

## **Biograds Minutes – Nov. 21/2014**

### *Amanda Tracey (Chair)*

- Salvation Army food drive bin is outside of main office. Delivered Nov 13, will be picked up after the holidays.

### *Alex Ross (Co-chair/seceratry)*

- *No update*

### *Michele (QUBS rep)*

- Frank Phelan (QUBS manager) will be retiring at the end of next year. Closer to the date there will be a formal process to replace him.
- User days were up at both QUBS, and Elbow Lake this year compared to last
- Carolyn Bonta, Elbow Lake manager, is looking to introduce a new seminar series for Elbow Lake. This will hopefully be a year round seminar series, where grad students, and other researchers will have the chance to talk about their work to the public. It is also being looked into, as to if graduate students could use this as their closing seminar.
- Looking for volunteers to fill citizen science/public workshops on weekends.

### *Leslie Holmes & Becky Taylor (Social Coordinators)*

- Holiday party is Dec 5, from 4-7pm at the University Club. Tickets are being sold at \$10 for graduate students, 537 students and post-docs, and \$20 for faculty. With the purchase of a ticket, attendees will receive 1 drink ticket, and a selection of appetizers. There was some debate from the department about the appropriateness of this event, even though it has always been an annual event. Things to think about when planning for next year: (1) theme must be secular in that no one will be left out, (2) there are certain days that we should not plan this event for (e.g. first day of Chanukah, Dec 6 – anniversary of Montréal school shooting). It is also suggested to start planning this event as far in advance as possible, to secure a venue, and to give us time with any negotiations we have to do with the department. One other thing to think about, is to try to get money donated by scientific supply companies (e.g. Fisher, Biobar, etc.). We had some luck with this for this year.

### *Shakira Azan (Treasurer)*

- Coffee time earnings have slowed down slightly – since the last meeting we've made \$33.05
- Total budget right now is sitting ~\$563.00

### *Nick Cairns (RTP)*

- Met with the committee to talk about the 5 faculty applicants that are up for full professorship. Unable to share results with the BGSC at this time.

### *Dave Ensing (Academic Coordinator)*

- Moodle site is back up
- Sent out surveys to instructors regarding graduate level courses

*Eric Fedosejevs (Sports coordinator)*

- No update

*Danielle Porplycia & Courtney Holden (SGPS Reps)*

- No update

*Deni Ogunrinde (Graduate Committee Rep)*

- No update

*Nishka (Alumni Rep)*

- Working with the alumni association to hopefully get names of past biology alumni – dealing with some red tape.

*Adam Meyer (Union Rep & Graduate Representative for the Biology Headship Committee)*

#### Union

- PSAC 901 is filing a grievance with the university to try and increase childcare on campus. They are also addressing the university regarding the laying off of 27 janitors.

#### Headship

- Have been meeting fairly regularly. Right now discussions are revolving around the state of the department, and what needs to be addressed as the department moves forward. Once this has been discussed, names of potential Department Heads will be brought forward. This process is likely to last through much of this academic year.

*James Sinclair (Staff and Faculty Rep)*

- No update

*Wayne Snedden (Biology Graduate Department Coordinator)*

Wayne came to talk about some of the issues he brought up at the beginning of semester orientation meeting. It doesn't seem like anything is set in stone yet, in terms of updated or new policies, but the following notes will show where the department is heading with graduate policies.

- Committee meetings:
  - Students must have a *yearly* committee meeting. Setting up this meeting is a shared responsibility between the supervisor and student. While committee meetings must happen at least once a year, they can be more frequent.

- New policy may include disciplinary actions. This would be in the form of an automatic “conditional” on the student’s progress report. There is no real punitive damage of receiving a “conditional”, but the student must have a meeting in the 4 months following to avoid an “Un-satisfactory”, which carries negative ramifications.
- Extra TAships
  - No true policy on taking extra TAships, but if you have more than 3 TA slots over the course of the academic year students *must* talk to their supervisor. It is unlikely that a student can be prevented from taking an extra TAship, but there needs to be some dialogue back and forth to ensure that the student has enough time for the extra TAship based on the progress of their own thesis.