



## **Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus**

**July 21st, 2016 – 15:30 to 16:30 PM**

### **In attendance:**

Heather Coatsworth (Associate chair), Jayme Lewthwaite (Treasurer), Marinde Out (Secretary and TSSU Steward), Nicholas Salcedo Porras (TSSU Steward), Richard Johnston (TSSU Steward), Tanya Procyshyn (TSSU Steward), Kolitha Halangoda (Events Committee), Kevin Hegeman (DGSC rep), Pauline Deschodt (DSC rep), Colin Bailey.

### **Absent:**

Kyle Bobiwash (Chair), Allannah Biega (GSS rep), Leon Li (GSS rep), Mike Hrabar (GSS rep), Adrienne Berchtold (TSSU steward), Joyce Leung (Events committee), Jennifer Bigman (DSC rep), Pascale Gibeau (member at large), Leslie Saunders (DGSC rep), Dan Greenberg (Faculty Mole), Vanessa Guerra (Webmaster), Eveling Taverna Fernandez (international student rep).

### **1. Welcome** -- Meeting called to order at 15:30 by Heather Coatsworth

#### a. Attendance

#### b. Additions to Agenda

##### i. Grad Hosted Speaker Search

An email has been sent out to initiate the grad hosted speaker nomination process. All graduate students can send in a speaker nomination. As the last two previous speakers were all male, this year's preference is for a female speaker. Nomination close on August 5<sup>th</sup> 2016. All graduate students can vote once the nomination period has closed.

To make searching for speakers easier, Tanya found a list of female Evolution/Behaviour speakers. Check this link: <https://goo.gl/6epGPJ>

##### ii. Website Amalgamation

Vanessa (the webmaster) is going to merge the two existing BISC Caucus websites. She is also going to put the grad hosted speaker information on the website before the August meeting, if the information is available in time.

##### iii. Welcome back BBQ plans

The Events Committee is organizing the yearly Welcome BBQ in early September (probably Thursday September 8<sup>th</sup>, because that's when the Biology Department's

graduate student orientation takes place). Last year's location is preferred (outdoor 7000 level area between Biology and Chemistry). The Highland Pub is closed in the summer, and might not open in the fall semester. The Events Committee is going to check if it is possible to either rent a part of the pub, or look for other suitable locations. As per last year, the events committee is also looking into obtain a liquor licence for the BBQ.

Motion to spend \$450 for the welcome BBQ from the core account.  
Moved by: Heather Coatsworth  
Seconded by: Tanya Procyshyn  
Decision: Motion carries with abstention from Jayme Lewthwaite.

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

Motion to approve the minutes from the May Biology graduate caucus meeting:  
Moved by: Heather Coatsworth  
Seconded by: Nico Salcedo Porras  
Decision: Motion carries with abstention from Kevin Hegeman.

d. Motion to approve nominees for caucus elections

Motion to approve the appointment of Danielle Hoefele as Events Committee Officer.  
Moved by: Heather Coatsworth  
Seconded by: Richard Johnston  
Decision: Motion carries unanimously.

**2. Treasury update** (Jayme Lewthwaite)

The BISC Caucus received \$1850 from the GSS this year. This is \$150 less than last year. The Caucus still had \$162 left from last year. This money has been transferred to the trust account.

Current account status: \$1218.07

Core account: \$162.45

Trust account: last update: \$1055.62

**3. Committee updates**

A. DGSC – Leslie Saunders and Kevin Hegeman

No updates. No meetings in summer.

B. DSC – Pauline Deschodt and Jenny Bigman

Committee has finished ranking students for private awards, and Debbie checked with the

Graduate Studies Office and was informed that the results will be out early August

C. GSS – Allannah Biega, Leon Li, Mike Hrabar

No updates.

D. TSSU – Richard Johnston, Nicholas Salcedo Porras, Tanya Procyshyn, Adrienne Berchtold, Marinde Out

Since the last caucus meeting, the stewards attended two general meetings and two steward meetings. The new Teaching Assistantship application system has been launched. Applicants no longer have to send separate statements of interests to every instructor. The Biology Department also has to send information off to TSSU so the union can check if Teaching Assistants are assigned to jobs in a fair way.

If there were any problems with the new application system, please contact one of the stewards.

Make sure you **print your Time Use Guidelines (TUG)** because the Biology Department might not print them, but they could potentially be changed digitally after they have been signed. Keep your copy to be safe.

One of the TSSU representatives will give an introduction talk to new students at the orientation day. In October there's a TSSU Steward Training Day.

E. Faculty Mole – Dan Greenberg (by email on May 30<sup>th</sup> 2016)

- Elizabeth Elle ratified to serve as chair for the next 3 years, and David Green to also be put forth to extend his service as associate chair
- Maclean's new rankings puts SFU Biology as the #10 Biology department in the country – the ranking system is unknown still, but there is a general consensus we can do better
- **New building for Biology** to be named: Life Sciences & Research Innovation (LSRI) building. This project is advancing rapidly, with an architect to be hired in early June and funding to be secured in July or August.
  - Building will consist of two wings (short & long), be 3 stories (and half the building will have a basement), and it will be about 100,000 ft<sup>2</sup> (this is smaller than Shrum B, but teaching labs are going to go into SSB – this will be mostly research space!)
  - So far, only the Biology department will be housed in this building
  - Ground-breaking may start very soon – with Phase 1 (exterior) to be completed by April 2018 and Phase 2 (Interior) by April 2019, at which point labs will migrate
  - Some equipment will be moved over, some will be bought new

- I asked if Grad students will be consulted about their needs and the response was that townhall-style meetings are going to be held to assess overall community (ie. not just grad student) needs
- In Fall 2017 the provincial high school curriculum is going to be changing, including courses relevant to entrance to Biology programs. There will be an increased emphasis on First Nation Perspectives, but also potentially less exams and a new grading system. It is unknown how this will affect student intake to Biology programs.
- There is talk amongst the various universities of sharing field courses in BC that would allow students to get credit at their home institution for any field course offered by participating schools. SFU Biology does not offer its own field courses (most through Bamfield) so this is viewed as a positive for the department.
- BISC\*357 – 1 more hour of lecture time & name change to ‘Genetic Engineering’
- Appointments committee unanimous in their support for Bernie Crespie as Canada Research Chair Tier 1 in Evolutionary Genetics & Psychology. The next phase is that Bernie prepares his application.
- Next Faculty meeting tentatively to be held in September, may be earlier depending on what happens with the planning for the LSRI building

#### F. Other updates –Colin Bailey

There are only two Les Ecol spots left for fall semester. Contact Colin if you want one.

General reminder that there are BBQs every non-payday Friday

Next caucus meeting is August 18<sup>th</sup> 2016.

#### 4. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 meeting of the Biological Sciences Graduate Student Caucus at 16:01.

Moved by: Heather Coatsworth

Seconded by: Jayme Lewthwaite

Decision: Motion carries unanimously.