

Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus

April 29th 2019, 2:00 - 3:10 pm

1. Welcome

a. Attendance

Steering Committee

Chair: Pauline Deschodt

Associate Chair: Elana Varner (unable to attend)

Treasurer/GSS Rep: Kari Zurowski

Secretary: Rachel Munger

Webmaster: Catherine Villeneuve

Officers

Events Committee: Allison Dennert, Asim Renyard, Kevin Colmenares, Melissa Orobko

Representatives

GSS Rep: Sarah Johnson

DGSC: Melissa Orobko, Jayme Lewthwaite

DSC Rep: Serena Wong, Yonathan Uriel

Members present:

Elijah Reyes, Tess Forstner, Jaime Chalissery, Lena Ware, Mason King, Tess Forstner, Florian Reurink, Robert Gochian, and Hannah Watkins.

b. Additions to Agenda

2019-2020 Elections

The nominees for the 2019-2020 BISC Graduate Caucus executive are running unopposed for all positions and are as follows:

- Chair: Yonathan Uriel
- Associate Chair: Melissa Orobko
- Treasurer: Kari Zurowski
- Secretary: Tess Forstner
- Member at Large: Pauline Deschodt
- Events Committee:
 - Elijah Reyes
 - Kevin Colmenares
 - Jaime Chalissery
 - Asim Reynard
- Webmaster: Adam Blake
- Departmental Scholarship Committee (DSC):
 - Serena Wong
 - Rachel Munger
- Faculty Meeting rep: Hannah Watkins
- TSSU Steward:

- Allison Dennert
- Tess Forstner
- GSS Council Representative:
 - Allison Dennert
 - Kari Zurowski

Motion to approve the above listed students at the relevant acclaimed positions listed for the Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus for the 2019-2020 academic term, beginning May 1st, 2019.

Moved by: Pauline Deschodt

Second by: Allison Dennert

Result: Passes unanimously. Abstention: Pauline D.

DGSC Position: Two self-elected candidates (Tanya Prinzing and Sarah Johnson).

- Both candidates gave short statement about why they would like to serve on the DGSC and why they would make a good representative. (Tanya submitted written statement due to field season absence).

- A blind vote (counted by Chair and Secretary) resulted in Sarah's appointment at the DGSC Representative.

Motion to approve Sarah Johnson for DGSC position for the 2019-2020 BIS Caucus year: Moved by: Pauline Deschodt

Second: Melissa Orobko

Result: Passes unanimously. Abstention: Pauline D.

Additional: Ranah Chavoshi would like to sit in on the Diversity Committee (Workshop and Diversity Committee are not official).

Note to all new BISC Caucus Committee Members and Representatives: Approach the previous Graduate Student who held your position so you can receive advice and tips from them!

Update on BISC department website (Melissa Orobko)

- Melissa and Jayme met with Jenny Cory about conflicting information on Biological Sciences Website. She was very sympathetic about the concerns, will meet with Dept Chair (Isabelle Côté) to share concerns. Then DGSC reps will be contacted afterward for an update.
- Yonathan met with Kathryn Coukell, (BISC office Administrative Manager) and learned that the BISC website is managed through a portal which gives access to one person at a given time. Can't contract students out, so Melissa Orobko's offer to do so is not a viable option.
- BISC office is hiring a contractor soon to update the BISC website, to match the overall universities website look. Once they are hired, access to the website will only be through them. Timing of that is unclear. Various committees and bodies will be responsible for contributing their portion of information, so degree requirements

information will be put forward by DGSC. Providing updated information is part of ongoing job.

- Melissa suggests going through these requirements in person at a DGSC meeting to ensure this information is assessed as soon as possible. Ideas include pages dedicated to proposals (MSc and PhD), PhD candidacy exam, defences, degree requirements, transferring from MSc to PhD, APRs, helpful links, etc.
- Additionally, add documents online as PDFs that are currently only available as physical copies from Marlene.

Questions to bring forward:

- What is the timeline that the department is able to complete website updates by?
- Who will be responsible after this person is contracted?
- Who is responsible at this moment in the BISC office?
- Can that persons email be displayed on the page? That way small errors and adjustments can be edited on an ongoing basis.

