

## **BioGrads Meeting Minutes**

### **Friday, Feb 12th, 2010**

#### ***Chair (Martin):***

-nothing to report

#### ***Secretary (Anneli):***

-nothing to report

#### ***Faculty Rep (Rhiannon):***

-Update from the January Faculty Meeting:

- major topic of discussion was about the adoption of a new GPA system

- a new system by Queen's will require that all departments convert to a GPA and letter grade system – there will no longer be any percentages reported

- in general, Faculty are upset about this change because it means that all students getting 85% and over will be ranked the same – this will have consequences when ranking scholarship applications

- they are hoping that the system will at least be adjusted to have an A-plus which would help to separate the top group of students

-Update from the February Faculty Meeting:

- one piece of good news: the TA budget will be protected

- website accessibility training is starting now for Faculty

- major topic of discussion at this meeting was about choosing keywords to rebrand the department

- one of Principal Woolf's requests is that all departments need to rebrand themselves

- the department needs to choose three keywords/topics that best describe and highlight its strengths from a marketability perspective

- six ideas were narrowed down at the meeting: EEB, Cell and Molecular Biology, Plant Science, Animal Physiology and Aquatics

- Suggestions at our meeting were discussed*

- we came up with three seemingly inclusive choices: Ecology and Evolution, Cell and Molecular, Physiology and Behaviour

- conveniently, these three categories match the undergraduate streams that are marketed to prospective students

- we also discussed the possibility of Integrative Biology but there was some debate as to whether it was truly representative of the Department

#### ***SGPS Reps (Chad and Chris)***

-Update from the council meeting where Woolf's proposed optional fee was discussed

- Woolf attended the meeting and addressed the Council

- he did not make any threats

- he explained that the rationale behind the fee is that he did not feel that it was fair

- to have asked for money from undergrads, but not the SGPS, yet still offer both groups governance seats in the new Student Center
- he also feels that without the financial backing of the graduate students, it will be difficult to solicit donors for a Graduate Center in the future
- he ended by requesting that a working group should be formed to work on this problem
- It was voted at the meeting that the question of the mandatory fee would be included in the upcoming referendum
- the SGPS will issue an official statement that they are against the fee and will encourage people to vote no
- also on in the upcoming referendum, the Grad Club fee is up for renewal
- will send an allgrads e-mail encouraging people to get out and vote

***RTP Rep (Julie):***

- not present

***QUBS rep (Cory):***

- Queen's was able to buy the house that is on the way to Warner Lake
  - the plan is to make the house liveable and rent it out to researchers or whoever takes Floyd's position
- Veronica's position is now more solid and the next step is to obtain benefits for her
- there will be 2.5% increase to user fees starting this field season
- working on an application to the Principals' Innovation Fund
  - application is to fund someone who could do the equivalent of Floyd's job in the summer and promotion /outreach in the winter
  - application process is going well so far and prospects look good
- There is a possibility that QUBS will absorb the station at Elbow Lake
  - Queen's didn't originally get this property but both Ottawa and Carleton have turned down the opportunity so it might still be feasible for Queen's to get it

***Sports Rep (Ann):***

- squash ladder is running
- not a lot of challenges happening yet

***GC Rep (Scott):***

- recent activity in the Graduate Committee
  - reviewing/approving applications for mini-masters
  - rankings of doctoral field research grants

***Academic Rep (Mark and Josh):***

- not present, but some updates
  - had the presentation by the CTL about the certificate and portfolio programs
  - contact Mark or Josh if you want more information

***Social Reps (Tara and Cat):***

- not present, but some updates

- planning on running one social activity per month for the rest of the semester
  - will likely have a skating event over reading week
  - ideas for March and April include renting out Elixir for a big-screen RockBand /Wii night and a Beer Tasting Contest
- plan to continue coffee hour until the end of April, but may have to end early if people are out in the field