

Minutes for SOBGS Meeting- October 10, 2014

3) BGRF- Joe

Went well, positive feedback from faculty about presentations, raised money and reduced costs. May have extra money this year.

4) Should we add another social committee position, or use subcommittees?

-Previous experience on social committee: best option may be to have subcommittees. May be better for organization, because there will be less confusion about delegating duties in the committee -and a subcommittee could be used for fundraising and formal.

-Current social committee- different people for different events, more variety.

-Suggests that one committee member spearheads one subcommittee tasked with doing one event or focusing on one thing, while another committee member can spearhead another subcommittee.

Is there any limitation for the # of people in the subcommittee? Joe- no, but cautions against too many because it may get too out of control.

Social committee- supports the subcommittees.

5) Preliminary Budget 2014-2015 Joe

Joe- SOGS funds- 80% attendance, if we increase attendance we'll get more funds. Left over BGRF funds, left over until December. Fundraising from BGRF raised about \$2700- much better than last year. Affects SOBGS available finances. Bio formal raised more than \$1000 last year- same goal for this year. Can raise money now for poster board rentals, contributed to the BGRF. Likely getting a department subsidy for the BGRF and also likely getting the Laudenschlager subsidy for the speaker. Total income for the year is roughly \$9000 (preliminary, some numbers need to be finalized). Social committee should try to keep the costs close to what it was last year to stay within our limits. Decreased the Halloween budget because some overspending last year. Do we want to have alcohol at social events? Feedback from last year- alcohol didn't increase attendance at all to the event, and just cost more.

Will vote on the budget officially next meeting.

6) Donation to support MSc/PhD careers- Joe

Cost of the food for these events- can we provide a small donation of \$100-200 to support the workshops?

The other money comes from the department, which is strapped for cash.

How many people attend? For the PhD event space for 20, 16 showed up. MSc has space for more.

Valuable to graduate students- grad students want more career development.

If we want to give this money, do we care whether it's evenly split between MSc and PhD, or let them decide?

\$200 would show our full support.

VOTE- Unanimous vote to donate \$200.

7) SOBGS Sustainability REP?

Would require constitutional amendment, and voted on in a general meeting in December. Duties may include departmental compost, advertising saving resources, recycled paper, weekly posting of environment and sustainability events.

Does the position need faculty support?

Costs?

What about SOGS sustainability committee? Currently 3 Biology members on it, including the committee chair.

We could talk to the SOGS committee, and find out what they're doing.

The role would require a lot of work, someone who's really passionate about it- will you be able to find someone enthusiastic year after year?

There's room for improvement in social committee events.

Composting- janitorial work is unionized, that's a whole other issue.

We could talk to the E&E / E&S program, the faculty there about potential options for programs.

Readdress this issue later for more information.

8) Committee reports-

- A. SOGS- sometime this week members will be finalized, and we'll know how many reps we'll have. VP Finance re-elected. Issues with the grad club struggling.
- B. PSAC- no rep yet.
- C. Graduate Education- have first meeting on the 29th to rank NSERC applications. New collaborative program with Comp Sci, trying to figure out the requirements for Biology.
- D. Undergraduate Education- brief meeting a few days ago- bringing forward curriculum mapping to outline a set of proposed goals, showcasing content and skills that every student should get before they graduate undergrad. They have to go through every course and see how their course matches up to the goals and skills gained. Still working on goals, wants everyone to have this for their students. Make sure every course is incorporating evolution into their subject matter in some way. Working to ensure faculty isn't overwhelmed by this.
- E. Seminar- increasing food a bit at the post-seminar student lunches to ensure they don't run out. How can we encourage Ag- Canada students to come? Tried a shuttle last year but no one was interested. Supervisors aren't encouraging their students to come. Troubles with interest in subject matter. Trying to increase faculty influence.
- F. Research – trying to build interdisciplinary research clusters in the department, headed by someone well established in the field or nominated by faculty. Potentially melding ideas for different clusters into Global Sustainability cluster, discussing in the coming weeks. Increasing visibility of research at Western with David Smith, liaison with Western Communications team- idea for them to meet up with the faculty of science and look for upcoming stories from faculty and try to get it published through various venues. Request update of new publications and research coming out.

- G. Outreach- no update.
- H. Social – decided on bake sale dates for the semester- first Oct 16th. Email sent out and posters around BGS. Contacted subcommittee to get volunteers to bake. Also have Halloween party planning coming up.
- I. Chairperson
 - a. Student-Supervisor Code of Conduct- contacted the student contact at Senate, he hasn't been getting any replies, and will hopefully have a response in the next week or two. Can discuss at the next meeting.
 - b. Greg Kelly suggested better developing our social networking for SOBGS, things like Facebook and LinkedIn. Getting more involved with BUGS, organizing dinner with a grad student (with undergrads). Advertise attending BUGS as TAs to increase attendance and involvement.