



## Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus

July 21<sup>st</sup> 2014 – 3:30 to 4:30 PM

**In Attendance:** Leslie Saunders (Chair), Pascale Gibeau (Secretary), Mike Hrabar (GSS Rep), Karen Lo (Faculty Mole), Sarah Thomsen (DGSC Rep), Samineh Deheshi (GSS Rep), Melanie Pylatuk, Jaime Lewthwaite (Treasurer), Kyle Bobiwash (Events Committee Officer).

**Absent:** Sebastian Ibarra (International Student Rep), Jen Scholefield (Member at large), Dan Peach (Events Committee Officer), Matt Holl (Events Committee Officer), Marinde Out (Webmaster), 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), Fiona Francis (Associate Chair).

### 1. Welcome –

Meeting called to order at 3:36pm by Leslie Saunders.

a. Attendance

b. Additions to Agenda

i. Grad hosted speaker vote results

There were 5 nominations, and a total of 50 grad students voted (1/3 of all bio grad students). Dr. Tyrone Hayes was selected.

Leslie Saunders to email him to see if he is available/interested in coming, and how much he would charge. Budget last year was 2000\$. Leslie also asked caucus to bring any ideas about themes for him to talk about or ideas for workshops he could give (e.g. professional development, science advocacy).

ii. Welcome BBQ (September 4<sup>th</sup>)

Discussion on whether or not to have the mentoring program this year, where current grad students were paired with new students during the BBQ. Suggested to pair students before BBQ via emails so that current students can help with questions before new students actually arrive. Suggested to change name from “mentoring program” to “grad contact”, so it is more appealing. Leslie Saunders to talk with Marlene N’Guyen about it, and then touch base with current grad students to ask who is interested in participating.

Suggestion of activity to do at the welcome BBQ to help connect people: Get-to-know-you bingo. Easy way to break the ice between new and current students.

Budget from last year: 450\$ in total, 200\$ for drinks at the pub, 250\$ for prizes/food at BBQ. Costs estimated this year would be around 500\$.

There will be Biology T-shirts for sale for 10\$.

Suggestion from last year: use the time between orientation of new students and actual BBQ to introduce the grad lounge to new students.

Details about organization of day and volunteers to be finalized at August meeting.

- c. Motion to approve minutes from last month's meeting.

Motion to approve minutes from May meeting.

Moved by: Leslie Saunders

Seconded by: Melanie Pylatuk.

Decision: Motion carries unanimously.

## **2. Treasury update**

**Core account:** \$598.98

**Trust account:** \$1049.72

## **3. Committee updates**

- a. DGSC (Sarah Thomsen)  
No meetings, no update.
- b. DSC (Lindsay Davidson, Luis Malpica Cruz)  
Rep absent, no update.
- c. GSS (Mike Hrabar, Samineh Deheshi)
  - i. Special general meeting with GSS birthday batch on July 31; there will be a poster to email to BISC-grad. Door open at 2pm, free burger and beer for those who stay for meeting (register before). In GSS offices.
  - ii. New executive director for GSS.
  - iii. Student claims center: now also available to grad students.
  - iv. Changes to the bylaws:
    - 1. Budget
    - 2. Getting rid of the family subsidy; suggesting to work with student aid. New bursary for students.
    - 3. Finances: trust account amendment about rolling costs over between accounts. Motion voted to deposit unused

money from trust to core account of up to max 50% of allocation.

- v. Living-wage campaign: GSS, CUPE and SFU Student Society are organizing the campaign. Discussed whether or not the Biology Grad Caucus should back up the campaign. Agreed that we should have someone to come in at a caucus meeting and introduce idea; and then have caucus/grads voting on whether or not we should support it.
- d. TSSU (Antonia Musso, Marlene Wagner, Paul Macdonald)  
Rep absent, no update.
- e. Faculty Mole (Karen Lo)
  - i. Last meeting was short faculty meeting (15 mins); only voted to approve adjunct prof.
  - ii. Discussed potential for biology to have a new building (long term), located close to greenhouses.

#### **4. Other Business**

- a. Apex program

Jackie from SFU Grad Office came to describe the program: to help grad students get started towards getting work/position after grad school. 5 sessions (3h each); committed or flexible but need to sign up for the 5 sessions, working towards getting a certificate. E.g. of subjects covered: improving LinkedIn profiles, updating resume, building a e-portfolio, help strategizing job search along the way, networking, projects management, active engagement networking. More information at: <http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/professional-development.html>.

Need to sign up for info session first (September 10-12).

- b. Toastmasters

Update from Karen Lo: need biology grad caucus to support the project in a letter in order to get caucus funding from GSS. Would need the letter by Sept.2.  
Agreed to discuss the letter at next meeting with a draft statement + vote.

- c. Tox Talks

Tox talks are toxicology seminars with students (15 mins talk) that will happen on January 2015. Include students from Biology, MVB, and REM; panel to judge presentations. All students working on toxicology related subjects welcome to get prepared and apply.

## 5. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014, meeting of the Biological Sciences Graduate Student Caucus at 4:33pm.

Moved by: Leslie Saunders

Seconded by: Mike Hrabar

Decision: Motion carries unanimously.