Grad Symposium (Allison Dennert)

– May 2nd (this Thursday) at 1 pm. Last minute sign up still welcome. Don't need to present or show-and-tell to attend, just need numbers for catering at The Study.

Update on Survival Guide (Catherine Villeneuve)

– Comments resolved and edits made by many people, now on the Caucus website!
– Could also send the Survival Guide out with package for new arriving grad students, along with link to BISC Caucus website and BISC Caucus Facebook page.

Meeting with new Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies (Pauline Deschodt)

- First meeting with Associate Dean (Dr. Michael Silverman) and all Graduate Caucus Chairs. Discussed several topics including:
 - Financial support
 - Mentor mentee relationships
 - Mental health
 - Post degree preparation and training
 - EDI (equity, diversity, and identity)
- Students want more transparency in admissions letter as to what we will make, how we will get it, and how that will factor in with tuition.
- Discussed student supervisor relationships
- More professors should be encouraged to take workshops and courses on managing students, etc. Could be recognized as experience levels on Faculty and staff website profiles, which would keep people motivated to do those courses, and gravitate students and post-docs more toward those professors.
- Caucus members suggest and agree it would be fine to have Pauline return to these meetings as a member at large with Yonathan if she desired.
- Overall very positive first meeting with Michael Silverman

c. Motion to approve minutes from March 2019 meeting

Moved by: Pauline Deschodt

Second: Allisson Dennert

Result: Passes unanimously. Abstention: Pauline D.

2. Treasury update

Core account \$1087.13

Trust: \$993.13

3. Committee updates

a. **DGSC:** Jayme: Some students having issues with their supervisor, so drafted a single page document that could go on BISC and Caucus website, in the Survival Guide, and get handed out at orientation. Could also be given to supervisors. Drafted document and looking for feedback. "A student's guide to student-supervisor conflict" prepared by Jayme and Melissa. Melissa and Sarah to work on document to bring back to Caucus with feedback. Email them if you have any thoughts.

** See attached draft at end of these meeting minutes **

- To mitigate these student-supervisor conflict, could have mandatory form or 1-page document to review and fill out with your supervisor when you first come into the program?

- could have wellbeing check on APR between student and supervisor.

- Could have a more official contract between student and supervisor

b. **DSC:** Serena and Yonathan currently ranking GFs, deadline for them is May 3. Announcement will go out in next 3 weeks. Private awards will be announced mid-May. Start on them early. Each different award has different requirements and terms of reference.

c. **GSS:** A few people had to resign. Looking for new Director of University Relations and Director of Finance. Temporarily filled the positions, will be doing campaigns and summer elections. Price of supplying coffee is more than \$20 000 a year. Purpose of the GSS is not to provide coffee. Could potentially be charging \$0.50 a cup and have people pay on an app.

d. **TSSU:** Nobody from TSSU present.

e. **Faculty Mole:** Colin Bailey not present.

4. Adjournment

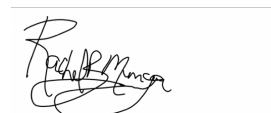
Motion to adjourn the April 2019 meeting

