

BiGCoW Meeting Minutes – Friday Jan 27th, 2012

Meeting times for the rest of the year:

- Friday, February 24th 2012 3:00-4:00pm, room 3101
- Friday, March 30th 2012 3:00-4:00pm, room 3101
- Friday, April 27th 2012 3:00-4:00pm, room 3101

Staff and Faculty Representative (Kat Stewart)

- No new news
- The staff enjoyed the Christmas party being held in the University Club rather than in the atrium.

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

- The Christmas party was successful!
 - They came in slightly under budget.
 - They compiled some of the activities that they did this year so that the future social coordinators will have a guideline for next year
 - Issues with the University Club rooms that were booked: It was difficult to hear the presenter if you were not in the room with the presenter/speakers. Next year, they could select a different room in the University Club.
 - The University Club did not have any issues with the events held or their potential for mess (including the Gingerbread House contest)
 - May want to increase the amount of food served next year. The options for food are limited, either appetizers or a sit-down meal. May want to increase the amount of appetizers served.
- The food drive was also successful this year!
 - The option for donating a non-perishable item in order to receive a drink ticket was well-received
 - Those who forgot food donations donated money, which was still cheaper than a drink
 - No one has claimed their ticket for the donation bin raffle, so the money will stay in the BioGrads account.
- Considering planning an Elbow Lake weekend getaway trip.
 - With the huge lodge on the property, there could be a potluck
 - If we go in the winter, we could include snowshoeing
 - The small cabins are 4-6 people, potentially 8-9 if you include cots & couches, and are \$36/night
 - This may be a relatively inexpensive getaway cost per person
 - We may need a cleaning crew (volunteers) for the final day

Sports Coordinator (Adriana Lopez (absent))

SGPS Representatives (2 Open positions)

- Roxanne, from the Academic Affairs Committee, has come with questions regarding departmental procedure:
 - The Queen's General Research Ethics Board
 - Some graduate student's across Queen's are having issues getting approved by the board. Do students have issues with this in Biology?
 - Not sure; one member we know has been approved in the past, for teaching
 - You need the approval to perform questionnaires/surveys
 - RAships: Are there any issues with RAships in this department? It is not uniform across departments
 - It may be good issue to discuss this with Joanne

Graduate Committee Representative (Niraj Kumar)

- No new news from last meeting

RTP Representative (Roslyn Dakin)

- No meetings this year yet, so no new updates.

Treasurer (Chris Baird (absent))

Academic Coordinators (Sarah Wallace (absent) and Amanda Xuereb)

- Teaching award:
 - They picked up all the surveys given out to graduate courses last term
 - They are going to tally all of the surveys at the end of the Winter term once they receive the surveys for the Winter term as well
 - The Centre for Teaching and Learning has regulations regarding creating awards for teaching. They will contact CTL to learn more about these regulations and inform them of the award, to see if any extra steps need to be done.
- Moodle page for TAs:
 - It may be useful to remind graduate students of the Moodle site in the beginning of the Fall semester, or earlier, so that new/returning students can learn more about classes they may be considering TAing.

QUBS Representative (Ann McKellar)

- There is no new news regarding the solar array
- They are working on workshops for the spring and fall
- There is a potential property that they are trying to purchase from the NCC. It has not gone through yet

- Eoadventure Camp
 - This summer, there will be 6-7 weeks (each is a weekly event).
 - They are looking for councilors. The lead councilors will be returning, so they need to have 3 additional leaders. The application for these are due at the end of January
 - Advertising for the ecoadventure camp was sent out via email to the environmental sciences

- QUBS Undergraduate award:
 - The application to the undergrad QUBS award is due at the end of January.
 - They usually only end up with a handful of applicants, it would be good to promote the award a little more to increase the amount of applicants
 - Part of the problem lies in the advertising of the award
 - Another potential issue is that when supervisors accept students, students may not be accepted for a project until they know the results of their SWEP. From the student's perspective, it would be easier to write up a proposal for this award if they knew their project first, which many do not know by the time this application is due.
 - It would be good if the deadline was extended until after the SWEP has been settled, to increase the amount of applicants.
 - It would be useful if there was a website where students could learn about potential faculty that are offering undergraduate projects that would be held at QUBS, so they know about their options.

Additional comments

- Do we have a sense of how many new graduate students there are in the department this semester?
 - It may be nice to have a formal get-together at the Grad Club