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 and 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 of 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