Moved by: Pauline Deschodt

Second by: Allison Dennert

Result: Passes unanimously

Secretary – Rachel Munger



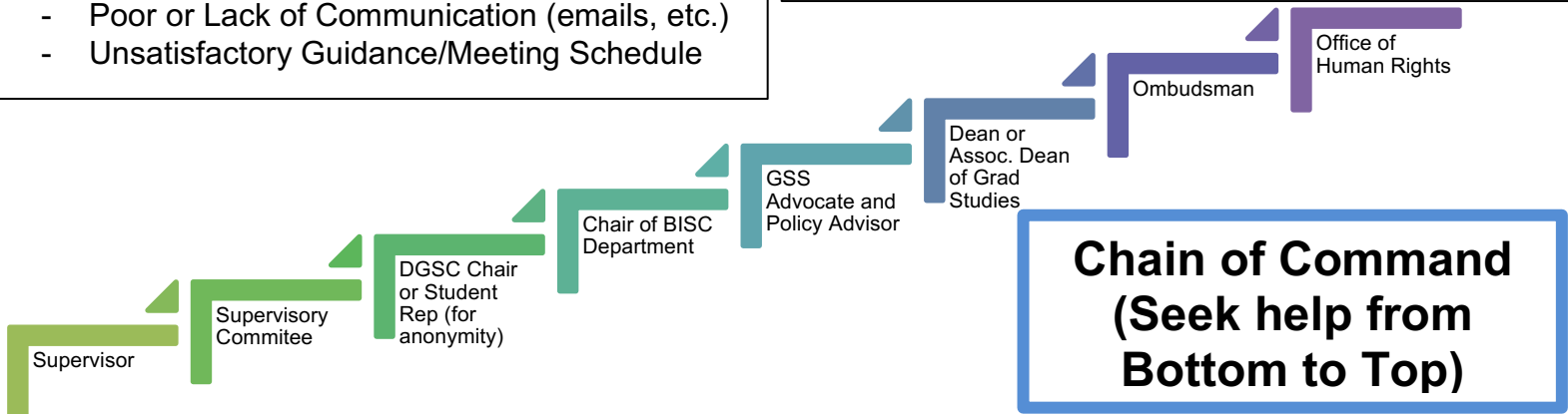
A Student's Guide to Student-Supervisor Conflict

Prepared by Jayme Lewthwaite and Melissa Orobko
DGSC Graduate Student Representatives

Potential Issues

- Funding and Conference Attendance
- Thesis Progress
- Work Habits
- Management Style (micromanager vs. absent)
- Poor or Lack of Communication (emails, etc.)
- Unsatisfactory Guidance/Meeting Schedule

- Publications/Authorship/Intellectual Property
- Leave of Absences
- More serious: verbal or sexual harassment, inappropriate behavior, discrimination



Expectations of Supervisor	Expectations for Both	Expectations of Student
Constructive, timely feedback	Respectful interactions	Focused work on research project
Minimum funding stipend	Regular meetings/discussions about progress in thesis	Meet important deadlines
Clarity re. expectations of research	Time for vacation	Make attempts to obtain scholarships or other funding when possible
Funding to attend conferences when available	Ensure a safe and healthy work environment	Independence (but willing to ask for help when needed)
Advice on future career options	Discussion of funding sources	Attend and present at conferences
Willingness to write letters of support for scholarships, etc.		Completion of degree requirements (courses, APRs, etc.)
Adequate research funding	**adapted from Dr. Margo Moore's "Guide for Graduate Students in Biological Sciences", 2010	Open to constructive criticism/advice

If you Need a Leave of Absence:

1. **Personal Leave** (max # of terms: 3). Must be approved by Senior Supervisor and DGSC Chair.
2. **Parental Leave** (max # of terms: 3 for each child). Must be approved by Dean of Grad Studies; should have support of Senior Supervisor and DGSC Chair).
3. **Medical/Compassionate Leave** (max # of terms: 3 per reason, though can be extended). Same as #2.
4. **Academic Break** (Students in a thesis program are not eligible for an academic break.)

If You Receive an "Unsatisfactory" Progress Rating on your APR:

1. The supervisory committee or the chair of the graduate program committee shall make a written report to the DGSC, and provide a copy to the student.
2. The DGSC will consider whether the student's progress has been satisfactory. The student has the right to appear in person to the committee and may submit relevant materials. Two possible outcomes:
 - require the student to withdraw
 - inform the student of the unsatisfactory progress and require the student to improve in specific ways in a specific period of time
3. The student may appeal any decision from the DGSC to the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (and has the right to appear). The decision from this Committee is final.

What You Can Appeal:

1. **Grades:** May be appealed to the instructor, department chair and, in some cases, faculty dean
2. **Progress Evaluations:** May be appealed to the Senate Graduate Studies Committee
3. **Admission:** Normally, admission decisions may not be appealed; In exceptional circumstances, unsuccessful applicants may appeal re. fairness of the admission procedure to the Senate Appeals Board
4. **Other:** Appeals of decisions on enrollment, graduation, entry/re-entry to a program or any matter relating to academic standing are referred to the Senate Appeals Board.