

## January SOBGS Meeting Minutes

January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014

### In attendance:

Atiyah Ferouz  
Joel Slade  
Toby Thorne  
Joseph Stinziano  
Emma Hobbs  
Joanna Konopka  
Morag Dick

Magda Konopka  
Michael Onley  
Aimee Lee Houde  
Matthew Turnbull  
Aniruddho Chokroborty Hoque  
Julia Matheson

### Minutes

4:05 – Meeting called to order

- Discussion of departmental external review report
  - o T. Thorne: somewhat pro-grad students, esp. re: stipends could be raised to meet national standards
    - How to pursue? May wait to see response from administration and bring up through department head if action is not taken
  - o Conversation on perceived faculty difficulties with thesis quality & potential alternative avenues for students
  - o Idea of a yearly meeting between faculty and graduate students, similar to the luncheon for the external review
- Automatic deduction campaign discussion
  - o T. Thorne presents international student perspective
  - o Comment by A.L. Houde re: usual case in other universities, giving students either option
  - o Mention that Facebook group has been created for campaign, so will not be conducted through science department mailing lists; interested students may wish to join
  - o Last that was heard, leaders of movement had secured a meeting with university administration to present arguments and discuss options
- A.L. Houde describes the new Masters in Management of Applied Science program
  - o Q: will this detract from resources available for biology students? Esp. considering faculty have voiced concerns about their workloads. A: theoretically not, should be a separate program altogether
  - o First time hearing about this for many representatives
  - o General agreement that the program may not be well realized in its first year, opinions voiced re: requests from employers for this type of education
- A.L. Houde presents budget and BGRF final costs update

- Poster boards remain loss leader: executives encouraged to talk to any acquaintances/friends/relatives in carpentry or engineering to estimate cost of building our own
  - Potential to ask department for one-time expense to decrease future costs and therefore their contribution to BGRF
- Some discussion of catering costs and whether food provided could be reduced to save money in future years (often leftovers)
  - A: provided by Great Hall based on attendance numbers given, so volume is not set by SOBGS. Could say lower amount of people.
- Some discussion about reducing speaker costs
- There has to be more communication with Hillary and Beth about the BGRF budget
- SOGS report by J. Slade
  - Upcoming referendum regarding post-residency fees
  - Q: Any progress on lawsuit? A: Exec issued a ruling declaring no one could discuss the matter further
- Union report by J. Matheson
  - Food bank fund is out of money, but may receive boost from other PSAC monies
- Graduate education committee report by T. Thorne
  - Will be ranking OGS applications with C. Dieleman
- Seminar committee report by J. Konopka
  - Presentation of recent seminar experience survey: students from AgCan indicate transportation keeps them from attending
  - Currently planning a shuttle to bring students to seminars from AgCan, if there is enough interest and department will contribute to gas money
  - Other small extras like lactose-free options, student baking being considered to improve experience
- Research committee: no meeting
- Outreach report by A.C. Hoque
  - Looking for ways to increase profile of biology department similar to that of physics, chemistry, and other sciences; not strong at self-promotion
  - Asks fellow students to forward ideas by the end of the week (Feb 2) on how to increase visibility and profile of biology department
- Social committee report by A. Ferouz
  - Finalized date and location for biology formal (April 4<sup>th</sup>)
  - Upcoming events: bake sales, Valentine's Day candy grams, coffee house (incl. call for acts), 50/50 ticket draw
    - Several offers of 50/50 ticket rolls
  - Idea for silent auction, half proceeds going to a charity
  - Approaching fundraising goal for bio formal
- Seeing no other business, meeting adjourned