



**GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MINUTES**

**Wednesday, May 27, 2020  
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm / ZOOM**

**Meeting commenced at 2:03 pm**

**1. Chair's Remarks**

CoGS is planning a Graduate Town Hall on Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup>. (note from PRS – this has been postponed for a week due to conflict with another student town hall)

The Chair extended a thank you to Laura Mudde and Hogun Kang for their work as Graduate Student Senators this past year, and welcomed Maya Pilin for 2020/21. Maya will be joined by Riley Petillion.

Huge thank you also to Cassidy Wallis and Tamar Swartz, who terms as Graduate Community Facilitators as now finished. Cassidy will be continuing her role as Graduate Student Representative with the UBCSUO. The Student Experience Office has hired two new Community Facilitators, who will be starting in September. In the meantime, incoming students can email the Student Experience Office with any questions.

Members thanked Cassidy for distributing the graduate representative communication email to students.

**2. Fall Orientation Planning – Haley Allen**

Haley reported that an online module for New Graduate Student Orientation for 2020 has been planned due to COVID, which will incorporate feedback gained from the January meeting of GSAC. This series of modules in Canvas, called UBC 501, will be similar to UBC 101 currently offered for undergraduate students. In addition to UBC 501, a series of online Zoom workshops will be hosted throughout the first week of classes. Topics will include an awards workshop, setting expectations and working with supervisors, tip for writing from home, and advice from current graduate students.

Members also suggested: how to teach and learn online, student mental health and wellness.

A full list of upcoming workshops will be available on the CoGS website: <https://gradstudies.ok.ubc.ca/events-workshops/> and will also be distributed to students in a monthly email.

Please email Haley with any comments or feedback: [haley.allen@ubc.ca](mailto:haley.allen@ubc.ca)



An updated graduate student representative message will be sent out in the fall including new contact information and new positions.

### 3. Monthly updates

a. **Senate**

No updates.

b. **UBCSUO** – Cassidy Wallis

Cassidy reported that a new Board is now in place for 2020/21. There have been several meetings about graduate student needs including events, HR, TA concerns, and the Health and Dental Plan. UBCSUO voted to get rid of EmpowerMe which would cost an additional \$7 per student this year, as this service is under-utilized and other options are now available through the BC government. Cassidy reported working to access resources and tools for students for distance learning for the upcoming semester.

The summer tuition waiver proposal was not approved by the UBC Board of governors, but has now become a provincial campaign via Graduate Students of Canada: <https://www.facebook.com/gradstudentscan/>

Emergency funding and financial support for graduate students is still available. Please email CoGS directly with requests.

c. **Graduate Council** – Paul Shipley

Paul reported that comprehensive exams have been online for the last 6 weeks and are going well.

CoGS is considering opening up defences to the public to attend the presentation portion and are working on best practices and procedure such as using waiting rooms and unique invitations.

The Cultural and Social Awareness Credential program is currently out to campus partners for consultation and will be available in the fall. This non-credit credential program will be divided into 3 categories: Interculturalism; Equity and Inclusion; and Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Students will take two workshops from each category plus an additional two, and will receive an official UBC letter of completion for CV's, LinkedIn, etc.

Other future credential programs will include teaching skills, writing skills, and professional development.

### 4. Revisions to GSAC Terms of Reference – Discussion, Paul Shipley



Members discussed how to implement community representatives on GSAC including concerns around tokenism and meeting community need. CoGS will continue to reach out the following communities for their input on representation on GSAC:

Aboriginal students  
LGBTQ\* students  
International students  
Students with disabilities

GSAC members voted on Faculty representation and the following membership was determined:

Faculty of Applied Science (3)  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (2)  
School of Education (2)  
Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies (2)  
Faculty of Health and Social Development (1 representative each from Nursing, Health Studies and Social Work)  
Faculty of Science (3)  
Faculty of Management (1)  
Interdisciplinary Graduate Studies (3)

Membership will continue to include two Graduate Community Facilitators and Graduate Student Senators.

## 5. Other Business

Paul reported that conversations are still ongoing regarding fall student fees but no updates have been provided yet. This will likely be discussed at the Graduate Student Town Hall.

This is the last meeting of GSAC for the year; however, GSAC members may be contacted by CoGS during the summer should an issue arise that requires student feedback.

Thank you to all GSAC members for their work this year, and thank you again to Cassidy Wallis for her role as Community Facilitator for the past two years!

**Meeting adjourned at 2:53 pm.**