

PGSC Meeting

September 8th, 2020
4:30 pm PDT
Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Liz Williams (Co-Pres.; TAC)
Chrissy Robillard (Co-Pres.)
Helia Sehatpour (Sec./Treas.)
Lauren Matheson (Social)
Breanna McCreary (Social;UnionRep)
Cindy Quan (Clinical)
Eric Mah (CaBS, SP, INDV)
Sybil Goulet-Stock (Lifespan)
Julie Prud'homme (GEC)
Debra Torok (Ombuds)
Yaewon Kim (CPA)
Tom Ferguson (GSS)
Lisa Ohlhauser
Andrew Switzer
Myles Maillet
Madeline Anne Gregory
Morgan Schaeffer
Carrie Kobelsky
Erin Lowey
Erin Light
Josh Palmer
Severin Odland
Lauren Qualls
Alejandra Contreras

Absent

Call to Order:

Called by Chrissy at 4:33 pm

Approval of Minutes [August 5, 2020]:

Minutes approved as corrected (20 votes)

Minutes

Member Updates

Treasurer

- Most funding applications (e.g. GSS) require detailed description of events and allocation of costs. Student engagement coordinators suggested that our upcoming

orientation events do not require funding. We will apply for these funding sources once we have specific events in mind.

- There is some funding available from the department. Helia will prepare an email to send to Ulrich to inquire about what is available.

Social Events and Student Engagement Coordinators

- Lauren and Bre have organized a number of orientation events. The new student meet and greet and campus tour have been successful.

Clinical Representative

- No updates

CaBS, SP, INDV Representative

- No updates

Lifespan Representative

- No updates

GEC Representative

- We received an update from Mauricio regarding the graduate student supervision policy handbook and the modifications being made to it. Some final tweaks are being made regarding language around funding. Mauricio would like to meet with PGSC members to go over the changes.
- In response to our request for increasing our participation in GEC meetings, Mauricio suggested that our involvement cannot increase as most of the tasks and issues discussed in the GEC meetings are confidential (e.g. discussing specific student issues, admissions). However, PGSC members believe that we can be involved with GEC during discussions on other non-confidential issues.
- The GEC meet on Tuesdays from 3:30-4:30. As a result, there might be a timing conflict for the GEC rep. The PGSC meeting day may be modified or the GEC rep may miss a few PGSC meetings throughout the year.
- The department's new student orientation was postponed due to COVID-19 protocols. Mauricio has also asked for help with creating a power-point presentation on the contents of the handbook. PGSC is hesitant about creating a presentation of the handbook as they believe the department should be responsible for creating a presentation of the department's own policy. This should be communicated to them (it was communicated previously, but needs to be reiterated as we have been asked again).

Ombudsperson/Liaison

- See agenda item "Update on Ombuddy Role"

GSS Representative

- No updates

CUPE 4163 Representative

- No updates

TAC

- There is an upcoming TA workshop and a mandatory CUPE 4163 orientation on Thursday September 10th.

CPA Representative

- The representative has connected with the undergrad CPA rep and will also connect with Psi Chi. They will meet with Fred Grouzet (the department's CPA rep) in a couple of weeks.

Co-Presidents

- See agenda item 4 "Review of COVID-19 Survey"

Agenda Item	1. Overview of Meeting Protocols	Raised by: Lauren Matheson
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Discussion

We will be employing a simple version of Robert's rules for PGSC meetings. This helps us make sure that there is an organized fashion in our approach to voting on different motions.

When proposing a motion, which is any change put forward, you can say that you motion to [blank]. Another person will second that motion, and then all attendees (council members and other grad students) will vote on the motion. When voting to pass a motion, we use a simple majority, except for changes to constitution where we need 2/3 majority.

In cases where it appears that we all agree on an issue, one person can ask for unanimous consent.

For online meetings, we can use a polling option (Bre knows how to implement that).

Motion(s): None

Action Item(s)

- Bre to show Zoom co-hosts how to implement a polling option on Zoom

Member Responsible

Bre

Deadline

Next meeting

Agenda Item	2. Update on the Ombuddy role	Raised by: Debra Torok
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Discussion

The Ombuddy serves as an advocate and peer-support for students. The PGSC would like to make the Ombuddy role more accessible, approachable and well-known, with more responsibilities. The Ombuddy is now considering the following:

1. Should we employ anonymous feedback forms for student who may not be comfortable with in-person meetings? This brings concerns about receiving sensitive feedback and how to handle it.
2. How can the Ombuddy handle complaints in the department? Anette has suggested that there are no processes in place for dealing with complaints of discrimination. We would like to implement policy for responding to discrimination complaints. When dealing with unresolved issues, the Ombuddy can be the person who forces some accountability. The

Ombuddy will do so after the PGSC reviews the issue, provides suggestions, and discusses how to make sure the department is responsible to these suggestions.

