

SOGS COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Approved

June 25, 2009

6:09 – 7:50 p.m.

North Campus Building, Room 117

Interim Speaker: Michael Burrell

Recording secretary: Olga Sauer

1) Ratification of Agenda

ratified

2) Announcements

Reminder to councillors that staying for almost a full hour is not enough to get your department grant – it must be a full hour from the time the meeting started.

Revised attendance sheet is available at the front and will be available in the next Council package.

Summer quorum is 22.

Next council meeting will be on July 30th in this room.

3) Reception and Ratification of the SOGS Council Minutes of May 28, 2009

Moved – G. Keller

Seconded – N. Bridge

No changes

Minutes Ratified

4) Orders of the Day

a) Motions arising from the President

BIRT any member of the Society who takes a leave of absence from her/his academic program and who opts to pay the Society's membership fee shall be entitled to all of the rights and privileges of membership in the Society except those services/programs that are not funded by the Society's membership fee alone.

BIFRT the Bylaws and Constitution Committee (BCC) develop language to ensure clarity of this policy within the Society's Constitution.

Moved – R. Telfer

Seconded – J. Jiang

Telfer – purpose of this is to deal with a current issue where graduate students going on a leave of absence must pay SOGS membership fees in order to opt into the health plan and therefore should have the associated rights of membership. Not clear in our Constitution or Bylaws. Ask Council for clarification.

Jacques – VP Student Services (K. Pisters) and President (D. Jacques) made this arrangement with FGS (SGPS) and the email is in error. That was not what was agreed to, these students weren't supposed to be paying SOGS fees. Motion should be tabled until correct information is received.

Telfer – useful background information; rather than table the motion, refer it to BCC

Jacques – not in the form it's in. As it is written, it is problematic and should be referred to BCC for study.

Meyer – problem with way it is worded because post-docs can opt into health plan but cannot use any other SOGS benefits; should be referred for study.

Telfer – refer motion to BCC for further study.

Moved – R. Telfer

Seconded – J. Meyer

Unanimous

Motion referred to BCC

BIRT notice for a meeting of a committee or board of the Society be provided at least five (5) days in advance of the scheduled meeting.

BIFRT the Bylaws and Constitution Committee (BCC) be directed to propose language to integrate this policy into the Society's bylaws.

Moved – R. Telfer

Seconded – J. Meyer

Telfer – no consistency as to how much time is given when meetings are called; bare minimum needed
Price – if meetings were called on a day's notice, was that because it was needed and will this motion interfere with workings of some committees?

Meyer – at Executive wanted days changed to three business days.

Seconded – R. Telfer

Unanimous

Jacques – some committees have standing days for meetings and reminders go out a day before the actual meeting; and sometimes there are emergencies.

Telfer – this is just a proposed policy until such time as the BCC has time to word a proper motion.

Perhaps a statement could be made to include provision for emergency meetings (i.e., by consensus of all members).

Amended motion:

BIRT notice for a meeting of a committee or board of the Society be provided at least three (3) business days in advance of the scheduled meeting.

BIFRT the Bylaws and Constitution Committee (BCC) be directed to propose language to integrate this policy into the Society's bylaws.

Unanimous

Motions 4 and 5 have been referred to Speaker and withdrawn from current consideration.

b) Motions arising from Other Committees

Bylaws and Constitution Committee

Whereas the Ivey Ph.D. students have voted to join SOGS; and

Whereas Article V Section 1 Paragraph 1 of the SOGS Constitution currently reads:

1. The requirements for full membership of the Society shall be

1. registration in the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies of The University of Western Ontario as a full-time graduate student (excluding those registered in graduate studies in the Faculty of Business Administration).

Whereas Article V Section 2 Paragraph 1 of the SOGS Constitution currently reads:

1. The requirements for associate membership of the Society shall be:

1. registration in the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies of The University of Western Ontario as a part-time graduate student (excluding those registered in graduate studies in the Faculty of Business Administration).

