

BISC Graduate Caucus Treasurer: Transition Report

Last updated Fall 2019: Pauline Deschodt

List of Supplementary Documents:

- Template of Grad Caucus Budget (included below)
- Template of Grad-Hosted Speaker Budget
- List of potential prize sources for Winterfest as well as contact info
- Example Caucus Grant application to the GSS (included below)

Petty cash:

- Maximum \$50 reimbursements
- Enter in logbook; receipts are kept in case of an audit
- Primarily used for t-shirt sales and if we sell beer at the Welcome BBQ
- If the balance gets too high, you can deposit it in our Core account with the GSS
- We don't need to motion to spend petty cash, but I would encourage it anyway, just to keep the caucus as transparent and accountable as possible

Sources of Funding

- The vast majority of our funding comes from student services fees that each graduate student in Biology pays (and is thus different every year, based on enrollment)
- We have two accounts: Core and Trust. They are similar to a Cheque (Core) and Savings (Trust) account. Our Core account gets topped up every year about \$2000 from enrollment. Whatever we don't spend gets deposited into our Trust account at the end of the year (which is currently sitting at about \$1100).
- HOWEVER: the GSS put in place rule that they will reclaim 50% of any unspent Core account \$ at the end of the year. We can motion and ask them to transfer 100% ahead of time, but it's usually best to spend from the Core account and leave the Trust account alone as much as you can. The GSS's reasoning is that they want to encourage the caucuses to spend their funds on their members instead of letting it languish in the accounts.

Checking Account Balances

- To check Core account funding, simply visit this webpage: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1D6dZcqqtqU7vZqgc7Da3HT10fl1n_UT4ohwyXmvKDvQ/pub?output=html
- Unfortunately, the only way to check the Trust account is to email the GSS and ask. This is the email address you would contact: help@sfgradsociety.ca or jeanette.ordonez@sfgradsociety.ca
- You will need to provide account balances for each of these accounts at every Grad Caucus meeting.

Financial Motions

- Make sure you abstain from any motions regarding caucus finances, or else the GSS will not reimburse the expense
- Make sure the wording specifically states which account (Core or Trust, or petty cash)
- If it's before the expense happens, the caucus should agree on a maximum amount to spend and then the motion should reflect that (i.e. "Jayme motions that the Grad Caucus spends up to \$200 from the Core account on pumpkins for the Halloween party")
- If it's after the expense happened, then the amount should be exact (i.e. "Jayme motions that Leslie get reimbursed \$123.56 from the Core account for pumpkins purchased for the Halloween party")
- The GSS will reimburse for alcohol expenses.

Reimbursements

- Although the Chair, Associate Chair and Treasurer all technically have the power to reimburse someone, I would HIGHLY ENCOURAGE that only you (the Treasurer) is doing it; this is necessary to keep track of where Caucus money is going.
- Email confirmation of the reimbursement goes to whoever is getting reimbursed, as well as whoever issued the reimbursement (i.e. you). Thus, if the Chair fills it out, you will not be notified, and can only find out from the Core account spreadsheet later on.
- To issue a reimbursement with the GSS, use this form: https://sfu-gss.formstack.com/forms/cheque_req
- You will need the minutes from the Caucus meeting where we approved the motion to spend the money, as well as a scanned (or photo) copy of the ITEMIZED receipt (i.e. it should say what you spent the money on, not just a credit card receipt with only the total).
- Takes up to 2 weeks for the GSS to prepare the cheque, and then the reimbursee will be notified when it is ready.

Additional Sources of Funding

- The Grad-Hosted Speaker is one of our biggest and most expensive events. Typically, the Biology Department will pay for the Speaker's flight and accommodations, but we are in charge of everything else.
- In the past, I have sought additional funding for the Grad-Hosted Speaker from both the Department of Graduate Studies as well as the Faculty of Science. Both have given about \$200-300 depending on the year. You will need to prepare a budget for them, and then will be reimbursed after the event once you provide receipts. IMPORTANTLY: both are pretty strict about reimbursing alcohol (i.e. for the post-seminar reception at Club Ilia). So double-check with them about this. If they will not reimburse it, use either the Biology Department's contribution (but check with them first), or the Grad Caucus's funding.

