



## **Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus**

**August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – 15:30 to 16:30 PM**

### **In attendance:**

Heather Coatsworth (Associate chair), Kyle Bobiwash (Chair), Marinde Out (Secretary and TSSU Steward), Adrienne Berchtold (TSSU steward), Mike Hrabar (GSS rep), Joyce Leung (Events Committee), Danielle Hoefele (Events Committee), Kolitha Halangoda (Events Committee), Dan Greenberg (Faculty Mole), Vanessa Guerra (Webmaster), Pauline Deschodt (DSC rep), Nicola Smith, Alice Domalik

### **Absent:**

Jayne Lewthwaite (Treasurer), Allannah Biega (GSS rep), Leon Li (GSS rep), Nicholas Salcedo Porras (TSSU Steward), Tanya Procyshyn (TSSU Steward), Richard Johnston (TSSU Steward), Jennifer Bigman (DSC rep), Pascale Gibeau (member at large), Leslie Saunders (DGSC rep), Kevin Hegeman (DGSC rep), Eveling Taverna Fernandez (international student rep).

### **1. Welcome** -- Meeting called to order at 15:31 by Kyle Bobiwash

- a. Attendance
- b. Additions to Agenda
  - i. Grad Hosted Speaker Search Update (Nominations closed, polls open soon)

So far, five speakers have been nominated. More nominations will be added. Then an email will be sent out so graduate students can vote for their preferred nominee. Voting closes when enough people have voted (in ~two weeks).

- ii. Website Amalgamation Update (all updates complete – comments)

The webmaster (Vanessa) merged the BISC graduate caucus blogger website and the SFU website, so now there is only one BISC graduate caucus website (<http://biscgrads.blogspot.ca>). All the old and new website files are still on the SFU server.

**The webmaster requests photos from previous events to decorate the website (e.g. pumpkin carving contest, welcome BBQ, etc.).**

The caucus requested that upcoming events will be published on the website.

Vanessa is going to ask the SFU Biological Sciences web manager to inform about the possibility to change our personal SFU websites to include pictures and a short bio. (see <https://www.sfu.ca/biology/people/graduate-students.html>).

iii. Welcome back BBQ plans

The Welcome BBQ is going to take place after the BISC orientation for new graduate students (on September 8<sup>th</sup>, starting at 4pm in the 7000 level courtyard between Biology and Chemistry where the lunch BBQs were also held).

The events committee arranged a liquor license (valid until 10 pm). No afterparty place has been booked yet because Highland has been booked already and Club Ilia requires a \$50 deposit and minimum spending of \$10 per person (\$500 in total if 50 people attend). If this amount is not reached, the caucus has to compensate the difference.

The plan is to buy more beer and stay at the courtyard till 10 pm and then go to the pub or Ilia (the caucus will not make a financial contribution past 10pm).

The events committee is looking for people with Serving It Right so different people can tend the bar.

- i. Biology Ambassadors for New Students (all positions filled – e-mail going out to new grads)

In past years, the BISC caucus used to have a mentor program. This year we changed the setup by nominating four ambassadors who represent different groups in BISC (1 PhD, 1 Masters, 1 MET and 1 MPM). All the new students will be given the ambassadors' e-mails, so if they have any questions about courses, class locations, campus life etc. they have a contact. The four ambassador positions have been filled.

- ii. Temporary new DGSC rep until Leslie Saunders is back

Because our current DGSC representative Leslie Saunders is staying in Minnesota until December, Marlene Nguyen and Isabelle Coté have requested a second temporary DGSC rep until Leslie is back. Meetings are held once a month.

Motion to approve the appointment of Dan Greenberg as interim DGSC representative.

Moved by: Kyle Bobiwash

Seconded by: Nicola Smith

Decision: Motion carries with abstentions by Kyle Bobiwash and Dan Greenberg

- iii. Presenters needed for the Student Spaceflight Experiments Program (SSEP)

The Student Spaceflight Experiments Program (SSEP) was launched in June 2010 by the National Center for Earth and Space Science Education (NCESSE) in strategic

partnership with NanoRacks, LLC. It is a remarkable U.S. national Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education initiative that gives typically 300+ students across a participating community the ability to design and propose real experiments to fly in low Earth orbit, first aboard the final flights of the Space Shuttle, and then on the International Space Station.

