

Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus Meeting Minutes (draft until approved)
July 16, 2012 – 3:00 – 4:00 PM, 7000 Level Graduate Student Lounge



Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus

June 22, 2012 – 2:30 PM

In Attendance: Amanda Kissel (Associate Chair), Emily McAuley (Secretary), Corinna Lichota (Treasurer), Leslie Saunders (TSSU Steward), Kyle Artelle (DSC Representative), Janie Dubman (International Student Representative), Tanya Stemberger (Events Committee Officer), Catherine Scott (Events Committee Officer), Franz Simon (Webmaster), Jesse Taylor, Brett Favaro, Steph Green, Doug Braun, Evan Henderson.

Absent: Lindsay Davidson (Chair), Sebastian Ibarra (Events Committee Officer), Julie Wray (GSS alternate), Michael Beakes (DGSC Representative), Jennifer Linton (Faculty Mole), Lindsey Button (Member at Large), Rob Greenland (GSS Representative).

1. Welcome

- a. The meeting was called to order by Amanda at 3:05 pm.
- b. Attendance
- c. Additions to Agenda
 - Amanda – Grad Olympiad Revamp
 - Brett – Weekly beer social
 - Steph – Blue Drinks
- d. Minutes from the previous meeting

Motion to approve the minutes from the special June 22, 2012 TSSU Science BBQ BISC graduate caucus meeting.

Moved by: Catherine Scott

Seconded by: Leslie Saunders

Decision: **motion carries unanimously**

2. Treasury update – Corinna

- a. TSSU Science BBQ
 - We are still waiting to hear back from TSSU about how much money we owe them for the BBQ. They asked us to approve up to \$200, but said they would probably need less, so we approved up to \$150. We have the grand total cost for the BBQ (~\$1000), but have not been given the broken down cost for each department.
- b. Current balances:
 - Core account: \$881.15 (we have used \$818.85)
 - Trust account: \$848.84
 - Cash box: \$207.65
 - Total: \$1937.64

Motion to request that the remaining balance of the 2011-2012 caucus funding for the Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus, valued at approximately \$881.15, be transferred into a Trust Account on behalf of the Caucus.

Moved by: Corinna Lichota

Seconded by: Janie Dubman

Decision: **motion carries unanimously**

3. Nominations for grad hosted speaker 2013 – Amanda

- Winner: Olivia Judson (29 votes; UK)
- Runner up: Nancy Baron (Seattle)
- Second runner up: John Parker (AZ)
- Because the winner is located in the UK, it might be unfeasible to host her. We have \$1500 to spend on this event. We will contact each potential speaker in order and see if they can come (and if we can afford them).

4. Grad Olympiad Revamp – Amanda

- The recent Grad Olympiad format (presentations) is not working well. Even the old format (posters) worked better. However, posters may not be a solution either as this was stopped because it was costing the department too much money.
- Current format:
 - Pros: great presentations, low cost to make
 - Cons: low participation (though high participation leads to a lengthy event with a small amount of time to socialize), unnecessarily large lecture halls (low socializing – posters lead to much more interaction), talks/videos are very time consuming to produce which leads to high drop-out rates/low participation
- Ideas:
 - What about making hand-made posters the day-of (e.g. one or two hours allowed only) with bristol board, scissors, markers, etc.?
 - “Lab crawl”: a tour of each lab (low cost but logistically difficult?)
 - What else?
- Events committee to follow up on this (Tanya, Catherine).

5. Weekly beers event – Brett

- The BISC department (faculty included) should have a friendly, bright, licensed, well-attended, and well-timed (e.g. Friday at 4:00 pm) weekly (or bi-weekly, depending on licensing) beers/social event.
- The first event could even fall on the same day as the Welcome BBQ.
- Possible venues: The atrium of TASC 2 (outdoor balcony), the Chemistry building (TSSU BBQ location), the bottom floor of SSB. We would need to determine if fees are required to book any of these spaces. An outdoor location may be bad because of rain.

Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus Meeting Minutes (draft until approved)
July 16, 2012 – 3:00 – 4:00 PM, 7000 Level Graduate Student Lounge

- Using a pub is a possibility; The Highland Pub has both indoor and outdoor spaces available. However, the beer is not great and is expensive, the service can be slow, and it is not a biology-specific space.
- We could partner with the post-departmental talk event at Club Ilia. Pros: piggyback on an event that's already happening; easier to get licenses; share some funding; many people aren't on campus, or leave early on Fridays, so Thursdays might be better. Cons: Thursday nights cannot be licensed at SFU because it is also pub night; attendance may be low because people might want to go home because they have to work the next day.
- Funding: Even if we do our own event (no partnering), it could be self-sustainable by week 2 if we charge a small amount per beer (~\$3/beer)
- We need to find a venue, determine whether there is interest in the department, and would need to (eventually) organize a volunteer system for this so that the same people don't have to lead every event.
- Brett to conduct web poll (grads and faculty).

Motion to reimburse Brett Favaro \$150 from the Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus Trust Account for six special event liquor licenses for six bi-weekly beers events, conditional upon finding a suitable venue and on a simple majority of the people responding to the web survey being supportive of these events.

Motioned by: Brett Favaro

Seconded by: Steph Green

Decision: **motion carries unanimously**

6. Blue Drinks – Steph

- The BISC Graduate Caucus approved to spend up to \$200 from the core account to help fund the first Blue Drinks event.
- This event was supposed to happen in the spring but has been postponed until September (delay due to looking for a venue). The first event will now happen at Science World. Because of the delay, we need to extend the deadline for the BISC Graduate Caucus to provide funding for this event.

Motion to reimburse Coastal Connections Vancouver up to \$200 from the Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus Trust Account for an event that will be held by October 31, 2012.

Motioned by: Steph Green

Seconded by: Brett Favaro

Decision: **motion carries unanimously**

7. Welcome BBQ – Amanda

- To take place Sept 6 2012. This is a Thursday, so the caucus cannot get a liquor license for this event because Thursdays are also campus pub night. However, we could apply for a liquor license through the department instead (via Brian Medford) – Brett will follow up on this.
- GSS will fund up to \$500/semester for a special event – we should apply for this for the BBQ (it can be used for food and drinks).

Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus Meeting Minutes (draft until approved)
July 16, 2012 – 3:00 – 4:00 PM, 7000 Level Graduate Student Lounge

- There are 12 new BISC grads starting this Fall
 - What about those that started in the spring or summer of 2012 and are left out?
- It has been suggested that the grad mentor welcome to new grad students be changed to a “speed dating” format, rather than a one-on-one style, followed by one-on-one at the second beers night (which mentors would be obligated to attend).
- Events committee will revamp the mentorship program (and organize BBQ once everything becomes approved).

8. Committee updates

- a. **DGSC** – absent
- b. **DSC** – absent
- c. **GSS** – Jesse for Rob Greenland
 - Professional development grant applications due August 1, 2012
- d. **TSSU** – Leslie
 - Results of the TSSU strike vote last month: 90% voted YES. This means that next, mediation will occur. No job action will take place until after and depending on the result of mediation.
 - Those eligible to vote were TAs, instructors, and sessionals over the past 3 semesters; 25% of those eligible voted, 30% of those with a teaching contract voted.
 - BISC grad students in the union (calculated as the percentage of TAs out of a total of 147 total BISC grad students at the end of June 2012)
 - Fall 2011 – 38%
 - Spring 2012 – 31%
 - Summer 2012 – 13%
- e. **Faculty Mole** – Amanda for Jennifer Linton
 - Nothing to report

9. Adjournment

Motion to end this July 16th meeting of the Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus.
Moved by: Brett Favaro
Seconded by: Franz Simon
Decision: **motion carries unanimously**