CGSS Meeting Agenda

**Date:** October 31, 2022

**Time:** 11:00 am

**Location:** D211

**Approval Status:** Approved

1. **Call to Order: 11:03 am**
   * Present (16): Jesse, Lucas, Trevor, Sabrina, Desiree, Athan, Andrew, Mason, Seja, Kaitlin, Vanessa, Joern, Jacqui, Jessica, Song (late, 11:15 am), Nealan (late 11:25 am)
   * Missing (2): Rama, Naysilla
   * Other (0):
2. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (October)**
   * Approved by: Sabrina
   * Seconded by: Lucas
3. **Budget Approval**
   * Desiree confirmed that 2022—2023 CGSS Budget approved by Department (via Michael Wolf and Ken MacFarlane). Budget increase reflected inflation.
4. **Skits**
   * Annual tradition at UBC in December where small groups come together to make a fun video “skit” to present during the Holiday Skits. Usually right before Coffee Time right before the holidays.
   * Need to form a sub-committee – anyone from Council can join. Ordering food and drinks, liquor license, etc. Highly recommend organizing making a skit. First Year Representative (Rama) is in charge of organizing some first years together to make a skit. Bi-weekly meetings will be held to organize the skits and groups together.
   * Sabrina proposes a motion to form a Skits Organizational Committee
     1. Seconded by Desiree
     2. Vote (passed):
        + In favour (14): Jesse, Lucas, Trevor, Sabrina, Desiree, Athan, Andrew, Mason, Seja, Kaitlin, Vanessa, Joern, Jacqui, Jessica
        + Against (0): None
        + Abstain (0): None
     3. Sabrina will send out an email to start prepping the Committee
        + Interested committee members: Desiree, Seja, Jesse, Trevor, Sabrina
5. **Icicle Raffle**
   * Another holiday tradition during the Skits. Learn how to make glass icicles with the glassblower (Brian). A fun event and charity fundraiser.
   * Sabrina has emailed Brian, and we would like to start selling the raffle tickets (1 for $2 or 3 for $5) either this week, or next week during Coffee Time. Number of winners determined by Brian’s availability.
   * Sabrina will send out a volunteer list for CGSS members to sell tickets during Coffee Time.
   * Comments that we should advertise this well in advance in order to maximize interest from the Department.
6. **Special Events Licences**
   * Several Council members have already obtained theirs.
   * All other member, please obtain before Skits so that all Council members can assist and rotate out during the events we hold.
   * Reminder that Councillors are expected to assist during two or more events each semester.
7. **Faculty Meeting Regarding Graduate Student Stipends**
   * Michael Wolf is proposing that grad students attend a faculty meeting to provide personal anecdotes about how living in Vancouver during grad school is rather challenging financially.
     1. Could be a bit embarrassing for a person to share how financially unstable they are. Arguably demeaning, as it is asking grad students to effectively tell the Department that we are not financially stable.
     2. A Google form may be appropriate for this, as it allows the speaker to be more anonymous. Perhaps Qualtrics (FIPPA-compliant). Mason and Lucas will look into this, as there are questions on if Qualtrics would allow the department to see who says what.
        + Ask David Huxtable for collecting income vs expenses and personal anecdotes.
          1. Specific expenses (food, rent, wifi, general cost of living).
          2. What percentage of wage goes to living expenses (more hard-hitting than general total sum of expenses).
     3. An email came out late last week from David Huxtable (CUPE 2278 Union Advocate) that highlights some conflicting information regarding support from the Department Head over limited graduate student finances (namely that GTAs may not meet our total contract hours, which is not a valid assumption to make for the majority of GTAs in the Department). Leading to potentially mixed messages from the Head about where he stands in his support of GTA finances.
     4. Given the apparent inconsistent support from the Department Head, the CGSS Council may or may not want to be involved in soliciting anecdotes or data from students – more information is required before Council votes on this.
     5. It would be ideal for several grad students to attend this faculty meeting, so that no one grad student is singled out.
   * More information required before Council decides to vote on this.
8. **Travel funds**
   * There used to be a $30,000 endowment to fund graduate student travel (access once, maybe twice) for conferences
     1. Currently no more money in this fund
     2. Now there is an alternate source, with a maximum of one access to it per student
     3. Alternate sources being approached by the Department
   * Department wants to know how much graduate students have spent on travel expenses for conferences over the past year
9. **Charities**
   * Oceanwise and BC Children’s Hospital were selected this year. Both charities will receive equal amounts from the CGSS charity fund.
10. **CGSS Charity Coffee Time**
    * November 17th, CGSS will host coffee time
    * Please bring something baked or bought
    * Anyone in the department can also bring!
    * Trevor will create a Google Drive form of some kind for CGSS members to sign up to.
      1. This will also be sent out to the general department.
    * There is a reimbursement for the general coffee, tea, etc. that is required, but no reimbursement for individuals.
11. **Social Coordinator Report**
    * Pumpkin carving contest went well. No apparent cheating this year via the Google Forms versus last year.
      1. Winners of both categories will each win $130 as prize money for a group lunch.
      2. Cost of pumpkins was about $90
      3. Budget was $350
    * Halloween Stressbusters went well the same day.
    * Nothing upcoming for November, although the Gingerbread contest is coming up in December.
12. **Union Report**
    * There is a Slack group that general union members can get involved with.
      1. Specifically someone for B-wing fourth floor
    * Generally keeping track of who needs to be contacted
    * Posters promoting unionization have been disappearing recently.
13. **First Year Report**
    * Nothing to report from Rama – she is aware of Skits and has expressed interest in joining the Skits committee.
14. **Sports Report**
    * Vancouver Sun Run in April, registration in November. Lots of interest from the department.
    * Approximately 15—20 department members signed up for biking.
15. **International Student Report**
    * Nothing to report. Probably no events to be planned until next semester.
16. **GSS Report**
    * Nothing particularly important happened at the meeting. Part of the meeting discussed GSS endorsement for the unionization effort – largely supportive, but some pushback (from the GSS President, Sam Kenston). Most departments are supportive. Some departments offer larger stipends than others, partially due to TA workload.
17. **Wellness Report**
    * Sock Wars this term may not be ideal – pushing back to January/February may be better.
    * A small wellness event towards December may be nice
      1. Pet therapy, holiday crafts, board game night
18. **Miscellaneous**
    * Wreath making might be fun to do again, if the budget allows it.

**Meeting adjourned: 11:56 am**