unfortunately, all of the data was lost except for the total number of species. There is talk of doing one this summer in late May. The Natural History of BC undergrads will be helping out. Sean is here to see if there is an interest, and if any one is interested in helping to organize the event from now until event. About 3-5 people are needed. No a lot of time is required for this position, only a few hours a week if planning starts soon. The group has to secure a space, develop protocols, and prepare materials. We are hoping to get everyone involved, doing even microinvertebrates. There will be a BBQ and drinks afterwards. The event will last 24h non-stop. You can volunteer to help set-up, or participate in the blitz. If you are interested, please contact Sean at smagee@sfu.ca.

### 4. Treasurer's report – Sam Franks

- We have \$521 in our core account and in petty cash, and \$1750 in trust.

Motion to use \$1800 for the graduate symposium by Nicole Tunbridge, seconded by Sam Franks.

Carried

### 5. Social Coordinator's report

- This position is open. If anyone is interested, please let Nicole know.
- This year the visit with the Grad hosted speaker coincides with the Symposium. Kay works on hyena behaviour, so if you are interested, go meet her. Kay's visit budget needs to be updated to \$1404. We need to pay for food plus a gift.

Motion to put aside \$400 for Kay's visit by Nicole Tunbridge, seconded by Sam Franks.

Carried

- The Symposium budget has been revised. We got \$1200 from the department, \$600 from the Dean of Science, and no donation from the Dean of Grad Studies. We can't afford to donate more money to PEEC, but this is okay because they got some last minute. We booked the SSB atrium once again for the symposium. Jerry Ericsson has volunteered to look after the catering, Devin Arbuthnott is looking after the liquor

license. Volunteers are needed to sell tickets in advance. Heather Major is taking care of posters, and needs them (via disk or e-mail) by the Tuesday before the symposium. Suzanne Tank is in charge of making the ads, Mel Hart will do tickets at the door, and Lina Perez will be in charge of door prizes. Sam Franks reminds everyone that she needs 24 h in advance if you require cash.

6. Other committees

i. GIC/ GSS rep – Andreas Steimel

- There is a referendum to see if the student society will remain a part of the CFS from March 18-20<sup>th</sup>. We need to vote because they require quorum for the vote to pass. There are rumors that the CFS is suing student unions that defederate. The GSS could be sued down the line if the SFSS does not defederate because we would have been grandfathered in. Visit [wewantout.ca](http://wewantout.ca) for more info.
- There will be a referendum March 10-13<sup>th</sup> to increase health benefits to a maximum of \$340 a year (roughly \$10 more per semester), but we would get more dental care. It will be for 1 year starting next September.
- GSS officer elections are occurring online.
- There was a discussion at the last meeting to see if the GSS should have its own building or be part of the possible new Student Union Center. During the discussion, the majority of the students thought that it's a better idea to be part of the new Center as opposed to building our own.

ii. DGSC rep – Suzanne Tank

- The DGSC met on Tuesday. A 1 credit pass or fail BISC 800 course got passed at the department meeting. The course will be similar to the one now, but with less assignments and more emphasis on writing and presentations.
- The DGSC is proposing to lower the number of required credits for a PhD from 15 credits to 12 credits for direct entries, and 12 credits to 8 credits if you have an MSc. Concern arose on whether the candidacy exam will be more rigorous, but this should not affect it because we still have more courses when compared to other universities.
- There is a proposal for a new course that will give credit for going to the departmental seminars. Consensus was that offering the course was a good idea, but that it should require some work, in addition to attending seminars, in order to be considered for credit, or be a 0 credit pass/fail course.

Motion to extend the meeting by 15 minutes by Nicole Tunbridge, seconded by Suzanne Tank.	Carried
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- The DGSC brought up doing student evaluations on grad courses, similar to how undergraduate courses are evaluated. There is concern that faculty might use grad courses as “coaster course”. However, because grad courses are small, there is fear of retribution. Possible solutions presented include holding the evaluation back a few years, or having an exit survey upon graduation.

iii. TSSU rep – Mel Hart

- The TSSU has money to give away to single parents. The bursaries are for \$400, and \$700 if the child has special needs, or if there is more than 1 child. Please apply.
- Elections will take place March 31<sup>st</sup>- April 1<sup>st</sup> for various officers, including chief steward and treasurer.

- Volunteers are needed for various committees. You make \$10-15 per hour. Contact the coordinator if interested.
- TSSU party is coming up April 4-5 at the pub. There will be free food and cheap drinks. There will also be a walk on controversies on campus on April 4<sup>th</sup>.

Motion to adjourn Nicole Tunbridge, seconded by Mel Hart.	Carried
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