

**COUNCIL**

Minutes of Meeting

Date: Wednesday April 10, 2019

Time: 4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Place: NH 3407

1. **Speaker’s Welcome and opening remarks.**

C. Van Bommel took the chair. T. Beirness recorded minutes and noted that quorum is present. The meeting is called to order at 4:06 pm.

1. **Adoption of Agenda**

*Wilson/Sargent*

16-0-0

*Carried*

1. **Declarations of Interest**

*No declarations of interest stated.*

1. **Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
2. **October 11, 2018 - Defer**
3. **February 13, 2019**

*Wilson/Freure*

*11-0-3*

*Carried*

1. **March14, 2019 – Defer**
2. **Council Membership Report:**

*New members stated and welcomed. See updated membership report.*

1. **Election of Speaker of Council:**

*Candidates were given the opportunity to introduce themselves and speak with Council. After all candidates in attendance spoke, decision to enter into confidential session was reached.*

*Entered into confidential session at 4:20pm*

*DaSilva/Wilson*

*Left confidential session at 4:30pm*

*DaSilva/Wilson*

***BIRT*** *Council elects Speaker of Council M. Paley by secret ballot at 4:40pm*

*Motion to destroy ballots*

*DaSilva/Wilson*

*15-0-0*

*Carried*

1. **Motions:**
2. Motion to set the May Council Meeting Date

*Discussion: Proposed date of Wednesday May 15, 2019 contingent on new speaker being available*

***BIRT*** *the GSA-UW Council will meet on Wednesday May 15, 2019 from 4pm to 6pm.*

*Haque/Sargent*

*15-0-1*

*Carried*

1. Motion to appoint Deputy Speaker

*B.Wilson nominated by L. Sargent (accepted)*

*C. DaSilva nominated by K. Mistry (declined)*

***BIRT*** *the GSA-UW Council appoint B. Wilson as Deputy Speaker.*

*Sargent/Wilson*

*14-1-1(Wilson abstained)*

*Carried*

1. Motion to adopt Political Position on Supervisor Relationships

***Whereas*** *graduate students often encounter issues with their faculty advisor; and*

***Whereas*** *the supervisor-supervisee dynamic is imbalanced such that the graduate students are discouraged from speaking up for their rights because of the potential of negative career repercussions; and*

***Whereas*** *the GSA does not currently have a political position on graduate student supervision; therefore*

***BIRT*** *the GSA-UW council adopts the following political position on graduate supervision*

*Reid/Haque*

*17-0-0*

*Carried*

16. Graduate Supervision

Every graduate student has the right to work in an environment free from discrimination, harassment, abuse and otherwise unethical behaviour, as well as the right to pursue action to ameliorate their environment when subjected to such behaviour. Unfortunately, students often tolerate such behaviour because of perceived repercussions and fear of negative career consequences.

While Policy 33 exits, addressing grievances/breaches of Policy 33 through Policy 70 - Grievances is not necessarily confidential nor without repercussions. Policy 42 - Prevention and Response to Sexual Violence can be used as a framework for handling harassing and abusive behaviour.

There is currently no policy on graduate student supervisory relationships. While graduate students are assessed through performance reports, the graduate supervisory relationship is often not assessed on an ongoing basis. A poor graduate supervisory relationship may be a factor in poor graduate student performance.

1. Graduate students should not have to tolerate discrimination, harassment, abusive or otherwise unethical behaviour as outlined in Policy 33 - Ethical Behaviour. These rights should be communicated to graduate students from matriculation with frequent reminders, and reference information should be readily available.
2. We compel the University of Waterloo to outline expected behaviour in supervisory relationships and provide a framework for preventing and responding to graduate student supervisory issues, similar to Policy 42. Recognizing the power dynamics involved in a student-supervisor relationship, this policy should require departments handling supervisory conflicts to minimize repercussions for students involved. This may involve mediation between both parties, arranging for a new supervisor for an affected student, providing alternative financial arrangements and minimizing future contact with a previous supervisor.
3. Furthermore, an independent third party member of the community who is familiar with the faculty structure and departmental policy should be available for confidential consultation to resolve supervisory conflict situations and to serve as an advocate if the student decides to pursue formal action. This role may be modeled by the Sexual Violence Response Coordinator as outlined in Policy 42, hereby named the Graduate Supervisory Response Coordinator. This Graduate Supervisory Response Coordinator could be a member of the Student Advocacy Office proposed in the 2013 Graduate Student Advocacy Survey Report. Graduate students should be made aware of the Graduate Supervisory Response Coordinator and their role through frequent communication, and reference information should be readily available.
4. Departments should provide a mechanism for graduate students to provide

confidential feedback on the graduate student supervisor relationship, preferably during the graduate student performance assessment process (i.e., term activity reports, committee meetings, etc.). This feedback should be reviewed by a non-faculty member of the department who has mental health training. The Graduate Supervisory Response Coordinator should also receive this information to maintain a long-term record, review ongoing patterns and recognize when to contact a graduate student to investigate their situation in more detail.

*Discussion: This is a great starting point and further changes can be made offering greater protections for Graduate Students.*

1. Motion to adopt Proposed Council Policy Actions

**WHEREAS** the GSA-UW Board of Directors have implemented a two-stage policy approval process; and

**WHEREAS** the GSA-UW Council should also uphold such a standard; and

**WHEREAS** other changes to Council policies are coming forward; and

**WHEREAS** the Proposed Council Policy Actions passed their first reading at the March meeting of Council; therefore

***BIRT*** *the GSA-UW Council approve the Proposed Council Policy Actions, as included in the supporting documentation.*

*Wilson/DaSilva*

*15-0-1*

*Carried*

1. Motion to provide feedback on Board Policy Actions

***BIRT*** *the GSA-UW Council provide the feedback on policy reforms to the Board as provided in the supporting documentation.*

*Reid/Wilson*

*10-1-2*

*Carried*

**5 minute recess by consent at 5:04pm to resume at 5:09pm**

1. **Advising the President**

*Discussions surrounding confusion about funding sources and acceptance letters. Clarity for students is needed as they navigate funding.*

*Strategic planning was discussed along with the possibility of upcoming surveys.*

1. **New Business & Member’s Discussion:**

*International funding cutbacks to the University which has supervisors reducing the number of grad students that they are taking on was a topic of discussion.*

*Mention was made by the President with regard to intent to hire a Political Director*

*The discussion of councilors meeting more informally outside of regular meetings was brought up along with the possibility of upcoming workshops.*

*The shortage of teaching positions across some Faculties/Departments was also discussed.*

1. **Special Orders:**
2. Confidential: Vice Presidential Nominating Committee

Motion to enter confidential session at 5:55pm

*Bhogal/Freure*

*16-0-0*

*Carried*

Returned from confidential session at 6:10pm

1. **Update from the Board:**

*Regular meetings of the Board have not been set at time of this meeting. The CRO reported that Director Nominations close on Monday April 15, 2019.*

1. **Notices of Motions:**

*No notices of motion*

1. **Adjournment:**

*Meeting adjourned at 6:15pm*