



Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus

January 23rd, 2017 – 15:30 to 16:30 PM

In attendance:

Kyle Bobiwash (Chair), Heather Coatsworth (Associate chair), Jayme Lewthwaite (Treasurer), Marinde Out (Secretary and TSSU Steward), Adrienne Berchtold (TSSU steward), Alannah Biega (GSS rep), Kevin Hegeman (DGSC rep), Dan Greenberg (Faculty Mole), Pauline Deschodt (DSC rep), Joyce Leung (Events Committee), Vanessa Guerra (Webmaster).

Absent:

Leon Li (GSS rep), Richard Johnston (TSSU Steward), Jennifer Bigman (DSC rep), Danielle Hoefele (Events Committee), Leslie Saunders (DGSC rep), Mike Hrabar (GSS rep), Nicholas Salcedo Porras (TSSU Steward), Tanya Procyshyn (TSSU Steward), Kolitha Halangoda (Events Committee), Pascale Gibeau (Member at Large), Eveling Taverna Fernandez (International Student rep).

1. Welcome -- Meeting called to order at 15:31 by Heather Coatsworth

a. Attendance

b. Additions to Agenda

i. Temporary new Member at Large

Our current member at large Pascale Gibeau is going on maternity leave. Pauline Deschodt takes over this function until the end of the term.

Motion to approve the appointment of Pauline Deschodt as interim Member at Large.

Moved by: Heather Coatsworth

Seconded by: Dan Greenberg

Decision: Motion carries with abstention by Pauline Deschodt

ii. Winterfest recap

Like last year, graduate students were invited to help organize the entertainment for Winterfest. Winterfest was originally planned for December 9th 2016, but as a result of snow the event was moved to January 20th 2017. Labs were encouraged to sign up for karaoke, however, nobody signed up except Paul.

List of sponsors (for future reference):

Korean place @ MBC	Slippers	several
Pearl Fever @ cornerstone	Bubble tea vouchers	Many
Renaissance	Coffee vouchers	Many
SFU Bookstore	\$50 gift certificate	1
Nesters	Gift basket	1
Highland pub	\$10 gift vouchers	Several
Ilia	\$10 gift certificates	3

Usually, Winterfest is organized by volunteers. The caucus proposes to officially include Winterfest to the duties of the Events Committee.

Motion to specify that Winterfest falls under the duties of Events Committee Members alongside and not limited to the Welcome Back BBQ and Halloween party.

Moved by: Kevin Hegeman

Seconded by: Alannah Biega

Decision: Motion carries with abstention by Joyce Leung

iii. Grad-hosted speaker and Grad symposium

Heather Coatsworth has formed a committee to organize both the Graduate Symposium and the Grad Hosted Speaker events. The committee is planning to apply for GSS funding (deadline is the 1st of February). The Grad Hosted Speaker is confirmed.

iv. ToxTalks - Sponsoring \$200 for their meeting

ToxTalks is taking place on Saturday the 25th of March 2017. Registration is about 50 people. The organizers request if the caucus wants to sponsor MET and BISC students for this yearly conference with \$200.

Motion to spend up to \$200 for the ToxTalks conference.

Moved by: Heather Coatsworth

Seconded by: Kevin Hegeman

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 November Biology Graduate Caucus meeting.
Moved by: Heather Coatsworth
Seconded by: Dan Greenberg
Decision: Motion carries with abstention from Heather Coatsworth

Treasury update - Jayme Lewthwaite

Core account: \$1148.74, however, we have 500 dollars already committed.

Trust account: \$1084.71

3. Committee updates

A. DGSC – Leslie Saunders and Kevin Hegeman

Meeting is this Thursday. No update

B. DSC – Pauline Deschodt and Jenny Bigman

Incoming and current students have been ranked for NSERC awards. GIRTAs, TMRAs, and President's Scholarships are now open for students to apply.

Questions from the members:

- The GA3 system does not seem to refresh automatically for some students: the TMRA application still shows the 'submitted' status, but this was a submission from 2014. How can these old submissions be replaced?
- Are there rules about how many times students can apply for TMRAs?

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

- SFU is looking for feedback on the Sexual Violence Policy. It is still possible to provide feedback online.
- Students who applied for the new Graduate Student Initiative Grant did not get a reply after submitting their applications.
- Vanessa is initiating a Genetics Club and did not get a reply to her grant application.

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

TSSU is going into arbitration with the Department of Biological Sciences. This is taking place on February 6 and 7, 2017. The arbitration is focusing on BISC 101 and 102. TSSU believes that the department is not following the formula on how to calculate base units. The BISC 101 and 102 TAs have been contacted if they want to be involved in the arbitration. If the TSSU wins the arbitration, the TAs who taught BISC 101 and 102

between 2014 and now could get \$500 per semester they TAed.

Joyce recommends that new TAs compare their TUG (Time Use Guideline) forms, because TAs might be scheduled for too many lab hours, even in other courses than BISC 101 and 102.

E. Faculty Mole – Dan Greenberg

- Representatives of the Ministry of Advanced Education will be touring the Biological Sciences Department buildings (Shrum). This building needs to be demolished, and Biological Sciences needs money for a new building.
- There is a new obligatory online safety training for new hires. New graduate students, work-study students, and undergraduates need to complete this training. This is only for paid employees.
- A new person is going to be hired for Life Sciences (research focusing on cellular disease topics). MBB, MPK and Biology are hiring this person together.
- The terrestrial ecology hiring committee completed a shortlist of candidates. Their CVs will be passed on to us. They are coming for interviews, which graduates students can attend. The dates:
20th and 21st of February, March 6th and 7th, 14th and 15th, 21st and 22nd.
- Tenure promotion criteria are being revised
- The deadline for the USRA is January 26th 2017
- There are changes happening to the multi-year funding packages. They are now good for 3 to 4 years, but offer less funding than before. The earlier you are nominated, the better your chances are. These packages are generally for incoming graduates, but M. Sc. students who are rolling up can also apply. Ph. D. students have priority.

Question from the members:

When will the new guidelines for Annual progress reports come in effect?

- Not yet, maybe in the Fall 2017.

4. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the January 23rd 2017 meeting of the Biological Sciences Graduate Student Caucus at 16:16.

Moved by: Heather Coatsworth

Seconded by: Dan Greenberg

Decision: Motion carries unanimously.