Arts Graduate Student Council Meeting Minutes, Oct. 14, 2015

Present: Shannon O’Rourke (Philosophy), Stephen Jackson (IDPHD), Sara Pun (Ethnomusicology), Sharmane Allen (Geography), Eli Mason (Religious Studies), Anatolijs Venovcevs (Archaeology; MINUTES), Steve Sutherland (Political Science), Mariana Hernandez Hernandez (Linguistics), Melanie Hurley (English), Steve Kiraly (MPHIL Humanities; CHAIR), Opeyemi Jaunty-Aidamenbor (Economics; ad-hoc representative).

Regrets: Lesley Derraugh (Gender Studies), Emma Lang (History), Bethany Paul (Classics), Michael Oman-Reagan (Anthropology).

• Meeting started at 4:30 pm.
• Steve Kiraly, sat as Chair.
• Carrie and Anatolijs Venovcevs doing the minutes.
• As agreed in the bylaws, the position of secretary will fall upon the person alphabetically by name of program, rotated each meeting. With the anthropology representative absent, the task fell unto Anatolijs as the archaeology representative.

A. Introductions and History for the New Representatives
• Meeting began with round table of introductions for some of the new members joining the council.
• Summarized the history of the Arts Graduate Student Council.
  o Started by Sean Cadigan for Carrie Dyck last year. The idea was to get student representation for middle/upper management.
  o Worked on the constitution over the summer and had a very successful social in September. Plans to continue communicate the concerns of the students to the upper management and promote Arts and Humanities on campus as a whole.

B. Announcements
• Annual general meeting for the Graduate Student Union next week.
  o Everyone should go – an excellent way to propose issues from the floor.
  o Currently GSU feels absent from the lives of students and there is lack of Arts and Humanities representation on the GSU board.
  o The issue raised to the GSU previously is how they can improve the quality of graduate students. Suggestions that were proposed:
    ▪ Address the issue of student metal health
    ▪ Find ways to provide funding beyond two and four years for MA and PhDs (respectively), given special circumstances.
    ▪ Help push students through their thesis.
    ▪ Address the issue of grad students being treated as grunts for their supervisors and not colleagues/apprentices. Much of student dissatisfaction stems from bad student-supervisor relationships.
  o Every department should have a director at the GSU meetings. Currently the Arts departments are underrepresented.
• Sharmane will send information on how to become a director to Carrie who will forward it out among the graduate students.

C. Discussion of Arts Graduate Student Council Constitution and By-laws

• Need to amend the constitution to allow co-members
  o Change the word “alternates” to “co-members”, and change the “Voting Rights of Members” section in the bylaws.
  o Add a clause emphasizing that it is one vote per program and that if both co-members are present at the meeting, only one of them can vote.
• Include the ability for council members to invite non-voting observers
  o In the procedures section add a clause stating that for a council member to invite an observer, an email needs to be sent by the council member to the rest of the council to see if that is ok.
• Regrets for non-attendance need to be recorded by the secretary. Regrets for the following meeting are recorded above.
• We will vote on the final version of the bylaws and the constitution in November.
• Department mergers
  o It would be best to get more information from the Provost on what is expected from us – what is being targeted, how, and why?
  o Carrie will send out a few draft questions for the council members to bring back to their departments about what would the graduate students expect from the mergers and then we’ll take two/three weeks for consultation. The questions should elicit the principles for restructuring.

D. Any Other Business

• A Faculty of Arts Celebration
  o A way to celebrate Arts and Humanities to kick off a campaign to promote the research within the Faculty of Arts
  o Proposed venue – the Breezeway
  o Get alumni involved and discuss why people chose Arts over other subjects.
• Response to the article in The Muse.
  o Motion tabled to collectively write a response to the recent article on the drop in student registration in the faculty of Arts.
    ▪ Motion tabled by Shermane Allen, seconded by Steve Sutherland
    ▪ All in favour, zero opposed
  o Over the next week, council members are to read the article in question and write their bits to address it. Sharmane will act as the chief editor to compile the text; edits will be made by all of the council members.
• November meeting will be used to accept the bylaws and the constitution and then discuss the Arts party.

• Meeting adjourned at 5:37 pm.