

BGSS Executive Committee Meeting

May 12th, 2023

Attendees:

Brontë Shelton – President

Selina Spence – Vice President

Sophia Kast – Treasurer

Liam Johnson – Senior Student-Faculty Liaison

Max Brubaker – Former President

Leah D'Aloisio – Former Treasurer

Item 1: BGSS Handover – Max Brubaker and Leah D'Aloisio

The following information was passed down from the previous BGSS executives:

- There is a BGSS binder that gets passed down every year. The President holds onto it.
- It is important that the new executives have access to all the old files.
 - The Google Drive for bgss.ubco has all the old files from previous years.
 - Since a new Google Account was set-up to not include 'UBCO' in the name, all these old files will need to be transferred to the new Google Drive (biogradsociety@gmail.com)
 - Old files can be used for inspiration of events to hold.
 - Also includes the BGSS constitution and some guides that may be helpful.
 - Should keep a folder of all the finance records.
- There are certain forms that need to be updated every year.
- Izzy Rusch is the main contact from the SUO (izzy.rusch@suo.ca)
- Each September, there is an orientation that MUST be attended by 2 executive members for the Course Union to be renewed.
 - Funding is not available if orientation is not attended
 - They will go over the new rules.
 - See SUO manual for more club renewal information.
- There is a club/course union Expo at which we can get a booth to promote the club and recruit new members.
- In past years, only 15 member signatures were required to renew the club. This year, 32 are required.
- The renewal forms need to be submitted by a certain date (this year is September 8th, 2023).
- Treasurer needs to submit a funding request to the SUO.
 - Make a tentative list of events that will be run and approximate the costs.
 - Up to \$1500 is available, unless a special request is submitted to the SUO.
 - Since BGSS has a lot of money saved up from previous years, they may not fund the full \$1500.

- Compared to undergraduate clubs, we are also small, so may not give us as much funding.
- In April of the following year, the treasurer will need to submit a final report to the SUO with a breakdown of all the expenses from the year.
- It is important to keep track of ALL physical **itemized** receipts. The treasurer must hold onto them even after reimbursements have been received in case there is an audit.
- All expenses must be paid upfront by an executive member. The treasurer will then fill out a reimbursement form and submit the itemized receipts.
 - BGSS is not allowed to pay for alcohol.
 - If alcohol is involved in an event, waivers must be signed.
 - SUO will contact the person who made the purchases, request direct deposit information, and will send the money. Note that the person must respond to their email, otherwise the reimbursement will not be sent.
- There is a bulletin board in the Science building that can be used for advertising.
- Finances:
 - We have \$3194.44 saved from previous years.
 - Even though there is saved money, still apply for funding.
 - Most expensive event from a couple of years ago was ~\$1500 (Winter Trip).
 - Keep a spreadsheet of all expenses and money records in the Google Drive.
 - Three signatures from 3 executive members are required for reimbursement submissions. Make sure signatures look like the original signatures. This year, the 3 signatures will be from:
 - President
 - Vice President
 - Treasurer

Item 2: Update on Name Changes and Renewal

- SUO has a policy where emails, domain names, social media accounts, etc. cannot have 'UBC' or 'UBCO' anywhere in the names.
- President and Vice President have made the necessary changes to the following:
 - Email/Google Account
 - Facebook Page
 - Instagram Page
 - Event Brite
 - Website
- Everything BGSS related is now called **bigradsociety**
- What is left to do with these accounts?
 - All information from the old Google account will need to be transferred to the new Google Account. President and Vice President are in charge of this.

- Note that the old Google Email will not be deleted and any mail coming to this email will be forwarded to the new email.
- Website is now up to date. If there are any changes required or suggestions, please contact the President or Vice President.
- UBCO websites are outdated with BGSS information. The President has been in contact to get these updated.
- Make a BGSS slack to provide continuous updates and facilitate communication between members. President in charge of this.

Item 3: BGSS contact with Karen Hodges and attendance at Department Meetings

- President and Student-Faculty Liaisons will have an initial meeting with Dr. Karen Hodges to facilitate contact between the BGSS and the department within the next two weeks.
- Student-Faculty Liaisons will then be in charge of communicating with Dr. Karen Hodges and the department.
- Aim: Improve contact between BGSS and department.

