



Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus

May 26th 2014 – 3:30 to 4:30 PM

In Attendance: Leslie Saunders (Chair), Pascale Gibeau (Secretary), Janie Dubman, Sara Ali, Sebastian Ibarra (International Student Rep), Heather Coatsworth, Jen Scholefield (Member at large), Dan Peach (Events Committee Officer), Mike Hrabar (GSS Rep), Matt Holl (Events Committee Officer), Karen Lo (Faculty Mole), Marinde Out (Webmaster), Sarah Thomsen (DGSC Rep), Samineh Deheshi (GSS Rep).

Absent: Neilab Amiri (DGSC Rep), Antonia Musso (TSSU Steward), Marlene Wagner (TSSU Steward), Paul Macdonald (TSSU Steward), Lindsay Davidson (DSC Rep), Luis Malpica Cruz (DSC Rep), Kyle Bobiwash (Events Committee Officer), Jaime Lewthwaite (Treasurer), Fiona Francis (Associate Chair).

1. Welcome – meeting called to order at 3:31pm by Leslie Saunders.

a. Attendance

i. Introductions of the new executive

b. Additions to Agenda

i. Amendments to motions from April Meeting

Need to reverse three motions (see next section) because the person being reimbursed either motioned or seconded those motions – next time we need to make sure that whoever is being reimbursed is abstaining.

ii. Reimbursements

Motion to reverse previous reimbursement to Janie Dubman 25.98\$ from the core account for baked goods purchased for the grad hosted speaker.

Moved by: Leslie Saunders

Seconded by: Sebastian Ibarra

Decision: Motion carries with abstention from Janie Dubman.

Motion to reverse previous reimbursement to Jen Scholefield 238.05\$ for catered lunch at Highland pub from the core account.

Moved by: Leslie Saunders

Seconded by: Sebastian Ibarra

Decision: Motion carries with abstention from Jen Scholefield.

Motion to reverse previous reimbursement to Jen Scholefield 40\$ for MEC voucher prizes from the core account.

Moved by: Leslie Saunders

Seconded by: Sebastian Ibarra

Decision: Motion carries with abstention from Jen Scholefield.

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Seconded by: Sebastian Ibarra

Decision: Motion carries with abstention from Jen Scholefield.

Motion to reimburse Jen Scholefield 40\$ for MEC voucher prizes from the core account.

Moved by: Leslie Saunders

Seconded by: Sebastian Ibarra

Decision: Motion carries with abstention from Jen Scholefield.

Motion to pay the invoice 25\$ for MESC projector used at Grad event from trust account

Moved by: Leslie Saunders

Seconded by: Karen Lo

Decision: Motion carries unanimously.

iii. Motion to approve minutes from last month's meeting.

Motion to approve minutes from April meeting.

Moved by: Leslie Saunders

Seconded by Dan Peach

Decision: All in favor.

iv. Elections for new caucus exec

Neilab Amiri, who was elected as DGSC rep during the April elections, had to step out. Nicola Smith is running un-opposed for DGSC representative in her place.

Motion to approve Nicola Smith as the DGSC representative for the Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus for the 2014-2015 academic term.

Moved by: Leslie Saunders

Seconded by Jen Scholefield

Decision: Motion carries unanimously.

v. Grad hosted speaker nominations

Leslie Saunders asking for suggestions or inputs into the event.

Suggested to use a doodle poll to ask all grad students to send nominations; caucus to compile list and set up a vote to elect the grad speaker. Suggested to ask for a short bio/synopsis but not for availability until the speaker is actually selected. Make sure that suggestions are realistic (i.e. that speaker do not come from too far away). Also mentioned they can be all kinds of speakers, not only academics.

All agreed caucus would ask for suggestions now via a doodle poll, with a 3 weeks window for people to answer.

2. Treasury update

Janie Dubman (for Jayme Lewthwaite): Current BISC grad caucus balances:

- i. Core Account: \$1135.96.
- ii. Trust Account: \$1307.70.

3. Committee updates

a. DGSC (Sarah Thomsen)

- i. Finished survey of all BISC grad students. Meeting during summer to go over some of the results of survey.
- ii. Response was good in the end; 54-55% of response rate.
- iii. Main results: students mentioned funding is inadequate + lack of courses to take.
- iv. Reps to go through survey data again before meeting with DGSC. Will circulate the summaries when available.

b. DSC

- i. Private award applications are due this Friday (May 30th).

c. GSS (Mike Hrabar)

- ii. Changes to way programs are funded, will affect smaller caucus.
- iii. Asking for gender neutral washrooms, to be investigated with university.

d. TSSU (Heather Coatsworth)

- i. General Membership Meeting tomorrow.
- ii. Last meeting:
 - a. Discussion about matching up conditions for TAs and TMs.
 - b. Discussion of new learning tools with e-tutorial. TSSU is concerned about increase in number of students that would mean for TAs/TMs.

e. Faculty Mole (Karen Lo)

- i. DGSC now requires animal care permits for progress report (responsibility of PI). Need grad student to remind PIs to add their names to their application.
- ii. Suggestion that first aid courses should be provided by faculty if working in the field.
- iii. Extra budget: faculty wondering what are the important things that grad students would like to see funded.
 - a. Changes to the grad lounge, to make it more private and comfortable; new fridge, new couches, proper table to eat, etc.
- iv. Talked about assignment formula for tutorials, how hours are assigned. Depending on students enrollment, credits, etc.
- v. The wall painting in B9242: Elizabeth apologized; said they had been talking about it for 6-8 months but unsure why grad students didn't know. She would like to get suggestions about how to help grad students feel like they achieved a milestone when they graduate.
 - a. Provide a graduation lunch for all graduates of the semester, after graduation ceremony, with parents and guests.
 - b. Announcements at the payday coffee, with posters, thesis on display. Use publication board.

4. Other Business

- a. Summer meetings

Might be difficult to have summer meetings at set time. Suggested not to have a meeting in June, but meet in July.

Motion to not have a meeting in June, but meet again in July.

Moved by: Leslie Saunders

Seconded by Janie Dubman

Decision: Motion carries unanimously.

b. Pay Day coffee

Passing on from Jessie Taylor that no labs are signed up for Pay Day coffee for the summer, so labs that haven't done it yet should sign up (sheet in biology dep).

c. Continuity from caucus to caucus

Suggested to work with person who held previous position in caucus to ensure continuity over the years.

- i. Create a "cheat-sheet" explaining responsibilities so information get transferred from year to year.
- ii. Leslie Saunders to send an email to executive to encourage that communication between old and new exec.

d. Toastmasters (Karen Lo)

Explanation what is toastmasters: would be a scientific communication based workshop. Meeting Monday June 23 at lunch time with demo meeting to learn how Toastmasters do it. Hoping to get 20-25 people, now about 10 people committed.

5. Adjournment (4:25)

Motion to adjourn May 26 th , 2014, meeting of the Biological Sciences Graduate Student Caucus at 4:25 pm. Moved by: Leslie Saunders Seconded by Janie Dubman Decision: Motion carries unanimously.
