

SFU Department of Biological Sciences Graduate Student Caucus
July 2023 Meeting Agenda

13 July 2023 @ 2:00PM PST
Via Zoom

1. Welcome

- Attendance
 - Ramis Rafay (Events, Web Master)
 - Emmanuel Hung (Member at large, DSC)
 - Raven Barbera (Associate Chair)
 - Mathew Gasparin (General Member)
 - Soobin Yim (DGSC)
 - Sam Meraj (Treasurer)
 - Brett Hodinka (Chair)
 - Kaitlin Bruzzini (General Member)
 - Em Lim (DSC)
 - Claire Attridge (DGSC)
 - Steven Brownlee (DGSC, TSSU, GSS)
 - Sarah Johnson (EDI)
 - Genavieve Desjardin (Secretary)

- Motion to approve May 2023 meeting minutes (no June meeting)
 - Motioned by Brett Hodinka
 - Seconded by Sam Meraj
 - Motion carries unanimously

2. Chair's Report

- Looking for an individual that would be eager to take over the chair position! Brett is resigning at the end of the semester. Email Brett with any questions about the position. Pays nothing but looks great on your CV!
- Looking for nominations for the grad hosted speaker. Send an email to Brett with the individuals name, and a few sentences on what they work on, where they work and why they would be a great speaker. Reminder that the department is looking to have speakers located in North America.

3. Treasurer's Update (Sam Meraj)

Core Account: 1649.37\$

Trust Account: 3211.55\$

4. Representatives' Updates

- DGSC
 - Local bisc department agree on a stipen increase to help with the cost of living. The minimum stipen has increased to increase to 26000, following an additional 2000\$ for 2023 and 2024.

- Eligible students Masters (within the first two years) and PHDs (within their first four years) should keep an eye out a random TARA in the fall, as this is the BISC bump up. More information on if you will actually need to accept the TARA is coming.
- DSC
 - Still assessing awards, and they are editing the criteria to increase the number of individuals that are considered.
 - Certain donor awards applications have low competition, specifically when applying for smaller awards! Apply because even if you don't fit the criteria you can be considered.
- GSS
 - PHD students within the first four years and a CGPA of 3.5 and higher will be eligible for an award of 5400\$ for the year (split between the semesters). More announcements will follow closer to September.
 - Senate graduate studies have proposed changes on leaves of work to no longer require doctors' notes and remove the 3 term leave limit
- TSSU
 - Currently at the bargaining table (again) during the meeting. Look out for more information in your email inbox.
 - TSSU is trying to get RAs recognized as part of the union, so if you haven't already, they are asking for you to sign the RA card. Come to our next meeting to learn more!
- Faculty Meeting
 - May and June meeting updates: Two new hires approved, one for a plant biologist and one for an insect biologist to help replenish the MPM program.
 - Megan barker created a new teaching course BISC 805 that covers teaching in academia. This will be open to BPK, MBB and BISC students.
 - Looking for input on BISC 800 course from the BISC grad caucus come to a meeting to discuss.

5. Committee Updates

- Diversity and Inclusion
 - Currently no new updates
- Events
 - Further planning on Fall Welcome BBQ will happen over Slack, will be held the first week of September. Don't hesitate to join the slack if you have a passion for event planning or join the next meeting!

6. Adjournment

- Motioned by Brett Hodinka
- Seconded by Steven Bownlee
- Motioned passes unanimously!