

**Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus Meeting Minutes (draft until approved)
March 21, 2012 – 3:30 to 4:30 PM, 7000 Level Graduate Student Lounge**



BISC Graduate Caucus

March 21, 2012 – 3:30 to 4:30 PM

In Attendance: Jeanette Bruce (Chair), Natascia Tamborello (Associate Chair), Elly Knight (Secretary), Jennifer Linton (Treasurer), Sherri Elwell (Member at Large), Cassandra Carroll (Faculty Mole), Rob Greenland (GSS Rep), Erica Jeffery (DGSC Rep), Joel Harding (DGSC Rep), Matt Huntley, Lindsey Button, Stephanie Green, Jesse Taylor, Iva Popovic, Jay Brogan, Kyle Artelle, Juliana Yeung, Franz Simon, Emily Whattam, Marinde Out, Erin Adams, and Emma Leah.

Absent: Nicole Gerbrandt (Events Committee Officer), Sacha O'Regan (Events Committee Officer), Marlene Wagner (Events Committee Officer), Erfan Vafaie (Webmaster), Noel Swain (GSS Alternate), Chris Mull (International Students' Rep), Brian LaBore (TSSU Steward), Samantha Franks (Scholarship Committee Rep), and Doug Braun (Scholarship Committee Rep).

1. Welcome

- a. The meeting was called to order by Jeanette at 3:30.
- b. Additions to agenda:
- c. Minutes from Previous Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes from the February 8, 2012 BISC graduate caucus meeting.

Moved by Jeanette Bruce

Seconded by Sherri Elwell

Decision: **motion carries unanimously**

2. Redesigning the main biology hallway – Elizabeth Elle

- People have been talking about redecorating the hallway outside the main BISC office for some time now. The original idea was to post photos of dead scientists (similar to the Chemistry department); however, some people have expressed that the décor should address some of the themes and commonalities of the department.
 - Current plan:
 - On one half of the hallway, replace current BERG posters (10 y old) with ones representing the levels of biological organization
 1. Molecules
 2. Organelles
 3. Cells
 4. Organs & organ systems
 5. Organisms (behaviour)

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- 6. Populations
- 7. Communities
- 8. Ecosystems
- On other side, replace center for pest management board. Ideas:
 - Glass etching of a circular diagram of the tree of life. Talking about artist.
- Still need suggestions for the rest of the hallway. Will maintain all the info there now: CUPE board, TSSU board etc.
 - Minimal text! Maximum picture/photo.
 - Needs to be locked down & indestructible
 - Something interactive like physics
 - Something from the collection
 - One more screen with info on biologists, single slides from conferences & posters (from students). But maybe won't be read.
- Please send ideas for images for 8 boards to Elizabeth (eelle@sfu.ca).

3. Treasury Update – Jenny

- New motion: There was some confusion over a motion made at the previous meeting to reimburse Sacha O'Regan. Clarification:
The Department of Biological Sciences loaned the BISC Grad caucus \$250.00 to cover extra expenses for the Grad Hosted Speaker event, January 26 & 27, 2012. This was given to Sacha O'Regan in the form of a cash advance. The BISC Grad caucus spent \$169.79 of the \$250.00, which we will need to reimburse Sacha for, in order to pay back the advance from the department. The remaining \$80.21 is in Sacha's bank account. She will write the department a cheque for \$250.00 once she is reimbursed from the GSS grant, which we were awarded from the Grant Allocation Committee, [January 26, 2012](#).

Motion to pay Sacha O'Regan \$169.79 from the GSS Grant to reimburse the Department of Biology cash advance issued by Barb Sherman for the Grad Hosted Speaker event held [January 26](#) & 27, 2012, instead of up to \$250 as motioned on February 8th.

Moved by: Jenny Linton

Seconded by: Jeanette Bruce

Decision: **motion carries unanimously**

- Current balances:
 - \$527.95 in core account
 - \$848.84 in trust account.
- Moving towards no printed directory books. In the future, we will circulate a PDF and have just a few printed copies for office staff and select staff members.

4. Blue Drinks Vancouver – Steph Green

- Based on green drinks: a monthly gathering of people from various disciplines that are interested in sustainability to talk shop, connections etc. These monthly

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meetings have lead to many great projects, collaborations, and jobs.

