

## BGSC Open Meeting Agenda - December 14th 2020

1. Motion to approve agenda for Dec 14th 2020
  - a. Emma, Emilie
2. Motion to approve minutes from Nov 30, 2020
  - a. Adam, Ryan
3. Updates
  - a. Update from co-chairs (Regan & Nell)
    - i. Female mentors campaign has been published  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_rSIW7rxyVo&feature=youtu.be&ab\\_channel=BioGrad](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_rSIW7rxyVo&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=BioGrad)
    - ii. Drafted plan for two new “initiatives” to focus on next semester (see full descriptions below)
      1. ad hoc Sustainability Committee - we will advertise for this next semester and get in touch with the existing department Sustainability committee
      2. Recruitment Coordinator - we will work on making a really great proposal to the department in hopes of getting funding for Fall 2021
4. Updates from representatives:
  - a. QUBS (Adam) -
    - i. Final QUBS staff meeting a week ago, no significant updates. No decisions about what field work will look like this summer.
  - b. Faculty and RTP (Hana) -
    - i. No updates
  - c. Alumni/Graduate Committee (Jessie) -
    - i. No updates
  - d. SGPS (Emilie & Chloe) -
    - i. Labs and offices are going to close again, expecting a covid surge when everyone returns to campus. Closures won't be as bad as summer. Precautionary measure against new surge in cases.
    - ii. Students that received extra funding for a semester because of covid may be able to extend the funding for another semester.
    - iii. Exciting awards coming soon
    - iv. Beyond Boundaries Conference, asked to share link: [sgps.ca/sbbc](http://sgps.ca/sbbc) . This might have gone out before?
    - v. Holiday crafting workshop on Dec 18th, can join on zoom

- e. International (Harsha & Peiwen) -
    - i. No updates
  - f. Union (Heather) -
    - i. Special general meeting last week, elected bargaining committee, TA TF collective agreement up for renewal - let Heather or bargaining committee know if you have input
    - ii. Several union-organized bursaries opening up in next couple weeks for registration, should get email about this soon
  
  - g. EDI (Sam & Kristen) -
    - i. With EEB Committee, sent out survey for feedback on EEB seminar "Making Ecology Less White"
  - h. Undergrads (Danica) -
    - i. Put survey out to get feedback from ugrads
      - 1. Biopsych students can't do theses in psych dept, want this changed.
      - 2. Not enough info about 4th yr opportunities e.g. thesis vs seminar based - want more accessible info.
      - 3. Gave feedback to dept on Fri Dec 11th
5. Update from Social coordinators (Ryan & Emma) -
- a. BGSC trivia fall trivia series has come to a close (great success!)
    - i. Will likely start up second series in winter
  - b. Holiday cards are in and will be "judged"/compiled this week
  - c. BGSC Talent Show is this Thursday (7:30pm)!
    - i. Pressure your profs to perform!
6. Update from Academic (Hayden) -  
 -mentoring program complete  
 -no other updates
7. BGRS update (Allen) -
- a. NSERC CGS M hasn't changed since 2004 -
    - i. Anyone who can advocate for increasing that? Emilie and Chloe?
    - ii. Nell - new recruitment coordinator position could put together a list of things that are barriers - e.g. stipend isn't exactly a living wage.
    - iii. Emilie will pitch to SGPS
  - b. Recruitment coordinator position -

- i. Allen sent email to Faculty of Artsci - ask for funding - haven't responded yet - dept might be more willing to contribute to this position if splitting costs 50:50 with Faculty of Artsci
  - c. BGRS -
    - i. Funding -
      - 1. \$1500 from grants so far, 2 haven't responded yet
      - 2. Will work with 3 seminar committees to see if money left over for the year that isn't rolling over to next year that could go toward speaker fees
        - a. EEB Committee can contribute \$687.32
      - 3. Want plenary speaker to be female or BIPOC
      - 4. Regan - there's also the university's EDII fund
      - 5. Potentially collaborating with QUBS - Dr Lougheed wants to bring in an Indigenous speaker, potentially also have them as plenary speaker for BGRS
    - ii. Ideally have spreadsheet and vote for who everyone wants plenary speaker to be.

## 8. Discussion

- a. Last meeting of the semester - happy holidays :)

### **Recruitment Coordinator**

- Goal of this position is to encourage recruitment of grad students to the department, especially from underrepresented or historically-excluded groups. This will relieve professors and the graduate school as the sole recruitment channel and will provide a new perspective.
- The Coordinator will report to the EDII committee to ensure efforts are focusing on recruitment from marginalized groups
- A main goal will be to determine what limits recruitment to the department in general, and to underrepresented groups specifically, in order to prioritize efforts (e.g. fees? Lack of advertising? Needed clarity on the application process or about what to expect from a research-based graduate degree?)
- The Coordinator will also work closely with the department social media coordinator to advertise recruitment-related initiatives

- Once priorities are established, possible initiatives could include:
  - o Making infographics for how to apply to grad school that are Biology-specific
  - o Guide for how to choose a supervisor; including what emails to professors should include, recommendations to contact former/current students, what to look for in a supervisor and/or research area , etc.
  - o Update or highlight any existing guides (e.g. career options with biology degrees, what to expect financially as a grad student, etc)
  - o Look at how application fees impact recruitment of students from historically-excluded and/or underrepresented groups (possibly try to introduce a fee waiver, possibly raising money to do so)
  - o Guide or promotional materials that highlight what to expect from the experience of graduate school in Queen's Biology – from our social events to funding to career opportunities – infographic or video?
  
- The BGSC will look into departmental funding for this position in the form of a TAship (as with the Social Media Coordinator) which would allow a greater time commitment and therefore better quality of work from the Coordinator.

### **Ad Hoc Sustainability Committee**

- This/these representative(s) will primarily report to the department committee (Sustainability Action) who will lead initiatives that work to reduce the carbon footprint of our research (e.g. recycling program) in hopes that strength in numbers will increase the impact of their work
  
- The committee member(s) may also approach Divest Queen's to collaborate, or at least promote their initiatives to the department
  
- Support and promote Kingston and Queen's community sustainability-focused initiatives (eg Kingston Climate Change Symposium, or letter writing campaigns about various sustainability-related issues in our community)
  
- Work with our social coordinators to create BGSC events with a sustainability focus (eg clothing swaps?)