

Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus
February 24, 2020, 1:30pm

1. Welcome

a. Attendance

Steering Committee:

Chair: Yonathan Uriel

Associate Chair: Melissa Orobko

Secretary: Tess Forstner

Webmaster: Adam Blake

Officers:

Events Committee: Elijah Reyes, Kevin Colmenares, Jamie Chalissery

Diversity Committee: Joanna Enns, Elana Varner, Ranah Chavoshi, Sarah Johnson

Workshop Committee: Yonathan Uriel, Elana Varner, Hayley Reekie

Representatives:

DGSC: Melissa Oroboko, Sarah Johnson

TSSU Rep: Tess Forstner, Allison Dennert

DSC Rep: Serena Wong

GSS Rep: Allison Dennert, Ranah Chavoshi

Faculty Mole: Hannah Watkins

Members: Nico Munoz, Danielle Ogilvie

b. Additions to Agenda

i. Territorial acknowledgment from Serena Wong

1. Steven Brownlee volunteered for next caucus meeting

ii. **Motion to approve minutes from January meeting**

1. Moved by Yonathan Uriel
2. Seconded by Allison Dennert
3. Motion passes unanimously

2. Treasurer's Update: Yonathan Uriel with email from Brett Hodinka

a. Core account: \$1141.41

b. Trust: \$1509.74

3. Representatives' Update

a. DGSC: Melissa Oroboko

i. Meeting this morning. Two adjuncts have contracts up for renewal that are being approved by the department.

ii. BISC 800 course: approved description for the calendar, there's no way to formalize that BISC 800 only gets offered in the Fall other than "institutional memory"

iii. Still improving on consistency on website. Official degree requirements are on the SFU calendar. You are only required to follow the ones that were in place when you started the program.

- iv. Adjunct vs Associate Professor. adjunct is someone not employed at the university. This does not count as biology member that you need on your committee. Associate professor CAN be the bio member for your committee
 - v. Student supervisor conflict: DGSC and department chair developing mechanism to discuss repeat offenders of conflict. Formalizing procedures at the department level for how to deal with student-supervisor conflicts, other than just an ombudsman.
 - b. DSC- Serena Wong
 - i. March or April grad fellowships will open.
 - ii. Undergrad award stuff is the only thing that has been going on currently
 - iii. GRTA: international travel, doesn't necessarily require "international" travel weirdly.
 - c. GSS- Allison Dennert
 - i. AGM met quorum!
 - ii. In the next GSS elections there will be two referendum questions for increasing fees: one is for an advocacy group, and the other is a refugee support program. These students are student funded only. Refugee and Newcomers Student Program apparently supports six refugee students every year. Cool!
 - d. TSSU – Tess Forstner
 - i. Next General Membership Meeting is in Vancouver on Feb 25, 4:30-6:30pm HC 7000
 - ii. Still three open seats for contract committee: one for general member and two for grad facilitators: if you're interested, please email trustees@tssu.ca with a candidate statement or put your name forward at the GM! Requires ~10 hr/wk commitment and is stipended. For more info, get in touch with chief_steward@tssu.ca
 - iii. TSSU is accepting nominations for the following positions: Chief Steward II, Organizer, Treasurer, Secretary, Trustee II, Solidarity & Social Justice Commissioner and Ex-officio. If you're interested in nominating yourself for an open position, complete the [Spring 2020 Nomination Form](#) and return to TSSU (AQ 5129) by February 24 or email to trustees@tssu.ca
 - e. Faculty Meeting – Hannah Watkins
 - i. No update. Meeting next week.
- 4. Committee Update
 - a. Diversity and Inclusion Committee
 - i. **LGBTQ STEM day: March 13th 1-3:30 in bio/chem lounge**
 - 1. Confirmed poster boards, 5 confirmed presenters, achieved full funding for food and beverages!
 - ii. Pride petition sent out
 - b. Workshop Committee
 - i. In contact with Megan Barker about running TA workshop/prepping CV/resume workshop potentially in March.
 - c. Events Committee
 - i. Biology showcase planning: potentially early April. Instead of doing lab talks, maybe individual blitzes

- ii. **Motion to approve up to \$500 from the core account for the Biology Student Showcase**
 - iii. Moved by Yonathan Uriel
 - iv. Seconded by Elana Varner
 - v. Motion passes unanimously
 - vi. Abstain: Allison Dennert, Elijah Reyes, Kevin Colmenares, Jamie Chalissery
- 5. IDEAS retroactive funding approval
 - a. **Motion for caucus approval for funding request for \$500 from GSS to retroactively fund IDEAS 2020. IDEAS took place January 25, 2020. IDEAS is a symposium for grad students. Past funding has come from dept. of biological sciences, BISC caucus, and various PIs. This retroactive funding will cover expenses such as catering throughout the day, speaker awards, gifts, and accommodation for the keynote speaker.**
 - b. Moved by Allison Dennert
 - c. Seconded Yonathan Uriel
 - d. Motion passes unanimously
 - e. Abstain: Nico Munoz, Steven Brownlee, Hannah Watkins
- 6. Liz Steves & Megan Barker – TA Reference Guide
 - a. Desire to make detailed how-to TA reference guide for biology TAs. Ex/ how to lead field courses, manage labs, etc.
- 7. Proposing a new grant for international conferences?
 - a. Proposed by Pauline Deschodt. TMRAs aren't quite enough for international conferences. GRTA needs to be away for three weeks only during the first three years of Phd, so the department is reluctant to give these out and almost no one qualifies. Maybe have a \$1000 travel grant for international conferences? Maybe bring up this idea at the faculty meeting.
- 8. Adjournment
 - a. **Motion to adjourn to February meeting (2:26pm)**
 - i. Moved by Yonathan Uriel
 - ii. Second by Allison Dennert
 - iii. Motion passes unanimously

Tesia Forstner - Secretary

