

BiSc Grad Caucus Meeting 25.06.04

In attendance: Keith Tierney, Shelley Hoover, Jonathan Stecyk, Edward Fung, Jonathan Whiteley, Dawn Cooper, Holly Middleton, Kat Salvante, Francois Vezina, Linda Hanson, Danielle Simonot, Jolene Widmeyer, Christiana Cheng

Agenda:

- 1) Kat Salvante's wedding Shower – Everyone is invited to a shower to be held in the Maggie Benson graduate lounge at 2:30. The event was organized by Andrea Pomeroy and is to celebrate Katrina's upcoming nuptials to Greg Baker.
- 2) Mentorship Position – Suzanne Grey has accepted to be the mentorship program organizer for the biology department. Last year, caucus kicked in for a joint mentor/new student orientation bbq/beer garden and there is hope for another this year as well, likely to be held during the second week of September.
- 3) Summer BBQ – there is interest in hosting a summertime BBQ for grad students and faculty to enjoy the lofty days of summer and mingle within the department. It was thought best held in late July, such as to intersperse with upcoming September BBQ. There were no immediate volunteers to begin organizing, but Jonathan Stecyk will contact Brian Ma, who can obtain a liquor permit and steers the Social Committee.
- 4) Faculty Mole Update – Dawn reported a recent very long faculty meeting where the primary topic was Lynn Quarmby's upcoming switch to the faculty of MBB. Margo Moore was asked to fill the to-be-vacated position of Assistant Chair and accepted. The recent renovations to the Quarmby lab and lack of lab space were heated topics at the meeting – the lab will become available when the new science building is completed and Quarmby completes the move to MBB facilities.
 - There was no mention of the common room, whose inception is being complicated by semantics (i.e. what to call the common room – “coffee room” and “common room” being amongst the unsuitable monikers) as well as questions about cleaning and maintenance.
 - The caucus also discussed the difficulties being encountered with the hiring committee – many candidates have turned down positions due to spousal issues while many other candidates are no longer available. The Quarmby move is likely thought to decrease the attractiveness for cell biology candidates in particular.
- 5) DGIC – no new meetings in the summer, one coming up in September.
- 6) Jolene and Jonathan W. reported that the checklist and survival guide for new grad students is now up on the website (http://www.sfu.ca/biology/grad_caucus/), but requires much updating (the survival guide being about a decade out of date).

Volunteers are sought to tackle various sections of the checklist – an email describing this duty will be sent out conjointly with the minutes.

- 7) Stipends for DGSC/scholarship/hiring student representatives.
Various ideas were tossed around on the best approach to bring forth this request to the department. Jolene suggested presenting a set amount. It was suggested each committee should send in a proper letter and have an idea of the number of hours for each stipend. The GIC receives \$75/month, so this might provide a good measure of a reasonable request. It is hoped that the issue can be brought forth in time for September – more specifics to be discussed at the July caucus meeting.
- 8) Grad Tshirts – Brianne
An idea has been proposed to ask MEC to donate organic t-shirts, thus the only cost ensued by the caucus would be printing. No set prices or logos yet decided – will be revisited next meeting. In addition, will research the number of graduates/year and whether leftover funds from the grad symposium might help lower the cost.
- 9) Hiring Committee – Kat and Jolene
It is recommended that separate committees be put in place for each new upcoming position. There will be at least three positions upcoming.