- The Biology Department is also a source of funding for the Graduate Symposium in April (~\$200), depending on the event.. if it is academic in nature, they will agree (you email the Chair to ask). If it's bowling, you may have a harder time ☺
- Finally: the GSS is a huge source of additional funding. I have successfully applied for money from them for many events (i.e. Grad Symposium, Grad-Hosted Speaker, Welcome BBQ) from anywhere from \$500-\$750. You have to apply pretty far in advance though, so double check their deadlines on their website: <http://sfugradsociety.ca/caucuses/caucus-funding/>

Caucus Events and Expenditures

- I have included a breakdown of typical events and their costs to help!
- Our big events are:
 1. Welcome BBQ (~450-500\$)
 2. Halloween Party (~200-450\$)
 3. *Christmas Party (although the Department usually pays for most of this, we just have to help with getting prizes) – Organized by the department, grad students can be asked to be in charge of the music but we don't do entertainment or gifts anymore.*
 4. Grad-Hosted Speaker (we usually get a lot of outside funding for this; I've included a detailed breakdown of this)
 5. Graduate Symposium (eligible for funding from the Department; we usually spend about 500-700\$ on this, depending on how much we have left in our Core account to spend!)
- Throughout the year, we will have many societies/conference organizations asking for financial help from us. In general, we usually contribute to these events under the assumption that they will benefit at least some Biology grad students. We usually cap our contribution at \$200 maximum. Here are the usual applicants and when they usually apply: ToxTalks (Jan-March), PPMABC (Dec-March), Coastal Connections (variable), IDEAS (January)

BISC Caucus Treasurer, to Do List:

June/July:

1. Have a caucus meeting and pass a **motion** to have any additional funds left over at the end of the summer semester moved to the trust fund.

Spring and/or Fall Semester:

1. Grad Hosted Speaker
 - a. Tweak budget from previous year to suit the invited speaker and location for events
NB: If you want food and beverages in an SFU room, they need to be catered (e.g. Highland Pub or Renaissance(?))
 - b. Request funds from:
 - a. Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies
 - i. Eric Tseung, Manager, Financial & Award Systems, grad_finance@sfu.ca
 - ii. Cheque to GSS c/o BISC Grad Caucus needs to be requested, picked up and deposited to the Trust Account
 - b. Dean of Science
 - i. Arlene Sullivan, Budget coordinator, 778-782-9585, scbudget@sfu.ca
 - ii. Cheque to GSS c/o BISC Grad Caucus needs to be requested, picked up and deposited to the Trust Account
 - c. Department of Biology
 - i. Isabell Côté, Department Chair, 778-782-3705, biscchr@sfu.ca
 - ii. Melissa Stephens, Chair's Secretary, 778-782-3535, biscsec@sfu.ca
 - iii. Kathryn Coukell, Manager, Admin. Services, 778-782-3292, biscmas@sfu.ca
 - iv. They will cover expenses directly (e.g. hotel room, post-departmental seminar social) or receipts can be claimed via an expense report
 - d. GSS Grant
 - i. See <http://www.sfugradsociety.ca/Caucus-Funding.html> for deadlines

Notes:

-For the caucus to receive cheques they must be made out to: "SFU Graduate Student Society c/o Biology Graduate Caucus"

- help@sfugradsociety.ca (to inquire about account balances, person is Faith Howard)

- Petty cash money CAN be transferred from core/trust account, or can be gathered from T-shirt, beer, ticket, etc sales. Payments under \$50 are ALLOWED but preferably for amounts close to that, get people to fill out a cheque request form (treasurer needs to sign it).
- What date should be filled in the 'date' field the core and trust fund accounting spreadsheet?

