



GRADUATE STUDENTS' UNION

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
LOCAL 19, CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS

GSU General Council Meeting

Monday September 19, 2011

6:10 pm sharp

Koffler Institute Auditorium, 569 Spadina Ave. (just west of GSU)

Ann McPherson called the meeting to order at 6:12 pm.

1. Report of Executive for GSU Council Chairperson

Ann McPherson reported that the Executive has recommended hiring Jennifer Fong as the Council Chairperson. If approved, Fong will take over chairing the meeting.

Motion: Be it resolved that (BIRT) that Council hire Jennifer Fong as the 2011/2012 GSU Council Chairperson.

Jason Dumelie/Derek Larson

Carried

2. Council Orientation

Fong reminded Council members that council proceedings will be guided by Bourinot's Rules of Order during council proceedings, and a handout summarizing the rules could be found at the back of the room, along with copies of the materials provided in the mail-outs. She said that there are two types of emails that are sent to councillors: one with the heading "please forward to the entire membership" and the other with the heading "please do not forward to members," neither which are confidential but used to prevent the duplication of emails. She also reminded the councillors to provide their name and course union when speaking and to use the microphones when addressing council. She stressed the importance of being punctual and to maintain quorum throughout the meeting in order to conduct GSU business. Quorum (the specific number of people that must be present in order to call the meeting to order) is twenty-five. There are 8 meetings a year and the meetings start promptly at 6:10 pm. The meetings typically last 2.5 hours and any outstanding items will be addressed after a debatable motion to extend the meeting. She said that a roll-call sheet will be circulated at every meeting and asked that councillors sign the sheet. If you forgot to sign the roll-call sheet but attended the meeting, please send an email to fieldworker@utgsu.ca. She explained that all members and non-members of the GSU are allowed to attend council meetings; however, non-course union representatives must be granted speaking rights to address council. Fong said that all GSU policies can be found on the GSU website.

3. a) Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

Motion: BIRT the Council approve the agenda.

Jason Dumelie/Jonathan McQuarrie

Carried

b) Roll call and Introductions: Council Representatives, Executive, Staff

GSU Council members, Executives and Staff introduced themselves. Fong asked that the members of the Executive and Staff also described their roles and responsibilities.

Nikita Reznik introduced himself as the Academics Commissioner of the GSU who is responsible for academic related issues and chairing the Academics and Funding Committee.

Greg Lusk introduced himself as an Executive-at-Large and the course union representative for HAPSAT. Lusk explained that Executives-at-Large do not have specific platforms, and as such he chose to oversee upgrading the GSU's communication infrastructure which included developing the new GSU website.

Michelle St-Amour introduced herself as the Civics and Environment Commissioner of the GSU. She explained that this position is a temporary one-year position which will be coming up for reconsideration in the fall. As the Civics and Environment Commissioner, St-Amour monitors Toronto City Hall and is the Chair of the Sustainability Committee and the Chair of the Civics Committee.

Danny Vandervoort introduced himself as the External Commissioner of the GSU whose responsibilities include linking graduate students with the outside community. Vandervoort also chairs the Social Justice Committee.

Shain Dhalla introduced herself as the GSU staff member who is the Health and Dental Insurance Administrator.

Carol Ramm introduced herself as a GSU staff member who is the Financial Administrator. She said her responsibilities include the GSU budget, administration of funds, and grant applications.

Ruth Perkins introduced herself as the Executive Assistant of the GSU whose main responsibilities include organizing council and executive meetings, and gym bookings.

Ann McPherson introduced herself as the Internal and Finance Commissioner of the GSU who responsibilities include chairing the Internal Committee and the Finance Committee.

Motion: BIRT Christopher Klinger is extended speaking rights on behalf of the International Students' Caucus.

Jason Dumelie/Sara Hipson

Carried

c) Minutes

There were no changes to the minutes of the April 26, 2011 GSU General Council Meeting.

Motion: BIRT the minutes of the April 26, 2011 meeting be approved.

Jason Dumelie/Derek Larson

Carried

d) Business Arising from the Minutes

i. Election of Finance Committee Members for all Divisions

Ann McPherson, chair of the Finance Committee of the GSU, said that the Finance Committee requires four members of General Council of which there is one representative from each of the four divisions of the School of Graduate Studies. McPherson said that the duties of the Finance Committee shall be to prepare proposals on fiscal policy and financial estimates for the

consideration of the Executive, to prepare the Special Grants allocation, to prepare Conference Funding allocation, and to assist the Finance Office and Officers in their duties. A summary of the duties can be found on page 3 of the agenda.

Ann said that the committee will meet twice before the October GSU General Council meeting and 2 or 3 more times throughout the academic year.

