



Biology Graduate Caucus

Friday, April 3rd, 2009, 3:30 pm

In attendance: Erica Jeffery, Janey Lam, Isabelle Raymond, Juliana Yeung, Nicole Tunbridge, Simon Goring, Jerry Ericsson, Jayashree Shrivastava, Sarah Jamieson, Rian Dickson, Nell Hamilton, Mike Wogin

1. Welcome

a) Introductions/ Attendance

i) Erica requests all questions to be directed accordingly at the end of the meeting, with the limit of 3 minutes for questions.

b) Any additions to agenda? None

2. Claim meeting expenses.

3. Events

a) Alton Harestad - "How to Write a Thesis" Seminar

- The seminar will be held on April 24th, 10:30-12:30pm in B8253. Erica will be sending out a reminder e-mail closer to the date.

b) Welcome Party - Mentor-Mentee Program

- A coordinator is needed to plan the barbeque party at the end of the Biology new grad student orientation day
- A volunteer is needed to match new students with existing students for the Mentor-Mentee Program
- o Alex Chubaty did a great job last year in coordinating the match of new and existing graduate students. Alex has confirmed that he will organize the Mentor-Mentee Program again this fall.

c) SFU-UBC Coffee House - ANZA Club, Thurs., April 16th, 2009

- i. To purchase tickets (\$5) in advance see Erica. There will be more tickets at the door but the facility has a 350 people capacity, so tickets will be limited.
- ii. Performers will be playing between 8:30-11:30pm and there will be a DJ from 11:30pm till approximately 1am.
- iii. Servers with Serving It Right: Volunteers are still needed. By doing a 2 hour shift, you will get a free ticket. Erica will send a reminder e-mail closer to date.

d) Grad Symposium/Grad-hosted speaker visit – March 19th-20th, 2009

i. Thank you!

ii. Feedback:

- Facility: Most attendees agreed that TASC was a much nicer space and it has been suggested by many people that this is a great location to host future grad symposiums. However, quite a few people could not find the place; more signs can be used in the future to direct people how to get to the TASC atrium.

- Attendance: There was a lower attendance than expected; in particular fewer staff and faculty members were present. It was suggested that technicians should have a formal invite and they should also be invited to bring a poster.

- More scientific posters were needed from each lab.

- Food and Drinks: The bar was opened a bit later, but it ran smoothly. Ordering food from Costco was very cost effective and everyone present at the symposium enjoyed the food. The grad caucus agrees ordering food from Costco is a good idea for future social events.

- Treasurer report – Simon Zappia: The whole event came in under budget. The cost of the food was primarily covered by the \$600 from the Dean of Science and the difference (\$60) was covered by the department. The cost for cleaning up the TASC atrium and renting the poster boards was covered by the department.

- The Biology department covered the total cost of inviting Rock Lowe (flight, hotel, meals) to the symposium.

- The Dean of Grad studies gave us money up-front and that covered the cost of all the prizes.

- There are no additional expenses to be claimed.

-It was suggested by Nell to have a summer social with any left over money.

4) Constitution amendments:

- Changes to the constitution need to be voted on and it was suggested by Erica to have a combination Bisc Grad Caucus/ AGM meeting to vote on the changes. A combination meeting will also provide an opportunity to vote on new members of the Grad Caucus for 2009/10.

- The following changes have been made to the constitution:

(1) The Biology Grad Caucus now belongs to the Graduate Student Society (GSS) and no longer belongs to the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS).

(2) Guidelines to Election: If one person is running for an executive position in the Biology Grad Caucus, there will be an option for the candidate to acclaim the position and an option for the people present at the meeting to vote for or against that candidate in taking the position.

(3) Guidelines for Biology Grad Caucus election to be the same as the guidelines used by GSS.

(4) To have future Biology Grad Caucus elections occur at the end of April even though candidate doesn't have to start their position until September. The summer semester will be a good opportunity for the new candidate to be trained by the former candidate.

- A possible problem to this idea will be if people are graduating in the spring term, then there is a possibility that the new candidate wouldn't have someone to train them.

(5) Nominations for Caucus Representatives

- a) Chair
 - Rachael: nominated by Nicole; declined by Rachael
 - Isabelle self-nominated; will accept position only under the condition that the caucus associate chair position is filled
- b) Associate Chair
 - c) Treasurer
 - Simon: nominated by Erica
 - d) Secretary
 - Juliana: nominated by Erica
 - e) Social Coordinator
 - Brendan Connors: nominated by Sarah
 - f) Member at Large
 - Erica: self-nominated and nominated by Nell
 - g) Webmaster
 - Alex: nominated by Simon
 - h) GSS rep
 - To be recruited
 - i) TSSU rep
 - Mike: nominated by Erica
 - j) Faculty Mole
 - Simon: self-nominated
 - k) DGSC - Jenn Sunday, Emily Darling (incumbent)
 - l) DSC - Sarah Jamieson, Lindsay Farrell
 - Rian: nominated by Sarah; 2 year position
 - Lindsay is still in the position
 - m) International Student's Rep (contact person for international

students)

-Muhammad Arshad: nominated by Erica

(6) BISC Grad Caucus Webpage

- The website needs to be updated! Volunteers are needed to provide content for changing the website. In particular, the student survival guide needs to be updated.

- Jeff suggests to have a grad student survival clinic/ workshop on finances with a focus on subsidies, external funding, budgeting, taxes, and etc.
 - Simon believes that this type of workshop should be provided by the GSS.
 - Nell feels that this type of workshop is useful for a new person to the country, especially filing tax returns.
 - Jeff will follow up with GSS.

(7) Reports from committees

a. GSS - Andreas Steimel

- The referendum for the GSS grad benefit plan fee increase was passed.

b. TSSU - Mike Wogin

- March for affordable housing is coming up
- People with kids who are part of the TSSU can apply for child care bursaries

c. Faculty Mole - Carson Keever

d. DGSC - Jenn Sunday, Jeff Joy

e. DSC - Sarah Jamieson, Lindsay Farrell

NSERC announcements: Are currently being delivered At least two people in the department has already received letters stating that they have been award a scholarship

- Grad Fellowships: applications should follow the format that was sent by Debbie and they are due April 15
- President's Research Stipend: are being phased out. People who are starting in May 2009 are not eligible for the stipend.
 - The push for more GFs has not been finalized
 - The BISC grad caucus would like to have an explanation to why the President's research stipend is being cut
 - Consequences of the funding cut will also affect MSc

students

(8) Next meeting - May 1st, 2009

(9) Adjourn meeting

- Motion by Sarah, seconded by Jerry

- All in favor