



Biology Graduate Caucus Meeting Minutes

Friday May 27th, 2005, 3:30 pm

In attendance: Katrina Salvante, Emily Wagner, Theingi Aung, Chenyong Liao, Charlotte Voss, Jason Catterson, Niki Cook, Suzanne Gray, Sandra Webster, Andrea Pomeroy, Jeanine Bond, Raul Ursic, Christiana Cheng, Martin Brummell, Jeff Joy, Keith Tierney

1. Welcome and introductions

- a. Andrea Pomeroy welcomed all and the agenda was introduced.
- b. Thanks were given to Katrina Salvante for holding biology caucus elections and congratulations were offered to the winners.

2. Claim our money

- a. On a motion from Jason Catterson, seconded by Raul Ursic, a motion was passed to approve caucus expenses for the summer semester

3. Meeting expenses

- a. On a motion from Suzanne Gray, seconded by Charlotte Voss, a motion was passed to approve caucus meeting snack expenses for the summer semester

4. Coffee room/grad lounge

- a. Since there will be no food permitted in the new lounge room, the microwave, toaster oven, and supplies purchased recently for use in it will have to be used elsewhere, and Biology Caucus has decided to not supply furniture for this room. Fortunately, Tony Williams has offered to spruce up the 7000 level biology graduate common area. A wish list was discussed for upgrading the room: a sink, a sign for 'no-undergrads', counter(s), U-shaped counter, comfy couches, and a fridge w/ freezer. Barb Sherman has proposed locked cupboards. SFSS money may still be used for this new room. Bisc Caucus discussed supplying coffee for the new area.

5. Tuition deadline for RA's and the removal of payroll deduction

- a. Any grad student being paid as an RA cannot delay tuition payment (i.e. have tuition payments deducted from biweekly checks), as can be done when being paid as a TA (which is permitted by the collective agreement with TAs). For students with GFs, money is taken from the first check. Until this semester, it was okay to deduct the amount personally. Andrea Pomeroy has written a letter to say she will deduct and will not pay late fees. The Biology department is working on the issue; Barb Sherman will help students cope with the problem. Bisc Caucus will write a letter on behalf of Bisc grad students. Suzanne Gray – the DGSC are aware of the issue and Tony Williams is writing a letter. The problem could be solved by providing RA money up front, or making the tuition deadline for grad students the end of the semester. Suzanne will bring it up at the next DGSC.

6. Mentorship program – coordinator needed

- a. A coordinator is needed for this fall since Suzanne Gray must be in field during the time when event is held. For the mentorship program, incoming grad students are paired up with volunteer grad students who can be used as a resource for questions or other. The program does not demand much time from the coordinator. The coordinator must get a list from Marlene Nguyen (nguyen@sfu.ca), send out emails, pair volunteers and students according to fields of interest, and during the new student orientation day, supply pizza, beverages, and facilitate meetings. If you would like the job, email Suzanne Gray (smgray@sfu.ca). Charlotte Voss has tentatively volunteered pending scheduling.

7. Committee reports

- a. DGSC – see 5a above; no other news.
- b. Faculty mole – no news.
- c. GIC – Reminder, health plan should be available this fall (for details see last month's minutes).
- d. TSSU – negotiations are continuing.
- e. Scholarships – no news.

8. Other business

- a. Soccer at five! Call Raul Ursic (4391)
- b. Beer Garten at 4:30 today. General discussion ensued on a name for 'the area'

9. Meeting was adjourned