

Chemistry Graduate Association at Simon Fraser University

Meeting Minutes January 12th, 2017

In attendance

Ali Nejatie (President), Joe Egan (Vice President), Nas Yousefi (Treasurer, TSSU Representative), Garrett Muir (Secretary), Diego Martelino (Social Coordinator), Matthew Deen (Sports Representative), Gregory MacNeil (Social Coordinator), Curtis Gibbs (TSSU Representative), Ania Sergeenko (DGSC Representative, TSSU Representative), Audrey Taylor (GSS Representative).

Regrets

David Ester (Second Alternate GSS Rep), Cindy Wu (Alternate DGSC Rep), Tasleem Muzaffar (Information Coordinator, TSSU Representative), Heather Baroodi (TSSU Representative), Fatima Garcia (First Alternate GSS Rep.), Parisa Shiri (TSSU Representative), Xiaoyun Yuan (Kelsy) (TSSU Representative), David Guan (TSSU Representative).

Call to Order

- Meeting was called to order at 9:30 in the Shrum Science Centre C9034.

Appointment of the Chair

- MOVED to appoint Ali Nejatie (President) as Chair for this meeting.

Moved by: Nas Yousefi

Seconded by: Matthew Dean

MOTION CARRIED.

Ali Nejatie was appointed Chair for this meeting.

Appointment of the Secretary

- MOVED to appoint Garrett Muir (Secretary) as Secretary for this meeting.

Moved by: Joe Egan

Seconded by: Curtis Gibbs

MOTION CARRIED.

Garrett Muir was appointed Secretary for this meeting.

News

- **A reminder about the winter social**
 - It cost the caucus about \$850. We paid that plus \$1000 to cover some debt to the department.

- **January Social**
 - There could be a smaller social in later January, but this depends on when the oral competition is held. If the oral competition is held in later February, a small social will be organized for late January.

- **GSS Information**
 - The past two meetings focused on the executive director hired by the GSS. This position is a salary position intended to guide the GSS. Their initial performance evaluation was not favourable. The GSS members are seeking external consultation for how to develop a more formal evaluation process for the executive director.
 - There are also reports from governance positions, which are elected positions in the university admin. They have discussed mainly finances and university relations. They are looking for volunteers to order to obtain input on the 5-year academic plan. This input can include how departments need to function, expectations for departments, and any other similar input. This can be done by contacting Chantelle Turpin, who can give more information.
 - They discussed the housing working group. This is intended to help establish more housing for grad students on campus. Grad student housing used to be co-op style, but the building was torn down and wasn't replaced. The university is now getting more money from the government and spending it on increased housing, which could include graduate housing.
 - A proposal has been put forward to make one of these graduate buildings a green residence. This will involve interdisciplinary interaction and promotes discussion between disciplines through events such as planned dinner with people from other departments. The student who is promoting this will give a presentation at the next meeting. The university has given no straight answer as to whether they will give more graduate housing. There is a housing group that students can volunteer in to give more input. More information about this was sent in a previous e-mail.
 - There is also a student initiative to give RA's better working rights. They do not have any criteria for their job because they are not considered employees at the moment. A criteria for RA's is being developed.

- **TSSU**

- There is a general meeting on January 22. This will include a free dinner. The union also posts outside GSS lounge about their socials. TSSU TA temp day was last Friday. Students can present a workshop there if they want.

- **DGSC**

- The caucus representative met with the new chair of the committee. The new chair has read the proposal to include graduate students in the committee and is interested in doing this.
 - They also talked about graduate fellowship (GF) allocation. People who have already applied for GF's are still encouraged to apply because the committee notices people who have had good applications and not everyone who has not received a GF applies.
 - As well, the terms of reference for the DGSC have never formally been written because they wanted to be flexible. This criteria may need to change and formal terms of reference may be written..
- It is also noted that faculty can come to all caucus meetings and that the minutes are posted on the caucus website.
- The caucus can also be supplied with the DGSC agenda before every meeting and discuss if the caucus wants anything to be brought up in the meetings.
- In the past, there has been a communication problem with issues that the DGSC decides on. This includes CHEM 802 counting or not counting towards a Ph.D. degree depending on when the student started. Students have still not been formally notified on these matters.
- The DGSC slack page can be used to talk about any more issues that could be brought up at the committee meetings.
 - The President's scholarship is one of these issues. It is gone from our department but exists elsewhere. Currently, the President's scholarship is tied up with the GF scholarships and students have to have their supervisors include that their student should be considered for the President's scholarship in their reference letter. However, this has not been formally presented to students.
 - The criteria for the President's scholarship has also not been adequately communicated to students. The criteria are for the student to have been at SFU for a certain number of semesters, be in the Ph.D. program, and be in good academic standing.

- **Slack**

- A reminder to add people to channels when make so that members can join channels.

- **Serving it right**
 - Caucus members need to get it before the next social.

- **Chemistry Department**
 - Dr. Dipankar wants to contribute more to Friday coffee. He wants to add more food to the socials and potentially provide food every week.

Meeting concluded at 10:01