- REM, BISC & UBC have been discussing a need for people who work on marine or aquatic conservation to connect and would like to start up a similar event called Blue Drinks:
 - A quarterly event downtown that would bring all marine/aquatic conservation folks together, to mingle, learn etc. A networking event.
 - Anticipating 50 – 100 ppl.
 - Weekday. Looking at late April.
 - Current venue suggestion: downtown @ Rogue.
- Need a bit of seed funding to secure a venue & offer incentive to come (e.g. drink ticket). Looking for \$500. REM has shown a bit of interest in funding. Once there has been one successful event, the fledgling Vancouver chapter of the American Fisheries Society may be interested in partnering.
- Is the BISC grad caucus interested in contributing \$200 to help kick start Blue Drinks?
- Feedback:
 - How will invites be sent. Steph has compiled a database of contacts to create an email list from. Email Steph if you are interested or know anyone who would be interested in attending.
 - Will UBC be funding? Not sure yet.
 - Concern: not applicable to entire student body & not on campus.
 - Do we have the finances? No big expenditures coming up & the new caucus will receive more funding in May.
 - Will there be any activities? There will be nametags available and a few key soundbites may be played throughout the evening to spark conversation.
 - Should get an idea of how many people in the department are interested in attending. Could send out a quick survey & then hold a special meeting, instead of deciding now.
 - What about asking for donations?
 - Kickstart.
 - Could have a donation box at the door.
- Steph will put together a poll and the exec will send out.
- Email Steph if you know anyone who might be interested in attending, or if you'd like to volunteer!

5. Spring Events – Jeanette

- No progress has been made on the suggestions made at the last meeting. Maybe we should just have a BBQ.
 - Right after the next meeting would be best to welcome the incoming exec. Will move the meeting to Friday April 20th so we can have the BBQ after.
 - Not enough time available to apply for an alcohol permit.
 - Don't forget there is still food in the Dill lab freezer!
- Rob still wants a trivia night where several departments go head to head. Jeanette could perhaps get in touch with other department caucuses.

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6. Committee Updates

a. DGSC – Erica & Joel

- Would like to hold a lunch time workshop on student-supervisor relationships.
 - Will present the results of the survey at the departmental meeting next Monday. Will include some practical solutions to various issues (~20% of grad students feel they have communication issues that are not addressable with current resources) in the context of program completion times.
- Motions regarding formal proposal & deadline for committee formation were both voted down. Why?
 - Perhaps too many deadlines.
 - Faculty didn't see "rationale"
- New motion: committee meeting in the 3rd semester & statement of intent by the 3rd semester.
- Looking for suggestions on how to improve communication. Please contact Erica (ejeffery@sfu.ca) or Joel (joel_harding@sfu.ca).
 - Memorandum of understanding or contract.
 - There is an expectations worksheet. Could hand in with statement of intent.
 - Margo Moore put together a document on potential conflicts & solutions.

b. TSSU – absent

c. Faculty Mole – Cassandra

- Motions regarding formal proposal and deadline for committee formation were voted down because the faculty wanted both changed to 2nd semester. Really liked the motions otherwise.
- Looking for a replacement for Cyril Thong. If you want be on the replacement committee, get in touch with Cassandra.

d. GSS – Rob

- AGM did not achieve quorum: had 89 (needed 100). Quorum was desired as the GSS was trying to pass bylaws, and create a new officer position. Without quorum, a referendum is required which will take a long time.
- Thus, there will be a 2nd AGM April 3rd @ noon. Free food, shouldn't be more than a half hour. Come!
- Polls for officer elections open tonight. 3 referendums associated:
 - a. Membership fee indexing: tie GSS student fees to inflation rates. This would cause a 2.9% increase for this year, but would increase or decrease every single year thereafter according to inflation.
 - b. Benefit plan. Increase the benefit plan cap from \$399 to \$450. This does not mean the cost will actually increase, but gives the committee the ability to raise it without referendum.
 - c. Special membership fee: \$2 per semester to grad student fee (\$1 for part time) for Sustainable SFU.

7. Adjournment

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Motion to end this March 21st meeting of the Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus at 4:26.

Moved by: Jeanette Bruce

Seconded by: Lindsay Button

Decision: **motion carries unanimously**

Nominations are currently open for next year's executive until April 9th!