Item 4: Newsletter

- Previous executive teams have made monthly newsletters to put on website and bulletin board.
- We would like to do this again.
- First one can be for June that:
 - Introduces new executive committee.
 - Talks about what we have been doing to improve the BGSS and biology graduate student experience
 - E.g. Taken feedback from survey conducted in March 2023 to Union/Department.
- President will make a newsletter template and executives can make edits before publishing.

Item 5: Constitution and Resubmission

- Needed 15 signatures last year. This year need 32 signatures.
- It has been printed out and President/Vice President are currently going around and getting signatures of Biology Graduate Students. Due September 8th, 2023.
- Upon renewal, course unions also have to submit their constitution. The plan is to update and improve the old constitution to submit a new one with the course union renewal.
- We need to work on the constitution before the renewal.
- Prospective changes to the current constitution:
 - Taking out redundant information.
 - Removing contradictory statements.
 - Remove section stating rules about undergraduates joining if going to become graduate students.

- Job description for each of the roles.
- Can BGSS be involved as representatives in hiring committees?
 - Potentially add an internal protocol to figure out who would be a representative for a specific committee (BGSS executive or someone else that gets voted to be a representative).
- We will discuss it in more detail at a later meeting.

Item 6: Potential Summer Projects

Subitem 1: BGSS Merchandise

- The President and Vice President want to make BGSS merch.
- Questions to think about:
 - Do we want to give merch out to members?
 - Do we want to sell it?
- Will encourage a sense of community and potentially supplement funds.

Subitem 2: BGSS involvement in orientation

- In the past, the BGSS was more involved in orientation. We would like to make this happen again.
 - Host campus tours
 - Welcome event of some sort.
 - This would not be until September so there is plenty of time to plan this.
 - BGSS will be more involved in onboarding too.

Subitem 3: BGSS welcome barbecue

- BGSS would like to host a welcome BBQ in September as the first event.

Item 7: Open Floor for Suggestions, Questions, Information

- We do not have any event coordinators. Current executives will need to collaborate to plan events.
- We will need to run an election in September to replace Liam when he graduates. Hopefully we can recruit some event coordinators at that time.
- Broad event ideas (details to follow at a specific event meeting)
 - Next semester: Set up recurring weekly events.
 - E.g. People are interested in having talks hosted by BGSS.
 - Recurring events are easy to pass on to future executive teams.
 - Have some main large events that BGSS runs yearly to pass on to future executive teams.
 - E.g. Biology Graduate Symposium, Biology Undergraduate Symposium

- We will need to determine who to contact about organizing the BGS.

Summer plans

- Meeting 1: Constitution Meeting
 - Google Doc of current constitution available to all executives for review and comments prior to this meeting.
 - First meeting to discuss overarching changes to the constitution.
 - Executives can make changes based on discussion at the first meeting.
 - Following the first meeting, a second meeting can be used for finalizing the constitution.
 - This first meeting will be planned for the beginning of June.
 - Initial constitution meeting:
- Meeting 2 (not all members): Meeting with Karen Hodges about departmental contact.
 - President and Student-Faculty Liaisons in attendance.
 - Set-up once Karen is back on campus.
 - Ask Karen how BGSS can be included on the mailing list for departmental meetings.
- Meeting 3: Orientation/Welcome events to plan in July.
 - Vice President will give a demo on how to submit event requests.
- Timeline:
 - Next couple of weeks:
 - Department contact and set up meeting with Karen Hodges
 - Newsletter for June
 - June: Constitution meetings
 - July: Orientation/BGSS BBQ event planning meetings.
 - Who to get in touch with about this? (Karen Hodges?)
 - Campus tour for biology graduate students.
 - Over summer:
 - Paperwork for maintaining the club.
 - Getting signatures
 - Apply for funding

Additional Comments:

- BGSS has an eventbrite.
 - We will use this for sign ups this year instead of using google sheets.
 - Eventbrite is connected to the calendar on the weebly.
- President/Vice President will add all executive names to the email signature.
- Who should have access to the email?

- Discuss at the following meeting.
- Right now the President and Vice president have access.
- President will discuss with the SUO about what allows other organizations on campus to get drink tickets for events/host events with alcohol.
- Executives will ensure to keep all BGSS information in shared folders.
- Meetings will be less frequent during summer (on an as needed basis).
 - Plan in slack.
- During fall and winter semesters, recurring meetings either each week or every two weeks will be scheduled.