Whereas the SOGS Constitution is inconsistent with allowing members from Ivey; and

Whereas only the general membership at a General Meeting can amend the Constitution:

BIRT Council recommend to the general membership that they amend at the next General Meeting Article V Section 1 Paragraph 1 of the SOGS Constitution to read:

1. The requirements for full membership of the Society shall be

1. registration in the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies of The University of Western Ontario as a full-time graduate student (excluding those registered in the MBA program in the Richard Ivey School of Business)

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1. registration in the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies of The University of Western Ontario as a part-time graduate student (excluding those registered in the MBA program in the Richard Ivey School of Business).

Moved – D. Jacques

Seconded – J. Meyer

Unanimous

Whereas the Finance Committee has determined that bursaries and subsidies currently require most of the committee's commitment

Whereas the Finance Committee feels that the sole mandate of the FC should be to direct the finances of the Society

Whereas the Finance Committee feels that subsidies and bursaries require the full commitment of a committee; and

Whereas the BCC feels that membership requirements for committees belongs in that committee's policy statements and not in the bylaw.

BIRT the bylaws be amended to include 9.4.6

9.4.6 Bursary and Subsidy Committee

9.4.6.1 shall have a Chair;

9.4.6.2 shall collect and organize data on overall student support;

9.4.6.3 shall administer the Society and Grad Club bursaries;

9.4.6.4 shall have representatives of at least one member from each Category of students (Cat I and Cat II);

9.4.6.7 shall have representation by at least one student in at least 3 divisions (Arts/Humanities; Physical Sciences; Biological Sciences; Social Science).

BIFRT 9.4.5.4 and 9.4.5.7 shall be removed from the bylaws

BIFRT the bylaws be renumbered as appropriate

Moved – D. Jacques

Seconded – J. Meyer

Amended:

9.4.6.3 shall administer the Society, Grad Club and external bursaries and subsidies;

Moved – J. Meyer

Seconded – E. Price

Unanimous

Price – why are 9.4.5.4 and 9.4.5.7 being removed? (A-Speaker) they concern the duties within the Finance Committee responsibilities.

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Unanimous

Whereas most of the day-to-day business of council is completed within the first hour, however, matters requiring debate and careful consideration frequently occur towards the end of the meeting; and

Whereas not all councillor positions are filled, and some constituencies have difficulty recruiting SOGS councillors and qualifying for the departmental allowance; and

Whereas the status of "dereliction" carries absolutely no consequences unless a constituent wishes to compete for the position of councillor; and

Whereas in the case of a competitive election, consistent failure to attend an entire meeting may indicate a lack of interest.

BIRT Section 3.0 Councillors be amended to read

3.8. Councillors shall be deemed to be in dereliction of his or her duties if he or she twice:

- a) fails to attend a meeting during his or her term and fails to designate an alternate without written explanation to the Speaker by the adjournment of the meeting; or**
- b) signs out of a meeting prior to adjournment for meetings lasting less than 3 hours; or**
- c) signs out of a meeting before 3 hours has elapsed for meetings exceeding 3 hours.**

BIFRT the bylaws be renumbered as required.

Moved – D. Jacques

Seconded – J. Meyer

Jacques – BCC doesn't agree with this motion; but because Council directed BCC to write the motion, it was done.

Motion Fails unanimously

Whereas the role of the Election Appeal Board necessarily requires it to be considered special in the bylaws; and

Whereas EAS the Election Appeal Board is not a committee; and

Whereas the Election Appeal Board should be kept, as much as possible, free from bias and outward influence during an election or campaign period; and

Whereas Section 9.4.10 of the SOGS Bylaws currently read:

9.4.10 The Elections Appeals Board

9.4.10.1 shall rule on elections appeals

9.4.10.2 shall never have a membership of less than three full members of the Society

WHEREAS the current Bylaw regarding the Election Appeal Board are incomplete:

BIRT Section 9.4.10 of the SOGS Bylaws be struck.

BIFRT Section 4.X of the SOGS Bylaws be added between 4.1 and 4.2 to read:

4.X Election Appeal Board

4.X.1 The Election Appeal Board shall rule on appeals relating to presidential elections and referenda.