Coquitlam School District #43 has begun developing the project in partnership with Simon Fraser University. The initial event will take place the afternoon of **September 23rd, 2016** and consist of graduate students and faculty delivering **20 minute talks** regarding their research or a particular science topic and how it can potentially relate to microgravity or study aboard the International Space Station (ex. gravitropism in plants, the value of microcosm studies, general scientific methods, etc.). **We are looking for graduate students who would like to participate and deliver a 20 minute talk** on any subject at the student conference in Coquitlam on September 23rd.

If interested please contact:

Kyle Bobiwash  
kbobiwas@sfu.ca

iv. Last lunch BBQ August 26<sup>th</sup>

The last Friday Lunch BBQ will be held on August 26<sup>th</sup> from 12:00-1:30 pm in the courtyard.

v. Statistics workshop update – Nicola Smith

A committee of BISC and REM graduate students and post-docs is organizing a statistics workshop. There will be two workshops (2 days each), instructed by Sean Anderson. The workshops will have the same content (General Linear Mixed Models (GLMMs), one in October and one in November). The topic has been determined by the results from a poll sent out earlier this year.

The Research Commons is willing to finance the workshops with the requirement that registration is open to all students from all three campuses, so they are not exclusively for BISC and REM students. Nevertheless, the organizers can let BISC and REM students know when to register early, so they don't miss the boat. The workshops are capped at 30 persons.

There will be a \$50 fee but the BISC chair is willing to reimburse this for BISC students. The fee is to pay for lunch, coffee and snacks, but also to increase the chance that students show up and do not just register and bail.

The Research Commons representative said that there is a chance to have another statistics workshop (with a different topic) in the spring if the other two are successful.

The workshops for this fall will be about GLMMs, and only available for students with a decent basic understanding of R and linear models.

For questions, contact Nicola Smith (nicolas@sfu.ca) or Marinde Out (mout@sfu.ca)

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

Motion to approve the minutes from July Biology graduate caucus meeting:  
Moved by: Kyle Bobiwash  
Seconded by: Dan Greenberg  
Decision: Motion carries unanimously

## 2. Treasury update (Jayme Lewthwaite by email)

1. The Core account is: \$1850.00
2. The Trust account is: \$1084.71

Motion to move 100% of the remaining 2016-2017 core funds into the trust account.  
Moved by: Kyle Bobiwash  
Seconded by: Dan Greenberg  
Decision: Motion carries unanimously.

## 3. Committee updates

- A. DGSC – Leslie Saunders and Kevin Hegeman  
No meetings in summer
- B. DSC – Pauline Deschodt and Jenny Bigman  
No updates
- C. GSS – Allannah Biega, Leon Li, Mike Hrabar

If you still need money back from the GSS (e.g. receipts from events), make sure you do this before August 31st.

Other updates:

The Collective Agreement is now linked with CUPE3338.

Funding for \$5000 to ombudsman continues

The Financial plan of the GSS has not changed much this year.

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

The TSSU has a new teaching assistantship application system. We've kept contact with Barb to check if there are any problems. So far it has ran smoothly.

Barb said that the TSSU has issues with the way BISC handles the digital TUG (time use guideline) forms. The TSSU is afraid that TUG forms can be edited from behind TA's backs, but Barb guarantees that editing TUG forms is not possible without notifying the TA. After every change in the TUG form, an email goes out to the TA.

Make sure to print your TUG forms to keep a copy for your records.

#### **New and Young Worker Health and Safety Orientation**

The New & Young Worker Health & Safety Orientation is a **mandatory workshop** for all new employees hired to perform work at SFU. This includes TAs, TMs, RAs, Postdoctoral Fellows and Events staff. SFU is required to provide workers with orientation and training about safe work procedures and how to recognize hazards on the job before they start work.

Topics such as hazard and incident reporting, roles & responsibilities, worker rights, health & safety committees, emergency response, working alone and workplace bullying & harassment will be covered.

Three sessions have been organized, one at each campus. Registration is required. Please bring your own lunch!

Burnaby campus: **Monday, September 19th at 12:00-1:00 pm in BH 9655.**

Please register at: <http://websurvey.sfu.ca/survey/248307620>

E. Faculty Mole – Dan Greenberg

No meetings

#### **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: Kyle Bobiwash

Seconded by: Adrienne Berchtold

Decision: Motion carries unanimously.