EXPENSES						
Category	Details	Budgeted Amount	Approximate Actual Cost	Outside Contributions		
Events						
BISC Welcome Party	BBQ Food	\$200				
	Party at Pub	\$250				
	Prizes	\$30				
	TOTAL		451.46			
Halloween	BBQ Food	\$200				
	Pumpkins	\$100				
	TOTAL		191.88			
Winterfest	Prizes	\$50	50			
Grad-Hosted Speaker	Lunch with Speaker	\$210	193.72	<- got \$210 from Faculty of Science		
	Pre-Seminar Reception	\$0	\$0	<- Paid for by BISC Department		
	Post-Seminar Reception	\$490	488.63	<- \$100 from BISC Department, \$290 from Dean of Grad Studies Office		
	Dinner with Speaker	\$100	95.74	<- \$100 from BISC Department		
	Workshop Reception	\$80	91.43	<- got \$80 from Faculty of Science		
	Gift for Speaker	\$50	84.57			
	Speaker Per Diem	\$100	60			
	TOTAL		820.37			
Grad Symposium	Food	\$500	491.21	<- Paid for by a GSS Grant		
	Drinks	\$500	650.88			
	Prizes	\$40	40			
	TOTAL		1182.09			
Sponsorship						
	Tox Talks	\$200	200			
	Professional Pest Management Association	\$200	200			
	Coastal Connections Vancouver	\$200	0			
	TOTAL		\$400			
TOTAL			\$1,825			
REVENUE						
T-shirt Sales	23 t-shirts	\$230				
GSS Allotment		\$2,000				
TOTAL			\$2,230			



The Graduate Student Society at Simon Fraser University

GSS Caucus Grant Application Form

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Caucus / Graduate

Student Constituency Group:
(Full Name, No Acronyms)

Biological Science Graduate Caucus

Name of Contact Person:

Jane Doe

Email:

email@sfu.ca

Phone#:

1-555-555-5555

Name of event:

Graduate Student Symposium

Date of event:

*(mm/dd/yy) or
range of dates*

March 27, 2015

Location of
event:

Highland Pub

DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

Description of proposed
event/project/initiative:

The Graduate Symposium will be modeled after last year's highly successful event, which was a "Cross-pollination of the minds" event between students in the department. Everyone who attends will be divided into different groups with members who do not belong to the same research group. Together, they have an hour to come up with a research proposal that combines all of their research topics into one cohesive and interesting research proposal. They will then present their proposal in a 3 minute presentation to a panel of judges (professors in our department). The winning teams(s) will receive gift certificates to a local shop. There will be food provided and 1 pitcher of beer for every group. Door prizes will also be awarded.

PROGRAM

Please attach a copy of the proposed program detailing the event schedule.

GSS Grant Application Form - Continued

Graduate Student Symposium

Name of event: _____

Description of how this event will directly benefit/strengthen your Caucus or Graduate Student Constituency Group specifically:

This event will provide a fantastic networking opportunity within our department and strengthen existing relationships. Additionally, it will challenge students to communicate and summarize their research to others who may be unfamiliar with the field or topic, and synthesize several fields of research into a novel research question or idea.

Description of how this event will directly benefit/strengthen the larger university community:

Better communication between research groups will allow opportunities for potential collaborations and foster broader research questions. Graduate students will gain invaluable experience towards conducting interdisciplinary research that they can draw upon in the future.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Describe what attempts, if any, have been made by your group to make your event more cost-effective:

The venue is expected to be of no cost to us, and the event itself only requires an overhead projector and clear projector sheets. The only cost incurred will be the food/beverages and raffle prizes.

List the contributions your Caucus/group has made toward the event:

**a contribution from your Caucus is required*

The Caucus would like to split the majority of the expenses with the GSS, and we will contribute \$500 towards the event.

List the additional sources of funding you have applied for or requested:

Source(s)	Amount Requested	Check status as of time of application		
		Approved	Denied	Pending
Dept of Biological Sciences	\$200	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

BUDGET

Please attach a copy of the budget, using the template that best matches your event. Please add additional information or make changes to the template to meet your event's specific needs.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Anticipated number of attendees:

100

Past history of the event:

Last year was the first time this event was run, had a turnout of ~ 100 people and was successful enough that we would like to repeat it this year.
This event was partially funded last year by a GSS grant for \$550.

Caucus Core Funding Available:

1808.12

Caucus Trust Account Balance:

1337.24

See Caucus Funding spreadsheet on GSS website for core funding info; contact GSS Office Administrator (help@sfugradsociety.ca) for trust account balance.

Amount requested via GSS Grant:

\$500

Maximum amount: \$750