

BiGCoW Meeting Minutes – Friday March 30th, 2012

Meeting times for the rest of the 2011-2012 year:

- Friday, April 27th, 2012

We introduced the new committee members who will be taking over on May 1st, 2012.

By a majority positive ranking vote in favour of each and every nominee (out of 29 received votes), the new 2012-2013 BioGrads executive committee will be:

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|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| C.O.W. Chair | Catherine Dale |
| Secretary/Co-chair | Amanda Tracey |
| Treasurer | Allyson Hill |
| SGPS Reps | Trevor Snider & Kate Mathers |
| Grad Committee Rep | Eric Fedosejevs |
| RTP Committee Rep | Kimberley Lemmen |
| QUBS Rep | Vanya Rower |
| Staff & Faculty Rep | Niraj Kumar |

Executive Committee – Representative Voting:

3 more people have applied for executive positions on next year's committee. Initially there were 9 people from the current committee, plus one member who voted by proxy for the social coordinator positions, which is enough people to vote.

Donya Danesh – Academic coordinator – 9/9 votes in favour (9 votes in person)

Courtney Holden – Social Coordinator – 10/10 votes in favour (9 votes in person, 1 vote by proxy)

Stephanie Greer – Social Coordinator – 11/11 votes in favour (One more member joined the meeting at this point, allowing for 10 votes in person, 1 vote by proxy)

Staff and Faculty Representative (Kat Stewart)

New Faculty Position

- A new Faculty position is going to be advertised this summer. The position will be posted until the fall, and the new hire should be selected by summer 2013.
- They will most likely begin interviews this Fall
- It is cell biology, with a possibility for physiology

- A 2% increase in stipend to go with the increased cost of living was discussed

Social coordinators (Celia Symons and Laura Doubleday (absent))

- There is a QUBS weekend tomorrow, for which many people have signed up
- Coffee Time is running a deficit. The cost of coffee is the major source of funds.
 - They have switched from the Percolator to a real coffee pot, and people seem to like the taste much more!

Sports Coordinator (Adriana Lopez (absent))

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SGPS Representatives (2 Open positions)

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Graduate Committee Representative (Niraj Kumar)

Overtime students

- They will need to send a plan of action to the Graduate Committee explaining how they plan to finish. The committee will take students on a case-by-case basis. This will begin this June.

International Tuition Awards

- There are 3 International Tuition Awards (ITAs) this year. There is a preference for PhD students.
 - Discussed whether two applicants applying under the same supervisor will affect their ability to attain an award. This year, they chose to go by the applicant's merit, regardless of number of applicants per supervisor.
- A motion was proposed by Lonnie Aarssen to teach a course – BIOL 850 on Darwinism and Coastal Evolution.
- Recent changes to the Guide to Graduate Studies in Biology:
 - “6.2.(f) Supervisors have the right to write up and take first authorship on papers based on any material in the thesis or arising from the thesis that is not submitted for publication **within one year of normal degree time limits (2 years for MSc, 4 for PhD)**. Since the student will be co-author on such papers, such thesis material may be used directly without infringing on the student's copyright.”
- It was discussed that at least one chapter should be of publishable quality in your final manuscript, for both master's and PhDs.

RTP Representative (Roslyn Dakin)

New Faculty position

- In September, there will be scientists coming to give talks as part of their interview process for the new faculty position being open
 - It is public knowledge that the position is available, however it is not advertised yet.

Commitments of the RTP Representative

- Roz will look into the official policy of how the hiring committee is formed, and how the RTP representative is involved.
- There may need to be a revision/clarification in the constitution of the responsibilities of the RTP representative.
- The Bailey Chair is up for review this year, and the new RTP representative will be involved in this.

Treasurer (Chris Baird)

- No new news.

Academic Coordinators (Sarah Wallace and Amanda Xuereb)

Graduate Teaching Award (GTA)

- They awarded the Graduate Teaching Award to Peter Hodson
- They hope for this news to be mentioned on the Biology website, and an explanation of the award may be put on the BioGrads Website.
- Ask Steve Lougheed to put up the results of the GTA on the main Biology page
- There were high marks for many of the professors who were being judged.
- It might be better next year to go to the classes earlier in the semesters to announce the award. This year, since it was still being developed, they were unable to go out as early as they would like.
- They may send out another reminder of the Moodle site for grads to put up their TA notes for next year's TAs.

QUBS Representative (Ann McKellar)

- No new news, there has not been another meeting since the last BiGCoW meeting.
- The winners of the QUBS awards have been announced

RA Union Discussion

Some representatives from PSAC came to talk to us about creating an RA union.

- Emily & Scott came to talk to us from PSAC. They came to address RA's and their working conditions.
- According to the representatives:
 - Queen's, from the administrative perspective, would like to decrease cost and augment revenue, which is having a trickle effect on graduate students. The TA's, post-docs, and staff are all unionized. The only group left is RA's, which do not have the job security that unionized students do. They have discussed with science & engineering students, and wanted to mention that the president of Queen's is planning to minimize guaranteed minimum funding of PhD's from 4 years to 1. This will affect many graduate students.
 - To be able to attract the best possible students, our faculty need to compete with other universities. PSAC is interested in talking to students about their experiences and about starting up a union for RAs. This is a

pragmatic approach to ensure that what you currently have isn't taken away.

- There was a comment that our RAship is different than that in other departments. RAships are used to alleviate the costs of keeping a graduate student; they are getting paid to complete their own research. Is this solely for RAships that focus on funding for a separate project?
 - Emily says that this is also included in the definition of the RAship that they are discussing.
 - If the RAship was eliminated in this model, there would not be a guaranteed minimum stipend. It would make it difficult for departments to be competitive.
- Scott wanted to mention that they want to hear everyone's experiences and address the issues people may have.
 - People in biology seem to be worried about lack of flexibility in hours: PSAC is not interested in making strict hours
 - We will send an all Bio-Grads email with their Contact information.

Anneli Jokela (C.O.W. Chair)

Snacks for visiting Carleton Grads BEERS night:

Official vote on food for BEERS event with Carleton University.

- 40\$ proposed – 11/11 votes in favour

Preparing the next committee:

- Each old committee member will write a short description of what their position is, what worked well, what didn't work well, then send it to the Secretary. There will be a .pdf and a hard copy for the next group.
 - A suggestion was given to mention what was done month-by-month.

End-of-year Bash:

- In April, incoming social coordinators usually help with the end-of-the-year bash. There is some money in the budget for this event.