Motion: BIRT Michael Bargezat of Medieval Studies from Division 1, Milosz Ceres from Russian and Eastern European Studies from Division 2, Scott Genin from Chemical Engineering from Division 3, and Jessica Ellis from Psychology are appointed to the GSU Finance Committee for 2011/2012.

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Carried

ii) Valid Reasons for Requesting Teleconferencing at GSU General Council Meetings

McPherson referred to page 15 Motion 1 of the April 26 GSU General Council minutes where the Internal Committee was requested to draft the reasons for needing to teleconference at a GSU meeting. She said that the following motion was drafted for Council approval:

Motion:

François Lamirande/Derek Larson

Carried

iii) Cafe Search Committee

Michelle St-Amour said that last year, the Management Committee of the GSU recommended to the Executive to not renew the contract of the GSU café service operator. As a result, the GSU needed to find a new operator and a Café Search Committee was struck to develop the Request for Proposal. Several call-outs were made for members to join but there were no applications; therefore an internal committee made up of Executives was formed. The Committee received a very strong proposal from the student-run group Hot Yam, who proposed to work in collaboration with other student-run food and beverage organizations. After an inspiring interview and the favourable feedback from the Hot Yam open house, the group was awarded the contract to operate the GSU cafe. St-Amour said that the group will be operating out of the GSU under the name Sweet Peas Café and plan to be open five days a week. Hot Yam is currently preparing for operations at the GSU and should be opening soon. St-Amour said the announcement of the official opening will follow.

Hasko von Kriegstein asked whether the \$4000 has been donated to the new café operators as discussed in the April meeting.

St-Amour said that the money has not been awarded as of yet, but the group plans to use the money to off-set start-up costs and for their first promotional event. She also said that the group's business model is self-sustainable.

4. Course Union Representatives Orientation

Carol Ramm said that the course union manual was mailed out and outlines the duties of the course union. She added that the head grant cheque applications were also mailed to course unions and must be received before the course union receives its first grant cheque. Ramm added that head grants are issued twice yearly, in October and March. Ramm explained that the GSU

helps fund the course unions through the head grants and helps keep all groups informed about what's going on through the council meetings and the GSU Digest, which she asked representatives to forward on to the members of their course union. Ramm said that course union representatives are responsible for attending almost all council meetings in order to be eligible for head grant cheques. Special grants for small course unions are available and more details will be provided to the representatives in October. There are also conference grants, which are awarded twice a year, and are for student-run conferences not for students attending a conference. Ramm said that questions can be directed to fieldworker@utgsu.ca or carol@utgsu.ca

Ali Ebrahimi asked when the head grant application is due.

Ramm said there is no official deadline, but the head grant cheques cannot be issued without the completed application. She added that between October 1st and the middle of October is ideal, and the application can be submitted directly to her or emailed.

Sara Hipson asked who to advise if there is a change to the course union representative.

Ramm said to email fieldworker@utgsu.ca.

Milosz Ceres said that he is unable to fill out the last sheet of the application form because there are no copies of the required receipts and he cannot get in touch with the representative from last year.

Ramm said that he should still submit the form since the GSU retains copies of the past applications for reference.

Albert Lam asked if you could still apply for the conference funding if you were already receiving funding from another source.

Ramm said that applications would still be accepted.

5. Introduction to Legislative Program
 - a) Overview of Process

Fong said the legislative program consists of the set of work that the executive and the committees of the union have been undertaking. According to the By-laws, programs must be approved by October 15, however, the motion to approve the programs is being extended to the next meeting because the groups have just begun to meet and priorities have not yet been shaped. She added that a list of caucuses and committees can be found on the GSU website so people can read the overviews and join.

Motion: BIRT approval for the 2011/2012 Legislative Program be tabled to our next meeting.

Jason Dumelie/Ann McPherson

Carried

Sara Hipson asked if committees would not action major plans (especially controversial plans) until approval from Council.

St-Amour said that the representatives of the Sub-Committees plan to talk about their group and goals, but the Sub-Committees' plans and priorities will be discussed and approved in October. She also mentioned that the Executive may bring forward the option of amending the by-law to have legislative programs approved at the October general council meeting rather than October 15.

b) Academics and Funding Sub-Committee

Nakita Reznik reintroduced himself as the Academic Commissioner and the Chair of the Academics and Funding Sub-Committee and provided a brief overview of the Sub-Committee's responsibilities. He said that the main focus of this Sub-Committee will be to continue the work from the previous year on issues such as the revisions to the Doctoral Completion Award policy, the Faculty of Arts and Science Restructuring plan, and the CUPE 3902 bargaining process.

c) Social Justice Sub-Committee

Daniel Vandervoort said that the Social Justice Sub-Committee meets regularly every few weeks, and its program and priorities are driven by its members. He said that over the summer, the group had been involved in issues related to military recruitment on campus, the reduction of the Graduate Dossier Service, labour issues such as the CUPE 3902 bargaining process and the support staff strike at George Brown, and has supported the action for better and accessible daycare services on campus and the community.

