

November SOBGS Meeting Minutes

November 15th, 2013

In attendance:

Catherine Dieleman
Emma Hobbs
Toby Thorne
Maja Milojevic
Joel Slade
Aimee Lee Houde
Julia Matheson

Trisha Tully
Jenna Siu
Michael Del Vasto
Atiyyah Ferouz
Matthew Turnbull
Michael Onley

Minutes

2:08 – Meeting called to order

- Overview of BGRF by A.L. Houde; comments by T. Tully

2:10 – Committee reports, starting w/ SOGS report by J. Slade

- Working to increase minimum wage, provide women & transgender support programs, no mention of lawsuit, refer to B. Sutton-Quaid for further information
 - o A.L. Houde: link on website for questions re: lawsuit
 - o A.L. Houde: Mustang Express status for grad students? J. Slade: need to ask a certain community, will follow up

2:15 – Chair report by J. Slade

- Department meeting, planning to restructure around “pillar” of Environment & Sustainability, possible poor fit
 - o Comments by J. Siu, T. Thorne, A.L. Houde re: suitability for biology department, existing E&S program(s)
- Rule changes to 2nd reviewer only reading thesis once, onus on student to make changes
 - o Various comments on cause for change, outcome of GEC meeting, importance of supervisor oversight
- A.L. Houde: more students needed for external review
 - o T. Tully: what will this entail? A.L. Houde: answering questions re: program and facilities, etc., free lunch, anonymous
- Workshops by Brent Sinclair re: post-doc opportunities, networking, career paths
 - o J. Slade: will this be annual? A. L. Houde: Hopefully! Will ask.

2:26 – Union report by J. Matheson

- T. Thorne joined & trained, still need another biology steward
 - o T. Tully: what does the job entail? J. Matheson: available online, description written but not passed on; J. Slade: possibly send a reminder email
- Extended union healthcare available for costs outside of SOGS plan

2:30 – Graduate education committee report from C. Dieleman and T. Thorne

- Sheila Macfie may be offering thesis writing workshop or course
- Grad student handbook could be updated and restructured in several ways

- Mandated to make necessary changes and send to A.L. Houde & Beth Macdougall-Shackleton for approval

2:37 – Graduate education committee report by M. Onley & J. Siu

- No system to keep students from entering program without high-school prerequisites, should we be allowing that?
- Curriculum mapping, are students learning what they need to? How much course overlap?
- UWO scores well on communication metrics, somehow
 - T. Tully: should minimize overlap w/ prerequisite courses; J. Siu: may be due to lack of communication, needs to be more top-down control
 - A.L. Houde: curriculum mapping initiative has been ongoing for >3 years, needs to make some progress

2:44 – Seminar committee report by M. Turnbull and M. Milojevic

- Host found for graduate nominated speaker
- A.L. Houde: be sure to send specific emails for grad speaker, funds are available for meals and accommodation

2:46 – Research committee report by A.L Houde

- Trying to identify key research areas, chiefly before external review

2:47 – Outreach committee report by T. Tully

- Possible event with BUGS using crayfish in NCB, but difficulties getting agreement from Sarah Lee due to animal care training & transportation to different building
 - A.L. Houde: make last ditch email effort, incorporate recommendations for next open house other wise

2:55 – Social committee report by M. Del Vasto and A. Ferouz

- Bake sale made \$147, where to submit?
 - A.L. Houde: give to Carol, ALH or Joel can sign any receipts for reimbursement
- Low grad student attendance
 - J. Siu: talk to people outside your lab; A.L. Houde: exec can help advertise personally, also use biograd Facebook group
- Faculty lunch, \$30 tickets this year
 - A.L. Houde: very expensive for grad students to afford
- Same days as Festivus events, ugly sweater party, alcohol serving form submitted
 - A.L. Houde and J. Siu: exec and volunteers can help organize and arrange
 - Various advertising & involvement suggestions re: future bake sales: advertising in res, talking to sophs, check BUGS Facebook group & email lists
- Formal semi-set for April 4th, currently considering Western Fair due to cost
 - A.L. Houde: drink tickets? A. Ferouz: no, but could ask
 - A.L. Houde: additional insurance required? Check if contract is tied to whole organization or one individual
 - J. Siu: past two DJs have been friends of an exec member
 - Tentative theme is masquerade
 - Some concern re: transportation distance to location

3:18 – J. Matheson, E. Hobbs, M. Milojevic, C. Dieleman, M. Onley adjourn

- Final reminder, lump sum payment at the end of this month, \$1345 on second last banking day

3:20 – Brief budget discussion with A. L. Houde

- T. Tully: any way to lower cost of BGRF poster boards? A.L. Houde: recurring question, still looking for lower cost alternatives
- Schedule and budget discussion tabled for next meeting

3:22 – Meeting adjourned