

## **BISC graduate student caucus meeting**

October 13, 2022, 2:00 pm PST

*In-person in B9242 Conference Room*

### **1. Welcome & Intro**

#### **Attendance:**

Brett Hodinka (Chair, Events Committee)

Steven Brownlee (TSSU Steward, DGSC, EDI Committee, GSS)

Allison Dennert (Associate Chair, TSSU Steward, GSS)

Hanna Roodenrijs (Webmaster)

Sherry Young (TSSU Steward)

Claire Attridge (DGSC)

Emmanuel Hung (Treasurer, Secretary)

Hannah Watkins (Member at Large)

Janesse Holmes (member)

Raven Barbera (member)

Genavieve Desjardin (member)

Heather Tso (member)

Sachithrani Kannangara (member)

Adam Gilewski (member)

Denno Dalrymple (member)

Cole Rankin (member)

Asim Renyard (member)

#### *Motion to approve the September meeting minutes*

- Proposed by Brett Hodinka
- Seconded by Hannah Roodenrijs
- Motion passes unanimously

#### i) Chair's Update

- **Wage Subsidy**
  - o Brett will have a discussion with Tony concerning how to get the wage subsidy disbursed equally to all grad students. It should amount to ~\$100 per person.

### **2. Representative updates**

#### i) Treasurer's update (Emmanuel Hung)

- Account updates:
  - o Core account: \$1,130.08

- Trust account: \$2,181.27
- Breakdown of BISC grad caucus welcome party costs:
  - \$248.38 spent on pizza
    - department funds cover \$200 and GSS funds cover \$48.38
  - \$169.18 + \$45.24 spent on alcoholic beverages
    - caucus core account funds cover \$169.18
  - \$162.44 spend on food (misc.)
    - GSS funds cover \$162.44

*Motion for the caucus to reimburse Sherry Young from the caucus Core account with \$45.00 for the purchase of gift cards distributed as bingo prizes at the BISC grad caucus welcome party held on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022.*

- Proposed by Brett Hodinka
- Seconded by Allison Dennert
- Motion passes (16 in favour, 0 against, Sherry Young abstains)

*Motion for the caucus to reimburse Brett Hodinka from the caucus cash box with \$45.24 for the purchase of beverages for the BISC grad caucus welcome party held on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022.*

- Proposed by Emmanuel Hung
- Seconded by Allison Dennert
- Motion passes (16 in favour, 0 against, Brett Hodinka abstains)

*Motion for the caucus to reimburse Brett Hodinka from the caucus Core account with \$169.18 for the purchase of beverages for the BISC grad caucus welcome party held on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022.*

- Proposed by Emmanuel Hung
- Seconded by Allison Dennert
- Motion passes (16 in favour, 0 against, Brett Hodinka abstains)

#### iv) GSS (Allison Dennert)

- The GSS received an important update from the TSSU about RA arbitration, which was a huge win for stipended research graduate students. Please see Steven's TSSU update for more details.
- The GSS is continuing with its student COLA campaign to advocate for increases in support for graduate students. Two important opportunities have recently come up to provide feedback on the university's budgets and strategic planning. Please consider answering these surveys and providing feedback as soon as you're able!
- SFU has launched its 2022 Tuition Conversation Survey, where they are asking for student feedback on tuition costs, structure, and implementation for research grads. The link to the survey can be found in the October 5th email from Graduate and

Postdoctoral Studies on “October Updates for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Fellows”, or accessed here: <https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/Q7HG7MZ>

- SFU has launched its 2023-2028 Strategic Research Plan and Implementation Plan for community feedback. Page 2 of the implementation plan in particular has some amazing updates for graduate student support here, though I think we’d all agree that explicit support for MSc students would be an excellent addition to this plan:

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#### SUPPORTING RESEARCH GRADUATE STUDENTS

*Challenge:* Graduate students are key drivers of research activity in an institution.

Vancouver is an attractive destination, but the high cost of living presents a challenge to our graduate students.

*Action:* Working closely with the provost, the dean of graduate and postdoctoral studies, SFU Advancement and with graduate students (through the Graduate Student Society), we will study ways to shift our limited resources to better support research graduate students. This includes study of tuition waivers, scholarships and bursaries. We will also work with SFU Advancement, provincial and federal funding agencies to grow resources available for graduate student support both for existing graduate students and to grow our research graduate student body. **Within a year, we will set a university-wide minimum funding level for PhD students.**

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If you have feedback for SFU regarding their support of research graduate students and a minimum stipend level for PhD as well as MSc students, please email [SRPUfeedback@sfu.ca](mailto:SRPUfeedback@sfu.ca).

- Additional links:

SRP Website: <https://www.sfu.ca/research/about/strategic-research-plan/new-srp>

Draft Strategic Plan (4 pages): <https://www.sfu.ca/research/sites/default/files/2022-10/SFU-2023-2028-SRP-draft-Oct-2022.pdf>

Implementation Plan (4 pages): <https://www.sfu.ca/research/sites/default/files/2022-10/SFU-SRP-Implementation-Plan-draft-Oct-2022.pdf>

#### v) TSSU (Steven Brownlee)

- **RA Arbitration Victory**
  - RAs will now be considered as part of the Teaching Support Staff Union (TSSU)
  - Discussion now revolves around figuring out what employee pay codes and benefits RAs qualify for.
  - SFU has until November 14 to bargain with the TSSU on new RA compensation and benefits. By Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, SFU must implement the transition to recognize and include RAs as employees.

### 3. Committee updates

#### i) Diversity and Inclusion (Steven Brownlee)

- Sherry will be capturing action shots at the next caucus meeting for a promotional video for the BIPOC scholarship. Reach out to Sherry ([sherry\\_young@sfu.ca](mailto:sherry_young@sfu.ca)) if you have any ideas for the video!

#### ii) Events (Brett Hodinka)

- There will be a graduate student pumpkin carving contest – tentatively planning for it to be held sometime in late October (24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>).

*Motion for the caucus to approve Brett Hodinka to use \$100 from the caucus Core account for the purchase of pumpkins for a graduate pumpkin carving contest held in late October (24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>) 2022.*

- Proposed by Emmanuel Hung
- Seconded by Hannah Roodenrijs
- Motion passes (16 in favour, 0 against, Brett Hodinka abstains)

*Motion to adjourn the meeting*

- Proposed by Brett Hodinka
- Seconded by Allison Dennert
- Motion passes unanimously