Based on several questions raised, Vandervoort explained that there are issues that are discussed at the Social Justice Sub-Committee that may result in multiple and opposing viewpoints.

Jason Dumelie asked if Vandervoort could expand on the Graduate Dossier Service.

Vandervoort explained that the service is to aid doctoral students in their search for academic positions. The service acts as a repository for letters of reference which are then sent out to employers at your request. The service was available to doctoral students for up to 10 years after graduation but has been reduced to 2 years.

In the interest of time, Fong recommended that any further questions be directed to Vandervoort after the meeting.

i. UofT Divestment

Vandervoort explained that many members felt that they did not have enough information to make informed decisions regarding the Israel Apartheid and the UofT divestment; therefore the Sub-Committee will be holding a forum on the divestment in October to allow members to come out and get informed.

Vandervoort gave notice that the motion put forth at the March 2011 GSU General Council Meeting will be brought forward at the November GSU General Council Meeting:

Notice of Motion: BIRT the Graduate Students' Union call the University of Toronto to divest from and refuse to invest in BAE Systems, Northrop Grumman, Hewlett Packard and Lockheed Martin.

Be it further resolved that (BIFRT) the Graduate Students' Union call on the University of Toronto to refrain from investing in all companies involved in violations of international law.

BIFRT that GSU call on the University of Toronto to work with students, faculty and staff to undergo a democratic and transparent process to ensure accountability of its investments to principles of social and environmental justice.

e) Sustainability Sub-Committee

Michelle St-Amour reintroduced herself as the Civics and Environment Commissioner. St-Amour said that the Sustainability Sub-Committee had two major successes last year: it successfully lobbied for the City of Toronto to install a pedestrian-activated stoplight at the corner of Queens Park Crescent East and St Joseph Street and successfully advocated for a Bottle Water Free Campus. This year, the Sub-Committee is working on the following: Toronto's Core Services Review, submitting a report to the UofT Campus Facilities and Planning on transportation and green spaces improvements for the St-George Campus, and helping Course Unions adopt sustainability policies. She said that the Sub-Committee meets once a month.

Sara Hipson asked if green infrastructure was included in the report.

St-Amour said that that topic was not brought forward as it was too large for the capacity of the Sub-Committee, but it is discussed at the Sustainability Advisory Committee which is a university-wide committee of which she is a member.

f) Civics Sub-Committee

St-Amour said this Sub-Committee is working on two short-term reactive issues: speaking out against the City of Toronto's proposed cuts and the Provincial Elections. She explained that the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario launched a campaign called "Take It Over" to encourage students to vote with education issues in mind. St-Amour asked members to visit the "Take It Over" website at Takeitover.ca.

Based on comments raised, St-Amour clarified that the Sub-Committee is non-partisan and only encourages students to vote, not who to vote for.

Vandervoort added that there will be a report card available on the "Take It Over" website outlining each party's education platform.

g) GSU Building and Housing Sub-Committee (tabled to the October meeting)

h) Notice of Motion to approve 2011/2012 Legislative Program

Fong gave notice of the following motion for the October GSU General Council Meeting:

Notice of Motion: BIRT the GSU Legislative Program for the academic year 2011/2012 be adopted by the GSU General Council.

6. Notice of By-Law Amendments

Fong asked that members refrain from discussing specific management or staff at Council and instead direct comments to supervisor@utgsu.ca.

a) Management Structure

St-Amour gave notice that the Executive passed the following by-law amendments which will be brought forward to the GSU for ramification or amendment. As background, St-Amour explained that there are discrepancies between the Collective Agreement and the By-laws. (The relevant by-laws and the proposed changes will be circulated in the next mail-out for discussion and review.) For clarity and consistency, the new structure will include four committees:

- The Management Committee would be responsible for the pub, gym, café, and all other building related issues and shall consist of any GSU Executive Member and any Staff

member. The Internal Commissioner, the Supervisor and CUPE 1281 Steward shall be a member of this committee.

- Employer Group Committee will be responsible for all staff issues and will consist of the Supervisor and other Executive members.
- The Labour and Management Committee is comprised of the Supervisor and the CUPE 1281 Steward and shall meet regularly to discuss any relevant issues that have been raised at the Employer Group Committee meeting or at the CUPE 1281 meeting. Additional Staff and Executives may participate in the meetings with the approval of both parties, but participation will be equally weighted between Staff and Executives.
- Bargaining Committee is outlined in the Collective Agreement and will remain as is.

