

**Chemistry Graduate Caucus**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**MBB Lounge 8000-Level**  
**11:04 a.m., 20 February 2012**

*In Attendance:*

Reagan Belan (President), Shira Halperin (VP/GSS Councillor), Brandy Kinhead (Treasurer), Stanley Chang (Secretary), Michael Jones (DGSC Rep), Danielle Wilson (Social Coordinator), Ryan Roberts (TSSU Steward), Alisa Paterson (Social Coordinator).

*Regrets:*

Kyle Greenway (TSSU Steward), Graeme Suppes (TSSU Steward), Venugopal Rao Challa (TSSU Steward), Jarod Moore (Grad Info Coordinator/Sports Rep), Hope Fan (Sports Rep).

*Guest:*

Christina Batstone (GSS Advocate).

**1. Issues Pertaining to Graduate Student Academic Policies**

- Tuition fees for international students:
  - The GSS Advocate informed that the university is currently considering raising tuition fees for international students to offset recent budget shortfall. Currently, the only other school in BC that has equal fees for domestic and international students is UNBC.
  - The GSS currently has no official stance on this change, but are seeking opinions from all student bodies.
  - Of note, this policy change will not come into effect until the 2013/14 academic year, and would not affect students already enrolled in the program.
  - This differential tuition fee currently applies to undergraduate students, but not graduate students.
  - The Caucus noted that should the fees get raised, the students should also receive a tuition relief with enough time spent in the program.
  - The amount the university is seeking to raise is currently unclear. As a guideline, UBC international graduate students pay about \$1000 extra compared to domestic graduate students, and receive no tuition relief.
- Tuition relief:
  - The Caucus noted that the tuition relief issue has affected some students in the past, and the exact number of students affected might be obtained from Lynn Wood (Chemistry Graduate Secretary).

- The Caucus speculates that this issue may be due to a glitch in the student services system, in which case we will need to also work with the DGS Office to fix the problem.
- Teaching Assistantship (TA) assignments:
  - According to Reagan Belan, Kyle Greenway was in communication with Yolanda Broderick (Manager, Administrative Services) regarding TA assignments.
  - Yolanda Broderick has kindly offered that she will cooperate with the Caucus to address any concerns regarding these assignments.
- Research Assistantship wage information:
  - The GSS Advocate encouraged graduate students to fill out an online survey regarding Research Assistantship wage issues. Those who require more feedback regarding the questionnaire can also fill out survey in person in the GSS Office.
  - The Caucus noted that the Summer semester might be the best time to complete the survey, as this is the term when most graduate students receive a Research Assistantship from their supervisor.
- Qualifying semester fees:
  - The Caucus needs to find out from Lynn Wood (Chemistry Graduate Secretary) the students in the qualifying semester prior to any further actions.
- Supervisor-student relationship workshop:
  - The GSS Advocate promoted a lunch & learn event in the near future that aims to inform and get feedback from graduate students on how to improve their relationship with their senior supervisor.
  - The event might be held in early April, at about 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

## **2. Upcoming Social**

- Michael Jones will be in charge of booking the GSS Lounge the upcoming games night social for Friday, March 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Danielle Wilson will be in charge of obtaining insurance.

## **3. Student Invited Speaker**

- Shira Halperin will introduce Prof. Mohammad Movassaghi, the student invited speaker for the Department of Chemistry seminar series.
- The Caucus will need to find out the budget as well as any additional responsibilities from Prof. Tim Storr in hosting this event.

## **4. Future Events**

- TSSU strike forum: Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>
- GSS AGM: Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>

**Meeting concluded at 11:50 a.m.**