4.X.2 Members shall be elected to the Election Appeal Board at the first Council meeting held in January.

4.X.3 The Election Appeal Board shall consist of exactly 4 members plus one representative from the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

4.X.3.1 The Election Appeal Board shall consist of exactly 1 member each from the divisions of Physical Sciences, Biological Sciences, Arts & Humanities, Social Sciences.

4.X.4 The Election Appeal Board shall have a ranked waiting list.

4.X.4.1 If there is a tie of votes when determining the order of ranking on the waiting list, the Speaker shall provide the tie-breaking vote.

4.X.4.2 Members of the Election Appeal Board waiting list shall follow the same restrictions as members of the Election Appeal Board.

4.X.5 Should a member of the Election Appeal Board no longer be able to fulfill his or her duty, the highest ranked member of the same division from the waiting list shall take his or her place.

4.X.6 Any member who joins the Election Appeal Board or Election Appeal Board waiting list must state his or her intention to not graduate within 4 months.

BIFRT SOGS Bylaws be renumbered accordingly.

Moved – D. Jacques
Seconded – J. Meyer

Jacques – timeframe worked out so that those on the EAB would be able to deal with any extended difficulties experienced during (or after) the election.

Telfer – step in the right direction. Concerns – EAB as defined is very vague and doesn't provide much in the way of substance. 4.X.2 – looking for rationale for electing Board in January. 4.x.4.1 using role of Speaker as tie breaker – as long as Speaker wears both hats (CRO and Speaker), any involvement by Speaker could pose problems. It's important to have the EAB free from bias. Third concern was that although it is called a Board, did it fall under the same section as Committees. This is no longer an issue.

Speaker – Section 4 deals with Elections and section 9 deals with Committees. Taken out of Committees and written into Elections.

Price – seems that we are making this more complicated than it needs to be – why are we fixing something that is working fine?

Asquith – how do the four listed divisions fit with someone who is in Media Studies. My work is very Social Science oriented. (A-Jacques) SGPS is working on creating new divisions, but until then these will have to remain.

Asquith – Would I be excluded in the way this is written? (A) no.

R. vanderZanden – how many members on EAB (A) 4 graduate students and a SGPS representative.

Telfer – Point of Information - rationale for 4.X.2.

Jacques – traditional timeframe preceding the opening of the nomination period, then EAB is set before nominations open.

Telfer – was consideration given to my concern about the Speaker playing a role in selecting members of the Board?

Jacques – the general consensus was that we trust the professionalism of the Speaker in the past and that they have to be impartial throughout the year and would be the same here.

Amendment

Remove clause 4.X.4.1

Moved – R. Telfer

Seconded – K. Asquith

Telfer – difficulty in this clause is that Speaker and CRO is the same person. You can be partial to your way of thinking and could be a sticky situation.

Meyer – who will be the tie breaker – currently Executive do not vote – perhaps they could be given a vote in that situation.

Jacques – the likelihood of this happening is not close to plausible.

Keller – clause shouldn't be removed.

Telfer – another way of breaking a tie would be to flip a coin. Strike down the clause and substitute with one that states tie breaker will be in the form of a coin toss.

Meyer – two last people have to be from the same quarter of the student body, and this very unlikely to happen. CRO and Speaker should not be the same person. Potential problem having one person in both roles. This should be looked at. For now, leave the clause as is and work on separating the two roles.

Yes – 8

No – 39

Abstentions – 4

Amendment fails

Whereas the role of the Election Appeal Board necessarily requires it to be considered special in the bylaws; and

Whereas the Election Appeal Board is not a committee; and

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4.X.6 Any member who joins the Election Appeal Board or Election Appeal Board waiting list must state his or her intention to not graduate within 4 months.

BIFRT SOGS Bylaws be renumbered accordingly.