St-Amour explained that changes to the structure required amendments to the by-laws to make the language clearer and to remove any discrepancies between the Collective Agreement and the By-laws. The amendments include but are not limited to: the addition of the new sub-committees of the Management Team, changes to the duties of the Internal Commissioner, and the inclusion of equal representation on the Management Team.

7. Summer Spending

Ann McPherson reported that \$2500 was spent on a labour lawyer over the summer and \$1500 for additional services. She explained that the reason for hiring a labour lawyer is confidential and will not be addressed at Council.

8. Reports

a) Course Unions

Fong said this is the point in which representatives may discuss issues from their course unions and the Executives can be informed and respond accordingly.

There were no reports.

b) Executive/Staff Announcements/Questions

There were no announcements or questions.

c) Governing Council

Morgan Vanek said that she will be reporting on behalf of herself and Chirag Varialla. She explained that they will be presenting reports on the Governing Council at every GSU General Council Meeting. She said they have started meeting with the administration and is working with the Academic Commissioner on issues such as the Doctoral Completion Award and the revision of the Towards 2030 document. Vanek explained that the Towards 2030 report will look at how UofT will move forward towards a third century of excellence. She asked that members and non-members who would like to participate in the planning process for the Towards 2030 document attend the Town Hall meeting on Friday, November 4 from 2pm to 4pm in the Bahen Centre room 1160. Vanek asked that the councillors encourage their course unions to attend.

d) CUPE 3902

Katie Mazer reintroduced herself as the Internal Liaison Officer and will be attending all GSU General Council meetings. Mazer explained that CUPE 3902 is the labour union that represents contract instructors such as teaching assistants; therefore you are welcome to speak to her if you have an issue with your TA work. Mazer invited Jason Nugent to present on the current bargaining process.

Nugent introduced himself as the Chief Spokesperson for the CUPE 3902 Bargaining Committee. Nugent started by giving a brief history of the guaranteed funding package to explain how the work of the union affects all graduate students. He said that all committee members are elected by the membership, and the team brings the issues to the table and works to avoid a strike. He explained that last year, the committee members conducted extensive consultations and sent out surveys to 1000 members to find out what the major issues were. Based on the results, a proposal was made and voted on. He said the four major planks of the proposal are defending the graduate funding package, addressing the precarious situation of upper year PhD students, improving the undergraduate experience and increasing transparency in hiring. The proposal will be posted on the CUPE website www.cupe3902.org.

Nugent said that it is not too late for members to provide input and to get involved with the bargaining support team. He added that there is CUPE Café every Tuesday and Wednesdays at the Grad Room where you can talk with members of the bargaining team executive or members are available to come to your course union to discuss some of the issues.

Fong asked that further questions be directed to Mazer and Nugent .

e) International Students' Caucus

Chris Klinger said he wanted to provide the GSU with an update on the activities of the International Students Caucus since their last report. Klinger reported that over the summer, the group had worked with the colleges and universities in the Greater Toronto Area to develop the City of Toronto's Airport Welcome Program. He explained that the program greets international students upon their arrival and provides the students with a welcome kit and answers to questions about transportation and life in the GTA and Canada in general. The program also offers international students a ride to their school's international centre. Klinger said that this year, the Caucus is working to improve health care access for international students. He added that the Caucus is actively recruiting members and asked representatives to communicate this opportunity for involvement with international students in their course union.

9. Other Business

a) Notice of the election of two Executive-At-Large positions next month.

Greg Lusk reintroduced himself as the Executive-At-Large and the course union representative for HAPSAT. Lusk explained that the Executive-At-Large position can be seen as a liaison position from Council to the Executive. He said the Executive-at-Large provides advice and guidance to the GSU as a whole and deals with internal GSU issues. The Executive must attend all the executive and council meetings and must sit on two GSU sub-committees or caucuses. He added that there is a small honorarium for the position. Lusk encouraged members to run for the position and to contact him if they have any questions at Gregatlarge@utgsu.ca.

Jessica Ellis asked why we are electing another Executive-At-Large when an election for this position just took place in April.

Lusk explained that there are 4 Executives-At-Large positions: two of which are elected at the April meeting for 12 months, and the remaining two are elected in the fall for 8 months.

10. Date of Next Meeting: Monday, October 24, 6:10 pm, Koffler House Auditorium

11. Adjournment

Motion: BIRT the meeting be adjourned at 7:53.
Jason Dumelie/Derek Larson
Carried

Jennifer Fong
Chair

Shranna Jaggernath
Secretary