3. How can the Ombuddy help enforce accountability and ensure fairness when working with the department?

Action Item(s)	Member Responsible	Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to Debra, discuss requirements for and create an online anonymous feedback form 	Helia	Next meeting

Agenda Item	Raised by:
3. Ratification of the PGSC Constitution and voting on the proposed amendment	Breanna McCreary

Discussion

The PGSC constitution was created to maintain the legitimacy of the council and establish responsibilities and goals to be held accountable to. It will also allow for consistency as new students join the department and new members are elected every year.

The only changes made to the constitution since our last meeting are the Ombuddy role descriptions and voting protocols. We need a 2/3 majority to pass the changes to the constitution. Today we vote to ratify the constitution and then we will post the constitution on the website. Amendments will be voted on separately.

We move to adopt the proposed amendment for PGSC mandate and vote to ratify the constitution which includes amendment to mandate and changes to Ombuddy role.

Motion(s):

Motion to approve the changes to the PGSC mandate	Lauren
Seconded	Bre
Motion passed	21/24 votes

Motion(s):

Motion to ratify the constitution	Lauren
Seconded	Bre
Motion passed	22/24 votes

Action Item(s)	Member Responsible	Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bre will send the pdf document of the constitution to Helia to be posted on the website 	Bre & Helia	Next meeting

Presentation:

A survey was sent out through the graduate list-serve about student work and research concerns during the covid-19 pandemic, and support and events students would like. Chrissy prepared a presentation on the survey responses. Only 9 students participated in the survey and the results are not necessarily generalizable to all students. There was a relatively even number of responses across diff programs.

1. **Concerns about the upcoming academic year in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and online learning and teaching included** difficulty learning online, heavier course loads and harder testing to prevent cheating, TA time-management and allocation of additional hours, classes and practicums being cancelled mid-term, disruptions to theses and dissertations influencing progress of program, inability to use office space and lacking internet and quiet spaces at home.
2. **Suggestions for PGSC to support academic activities during the pandemic included** having Zoom informal writing rooms, finding a way to advocate for safe office access on campus, advocating for support and accommodation for ppl whose theses have been delayed, and look into tuition reimbursements due to delays. Many students skipped this question and were unsure how PGSC can help.
3. **Suggestions for social events for PGSC to coordinate included** hosting more trivia nights, fostering connection between new students and their buddy throughout the year, organizing weekly drop-in zoom meetings to chat, virtual happy hours, and outdoor socially distanced activities. There was reported worry about social isolation and not feeling connected to others in the department.
4. Another recommendation was to **make PGSC less formal and more engaging for all students**. It was recommended that we save voting to only PGSC member meeting and include ice breakers in beginning of meetings. Perhaps as the year goes on and we have solidified the council we can become more informal.

Discussion:

Addressing formality of PGSC: Our aim for employing some level of formality is to make PGSC more transparent, such as on our voting process. The past few meetings have been more formal as we intended on establishing the groundwork for PGSC and the level of formality might naturally lessen in the future. We can have separate sessions for voting, or we can leave voting for the end of the meetings if there are a couple of items to be voted on. We can use the polling option on Zoom.

Safe usage of offices in Cornett:

There was a lack of recommendation from students in the survey responses on how to address this. The department has not communicated well about in-class and office space use to first year students. Regulations such as WorkSafe BC have not been communicated well with students.

The union or Ombuddy can ask for this information to be communicated. Karen is on occupational health and safety board and may be able to help in communicating the information.

It was suggested that the department does not have a plan for safe office use for grad students. Individuals with keys can access the building but they are being asked to limit their use and maintain physical distancing in the office. Students need to contact their lab mates and arrange with them. An email has been sent out to ask if students are planning on using the building. Anyone using their office in Cornett has been asked to notify the chair for covid-19 tracing. Cleaning supplies should also be provided by supervisors. We are not sure whether this email was shared with students.

We can email Sheena and ask for a list of individuals assigned to the offices and then contact those individuals. We can also ask Sheena to email those offices where there are students to increase transparency.

Motion(s): None

Action Item(s)	Member Responsible	Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email Karen/Sheena/Ulrich about office use for grad students 	Chrissy	Next meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a list of individuals using their office spaces 	Chrissy	Next meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss how to support students who are being delayed due to covid-19 	(as agenda item?)	Next meeting

Agenda Item	5. PGSC Goals and Projects in Process	Raised by: Lauren Matheson
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Discussion

Lauren has created two documents:

1. A document has been created which includes a modified version of our response to the external review. The external review discussed the strengths and challenges in the department and we created the PGSC response to the review by soliciting feedback of students on what could be improved. Based on that, Lauren created a list of **long-term goals** to document what is important to the PGSC and grad students. We will be asking for everyone’s feedback on this list and hopefully post this on website.
2. The **Current Projects** document includes a list of smaller projects/tasks that we are working on right now. This includes short term goals which are internal to PGSC. PGSC members should add their projects to the document so we’re all kept in the loop on what is going on.

Motion(s): None

Action Item(s)	Member Responsible	Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post long-term goals on website 	Helia	When ready

- Add current tasks/projects to current projects document All members Ongoing

Notes and Recognitions

None

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned by Chrissy at 5:30 pm PDT

Helia Sehatpour

Secretary & Treasurer (or proxy note-taker)