Moved – D. Jacques

Seconded – J. Meyer

No – 7

Abstentions – 4

Motion carries

Whereas the SOGS Bylaws contain multiple references to the Faculty of Graduate Studies; and

Whereas the Faculty of Graduate Studies no longer exists:

BIRT "Faculty of Graduate Studies" be replaced with "School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies" in the following SOGS Bylaws:

1.4.3 shall meet regularly with the Faculty of Graduate Studies to discuss academic issues.

1.6.15 shall submit an annual report to the Faculty of Graduate Studies on the disbursement of the subsidy received from the Faculty.

9.4.3.4 shall administer the Graduate Student Teaching Awards in conjunction with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Teaching Assistants' Union.

Moved – D. Jacques

Seconded – J. Jiang

Unanimous

Whereas it is not standard practice to receive subsidies from the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies; and

Whereas bylaw 1.6.15 reads:

1.6.15 shall submit an annual report to the Faculty of Graduate Studies on the disbursement of the subsidy received from the Faculty.

BIRT bylaw 1.6.15 be struck.

BIFRT the bylaws be renumbered.

Moved – D. Jacques

Seconded – J. Jiang

Unanimous

c) Other Motions

d) Tabled Motions

5) Executive/Committee/Councillor Reports

a) President

Nothing to add to report.

b) VP Academic

Joint fund coming to the end of year. ~\$4000 left for 2008-09 year. Want to keep the money coming, so students should apply for these funds. Send applications to sogs@uwo.ca.

How many people know about the 360 degree program – (not many) – will be working on getting information out to students.

Jacques – have you talked about changing the maximum amount per application? (A) It has been discussed, but maximum will stay the same for the time being. If there is a multi-disciplinary application, they will consider given more – anyone in this position should talk to VP first before applying.

c) VP External & Communications

Annual General Meeting of CFS-Ontario will take place in Markham (Toronto) from August 13-16, 2009. Registration deadline is July 30. If anyone is interested please contact VP

(sogs.external@uwo.ca).

GSIC met last week and selected a new chair – Rebecca Williams. GSIC has started the review of CFS and other organizations in order to try to finish before the August Council meeting.

Equity Issues Committee will be meeting in early July.

Newsletter needs submissions. If there is anything that needs to be shared with all graduate students, please contact VP.

Town and Gown hasn't met yet. The next meeting is scheduled for mid-September.

d) VP Finance

Apologized for not submitting a monthly report.

Subsidy Committee did not meet.

Sustainability Committee is still generating ideas.

Grad Club Committee has a new Chair; bottled water prices have been raised to encourage people to use the water filling station.

Finance Committee meeting soon.

Had been asked by Jensen Caughlin to express his apologies for a remark he made at last council meeting that may have been construed as inappropriate. This was not intentional.

Fiscal year has been closed out. Audit will be taking place shortly. Grad Club will end up well with about a \$40,000 surplus.

Penev – the Grad Club is doing well now but in January there was approx. \$8,000 loss. Does this happen every year?

Meyer – in the winter there is lull because there is no patio and so there is less business; during the other seasons, the patio is open and it brings people to the Grad Club. This balances the ups and downs in the balance sheet. The money always comes back to the students.

Penev – Grad Club windows are single pain; is it possible for the Sustainability Committee look at having these windows replaced with double pain ones to save on heat in the winter?

Meyer – double pain would be more efficient, but it's not up to us to have it done – this would be something the University would have to undertake. There might be an extension made to the patio.

Bridge – last summer, some of the windows in Middlesex were replaced.

Meyer – they are probably trying to keep the rustic look of the building.

e) VP Student Services

Health Plan Committee – the new premiums have been received from the broker and a motion will be brought forth under new business. Fees will be billed annually at the start of September or whenever the student first starts (i.e., January or May). We hope to have on-line opt out starting in

September.

IGSIC – the June 20 dinner event was successful. Hope to have information sessions for international students to make them feel more involved. We are looking for new members.

Orientation Committee – handbook is moving along. It will be sent to printers early next month. New members are needed as many of the members are graduating this term.

