

# COUNCIL UPDATE



*GSS Council met on September 24 2012 for its regular monthly meeting. Council was unforeseeably delayed by a half hour due to a lack of quorum. Our thanks to those that attended and apologies for the wait. We are being proactive in developing a resource to aid Councilors in navigating Council meetings and the "how to's" of being a Councilor and/or an Alternate, including guidelines for submitting regrets.*

## Major decisions made at Council:

- The Shared Services Agreement with the SFSS is moving forward but is in need of more time to finalize details. Council approved extending the existing agreement until October 31 2012. Council is encouraged to provide feedback on the proposed Agreement to CERO Julia Lane.
- In continuing the GSS' commitment to hosting a Council meeting at a non-Burnaby location once a semester, Council approved to hold the October 15 2012 Council meeting at SFU Vancouver and to host a joint Social with the TSSU after the Council meeting.
- The GSS and the TSSU have had an on-going, long-term relationship. Council affirmed the TSSU's external seat on Council for the Fall 2012 semester. Some Councilors expressed concerns regarding the voting status of this external seat, and so voted for the AIRO Logan Ansell to work with the TSSU and Council members to discuss the concerns raised. This discussion will come to Council, at the latest, as a business item at the December 2012 Council meeting.
- The GSS is sad to announce that Elaine Parker, our wonderful Executive Director, will most likely be leaving. In anticipation of this, Council appointed a Hiring Committee: Julia Lane (CERO) will act as Chair, Eleonora Joensuu (MCRO) as Executive Committee representative, and Joe Howard stepped forward as a Council Representative. There are still 2 available Council Representative positions on the Committee. Please consider volunteering for this opportunity!
- Council approved transitioning the Operations and Finance Officer job portfolio to a Financial Coordinator position, beginning in January 2013. Furthermore, to address concerns regarding the hours of work for the two existing Coordinator positions, Council approved increases to the Graduate Services Coordinator and Professional Development Coordinator job portfolios from approx. 20 hours per month to between 30 - 40 hours per month, to begin January 2013.

- **These transitions will require by-law changes which can only be done in a General Meeting. Please mark your calendars for October 24, noon - 1 pm for a Special General Meeting!**

- The work of the Bargaining Committee is going well, however significant meetings are still anticipated. The stipends previously approved have been exhausted, and so Council approved an additional \$850 from the Stipends - Bargaining Committee budget line for the continued work of the Committee during the Fall.
- The GSS provides the Benefit Plan Bursary program from the interest accrued on the Benefit Plan Reserve Fund. The management of the fund has been unstable since Feb 2012 given the early departure of the previous OFO, and consequently the interest will only cover 8 bursaries for the upcoming October adjudication compared to the 12 bursaries that has previously been the target. Of the three options presented, Council decided to only offer the 8 bursaries for this allocation period.

## Discussions held and future directions:

- Council expressed interest in discussing the Copy Centre, currently a SFSS service and not a part of the existing or proposed Shared Services Agreement, as to whether this is a service which graduate students wish to contribute to financially.

## Upcoming dates:

- **Next Council Meeting** - October 15 2012 at the Vancouver Campus HC 1315 Scotiabank Lecture Room
- October Council will be followed by a joint GSS and TSSU social from 5 - 8 pm at the Shebeen Whisky House
- Think Again! Conference - Abstract Deadline Oct 1 2012
- Benefit Plan Bursary Application Deadline - October 12 2012
- Family Subsidy Application Deadline - October 15 2012

*The full agenda package containing more details and information is available at [www.sfugradsociety.ca](http://www.sfugradsociety.ca).*