

Biological Sciences Graduate Caucus  
September 29, 2020, 12:30pm  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

1. Welcome

a. Attendance

**Steering Committee:**

Chair: Nancy Yang

Associate Chair: Tess Forstner

Treasurer: Brett Hodinka

Secretary: Gwyn Case

Webmaster: Nancy Yang

**Officers:**

Events Committee: Elijah Reyes

Diversity Committee: Steven Brownlee, Joanna Enns, Elena Varner, Ranah Chavoshi

Workshop Committee: Hayley Reekie

**Representatives:**

DGSC: Hannah Watkins, Sarah Johnson

TSSU Rep: Steven Brownlee, Allison Dennert

DSC Rep: Rachel Munger, Sarah Gravel

GSS Rep: Mason King

Faculty Mole: Danielle Ogilvie

**Members:** Melissa Orobko

**Guests:** Ed Graham (TSSU)

b. Additions to agenda

i. No territorial acknowledgement this month. Volunteers welcome!

**ii. Motion to approve August meeting minutes**

1. Motioned by Nancy Yang

2. Seconded by Allison Dennert

3. Motion passes unanimously

2. Representatives updates

a. Treasurer's update (Brett Hodinka)

i. Core account: 2000.00

ii. Trust account: 2558.71

3. TSSU rep (Ed Graham)

a. Changes have been made to the TSSU steward election system: previously stewards were elected through caucus. System has been updated to be more centralized, ensure members who are not graduate students (and not part of a caucus) have a voice.

- b. Steward nomination form can be found here:  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfllomO6TsLXdctucPQDASypmoj5A-Qzd8rN4VQz\\_xlYWtb-Q/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfllomO6TsLXdctucPQDASypmoj5A-Qzd8rN4VQz_xlYWtb-Q/viewform)
  - c. BISC is allowed up to 8 stewards, if you're interested in being one of them get in touch with Stephen ([sbrownle@sfu.ca](mailto:sbrownle@sfu.ca)) and Allison ([adennert@sfu.ca](mailto:adennert@sfu.ca)).
  - d. Research assistants (RAs) were unionized last year but bargaining is unfortunately behind schedule. Thursday Oct 1 at 5pm there will be a special general meeting to vote on RA contract priorities (such as workplace health and safety, benefits, etc.). Please come!
  - e. There will also be two drop-in sessions if you have any questions about the contract, bargaining process, etc.: Wednesday September 30 at 9-10am and at 5-6 pm. Here's the link: [bluejeans.com/tssu7/1978](http://bluejeans.com/tssu7/1978)
4. Representatives updates, continued
- a. DGSC updates (Sarah Johnson, Hannah Watkins)
    - i. No meeting this month, so no updates.
  - b. DSC updates (Rachel Munger)
    - i. Departmental scholarship committee chairship has passed from Jonathan Moore to Leithan M'Gonigal. Bernie Crespie is on leave, so Nick Dulvy is stepping in as a committee member on the DSC.
    - ii. The committee is currently reviewing Vanier applications and will be providing feedback prior to the final application submission.
    - iii. Ranking of PhD NSERC applications will happen soon!
  - c. Faculty mole (Danielle Ogilvie)
    - i. No updates relevant to the caucus.
    - ii. The caucus discussed the merits and logistics of encouraging the BISC faculty to form a EDI committee.
  - d. GSS (Allison Dennert)
    - i. The GSS sent around a Covid-19 childcare survey. Please fill it out! Here's the link: <https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/GSS-COVID19Childcare>
    - ii. Elected an interim director of student life and other small pieces of internal business.
    - iii. Allison gave a very informative presentation about what the GSS is and what it does.
  - e. TSSU rep (Steven Brownlee)
    - i. The deadline to opt out of Guard.me is TODAY (September 30). If you are an international student who will not physically be in Canada you will want to opt out or else you will be paying \$281 for nothing. Here's a helpful link: <https://www.tssu.ca/guard-me/>
    - ii. Also for international students not physically in Canada, be on guard against attempts to renegotiate your funding offer letters. And if you are

having trouble getting your SIN, that unfortunately means you are not eligible for TAships and may have trouble getting RAships.

- iii. If you are a TA/TM remember that everything you do related to your position counts as work hours and you do not have to work more than your allotted hours. Track your hours!

## 5. Committee updates

### a. Diversity & Inclusion Committee (Elana Varner)

- i. The D&I committee would like to remind everyone that their meetings are open to all! People with questions or concerns about what D&I initiatives are or what the BISC D&I committee specifically does are welcome to join the meetings.
- ii. The D&I committee is planning to send out a survey to graduate students similar to that sent out last year, and a similar survey to undergraduate students.
- iii. **Motion to pass 2020 survey questions for distribution to BISC graduates and undergraduates**
  - 1. Motioned by: Elana Varner
  - 2. Seconded by: Nancy Yang
  - 3. Motion passes 9-0
- iv. Committee has been working on a “landing page” for outreach for BIPOC scholarship and hopes to hire a professional copywriter (Frankie Katz) to offer edits and revisions. Committee would like request \$100 toward this end. Some cool things Frankie has worked on:  
<https://www.kaianalytics.com/>, <https://www.triangleinvestigations.com/>
- v. **Motion to pay \$100 to Frankie Katz as an honorarium for work on BIPOC scholarship landing page.**
  - 1. Motion by Elana Varner
  - 2. Seconded by Sarah Johnson
  - 3. Passes 8-0, Ranah Chavoshi abstains

### b. Workshop Committee (Hayley Reekie)

- i. Currently working on putting together a workshop on creating CVs for teaching jobs with Megan Barker. A date will hopefully be coming soon.

### c. Events committee (Elijah Reyes)

- i. Halloween party will be upcoming and ideas are being brainstormed. Virtual costume competition and virtual pumpkin carving competition are options.
- ii. The events committee is seeking volunteers! If you're interested, shoot an email to [bisc-events@sfu.ca](mailto:bisc-events@sfu.ca).

## 6. Chairs update (Nancy Yang)

- i. No updates.

ii. **Motion to reimburse Jaime Chalissery \$140.00 from BISC graduate caucus core funds for gift cards used in fall icebreakers.**

1. Motioned by: Nancy Yang
2. Seconded by Ranah Chavoshi
3. Passes 14-0, Brett Hodinka abstains (Jaime Chalissery not present)

**7. Motion to adjourn meeting (2:30)**

- a. Motion to adjourn: Nancy Yang
- b. Motion seconded: Brett Hodinka
- c. Motion passes 9-0

Gwyn Case – Secretary