Jacques – you said the university mandated the annual premiums. Where did that come from the Board of Governors? (A) this was actually started by Sarah Detombe. (A-Tlefer) the language in her report probably should say the - Health Plan Committee endorsed the move to a once a year billing. Implementation might be difficult, it is being explored further by SOGS staff.

f) Disabilities Commissioner

g) Senators/Board of Governors Reports

h) Councillor Reports

i) Speaker's Note

7) Elections – Committees (Internal & External)

Speaker

Speaker – Alison Braley, Speaker nominee, was unable to attend this meeting, but did send a statement read by Speaker. (Appendix B)

Telfer – process is that nominations come to the Executive who then put forward names for Council to elect. Only one application received. Only met once at a GTA union meeting but appears to be very professional, skilled and knowledgeable. Surprised and pleased that she put her name forward. All Executive reviewed her statement prior to coming to Council.

Penev – I too know her from the GTA Union. She is a Social Science Steward. She ran for President of the GTA. She will be an asset to SOGS.

GTA Alliance Representative – Knows her well and can answer questions for her.

Jacques – if people are unsure, we can postpone the election to next month.

McLachlan – would like to make a motion to postpone the election to next month. It's hard to make a decision without meeting her.

Speaker – this isn't technically a motion, you can just vote no confidence at this time and she would be brought back next month for another election.

Telfer – don't know her particularly well, but from everything I know she will be totally fantastic and very professional. We have had a number of Speaker changes in the last few months, and I would like to get some consistency and relieve Mike from front of the room.

Meyer – I would like to talk to her. It's an order of the day, so we can suspend or table the motion. It is an Order of the Day.

Speaker – It's not an order of the day, so you can't table the motion. You can vote no confidence, not to be taken personally, and she will be able to come in next month and present her statement.

Penev – will she continue to be Chief Steward of Social Sciences? (A) yes, she can continue both.

McLachlan – we have had a lot of changes. I had seen her at the GTA union meeting where she was campaigning. That is different than what she would be doing here. Without having met her and having a chance to question her, can make an informed decision. We need to consider this.

Jacques – I would like to ask her how she will deal with particularly contentious issues. One of the problems you have seen in the past is that Speakers have been overwhelmed sometimes. We have to find a speaker who will stand up and thoughtfully and thoroughly squash whatever shenanigans are going on within Council. Take a stand. We have to find that out.

Price – how long is the term – is this a complete term or partial?

Speaker – this would be a full one year term.

In favour of appointing Ms. Braley as Speaker?

Yes – 11

No – 36

Abstentions – 3

“No Confidence” – will ask Ms. Braley to come to Council next month to present her platform.

Disabilities Commissioner

No one

SGPS Graduate Program Appraisals Committee

Gaston Keller

Daisy Tam (Alternate)

UWO Biosafety Committee

Jessica McLachlan

SOGS Committee Election

Noone

8) New Business/Open Forum

The Health Plan Committee approved the new premiums for 2009-2010 year.

BIRT Council approve the 2009-2010 health & dental plan premiums as follows:

Full-time Students \$400.79; Full-time Student and Family 959.96; Part-time Students \$528.66 and Part-time Students and Family \$1254.33.

Moved – Telfer

Seconded Meyer

Unanimous

A motion to amalgamate Changes to Meeting Minutes

Whereas at present unratified Council Meeting Minutes form part of every Council Meeting mailout;

Whereas every Council Meeting mailout is available on the SOGS website;

Whereas all changes to previous Meeting minutes can only be viewed in the following month's Council mailout;

Whereas there is an unacceptably high risk of being misled by incorrect, incomplete, and unratified minutes; and

Whereas it is tedious to read two separate documents to obtain accurate information on the business of Council

BIRT published unratified Meeting Minutes contain the word “Draft for Approval” in the title heading.

BIFRT within 10 business days after ratification of Council Meeting Minutes, they are published with any and all corrections included inline.

Moved – M. Huard

Seconded – D. Jacques

No – 2

Abstentions – 3

Passes

Adjournment (7:48 pm)

Moved – Meyer

Seconded – Bridge

Unanimous