

The Grad Zone

By Karen J. Matthews, GSA Treasurer

GSA HAPPENINGS

The Annual General Meeting of the Graduate Student Association was held last Friday, Sept. 30. We were not able to hold formal elections and to vote on the budget because quorum was not met (only 20 Grad students attended); however, the following 94-95 Executive was appointed:

PRESIDENT -Tim Buskard
 2nd VP -VACANT
 1st VP -Dennis Woo
 SECRETARY -Arif Yousuf
 TREASURER Karen Matthews
 ADMIN. -Andrea Best
 ARTS -VACANT
 CS -Anaya Gujar
 EDUCATION -VACANT
 ENGINEERING -Roger Cormier
 FORESTRY -VACANT
 PHYS. ED -Tracy Pella
 SCIENCE -Matthew Munn

As you can see, 3 faculties still do not have representation and we need someone for 2nd vice-president. The Graduate Student Association is a large organization that has a huge mandate which is difficult, if not impossible, to carry out if these positions are not filled. This results in increased member frustration leading to increased apathy. Faculty representative positions are

not, in themselves, a lot of work or responsibility; however, each is a vital part of a team that needs the efforts of all players to succeed.

But, even a complete executive cannot do all the work, some of the load has to be shared by the members. I ask that each member take a good look at the 94-95 handbook. Listed under the sections Officers, Committees, and Advisory Seats (pp. 6-7) are the many areas in which the GSA needs volunteers. I cannot count how many times I have heard complaints about the GSA not doing anything. Or that Grad students need... Or that there should be...for Grad students. Well, get with it people! This is how it works: The GSA has been given representation in many diverse areas, but if people do not care enough to sit on these committees, councils, and boards, we lose this representation which becomes a loss of power and credibility with the university which in turn translates into a loss of voice. And, a loss of more than 800 voices is a serious matter in the minds of most intelligent people. My point: The GSA cannot make things happen without you; it can only "hold the fort."

The GSA is incorporated as a non-profit organization; therefore, the 93-94 Exec. felt that by definition it is the GSA's responsibility to make every effort to end the fiscal year with a zero balance. There is still room for im-

provement in this area. To get the most out of your money (and, it is your money), GET INVOLVED!

Speaking about money (& getting back to news from the Annual General Meeting): The 94-95 Budget was presented and questions were entertained. Those who attended probably found the session quite informative as both the outgoing and incoming presidents addressed issues concerning past, present, and future endeavours.

Two important topics should be noted:

1. Giving the apathy the GSA encountered last year some benefit of the doubt, the 93-94 Exec. were concerned enough about the problem to determine if there was a systemic contribution. As a result, it was found that perhaps the structure of the GSA facilitates communication difficulties. Communication breakdown was seen as the underlying obstacle of approx. 95% of the problems past executives faced. Therefore, current discussions of the 94-95 Exec. centre on the idea of changing the structure of the GSA, perhaps to incorporate a framework that has departmental representation comme the Undergraduate Student Union as opposed to the present faculty representation. The new system is not without flaws, as vacancy rates may

prove to be an even bigger problem than currently.

2. There will be a definite attempt to revise the Constitution of the GSA as the Executive has encountered past difficulties in carrying out its mandate due to its outdatedness.

I would like at this time to extend an invitation to all members to write to the GSA, c/o the School of Graduate Studies, Campus Mail, if they have any issues that they would like to have put on our agenda to be discussed in our meetings. Also, this year, the GSA plans to make "The Grad Zone" a regular feature. We welcome your input and would appreciate receiving your articles or

hearing your suggestions for issues to be dealt with in public forum. It is very difficult for the present body of 9 people to properly represent you if we do not know how you think and feel.

In closing, there are a couple of apologies that must be made. Dennis Woo, Engineering Rep (93-94), would like to apologize to the grad students at Incutek for failing to inform them of the Social and AGM. Also, I must take personal responsibility for the lack of advertising in the Forestry Building. Sorry, people! We won't forget you next time! Foresters, in your case this could have been prevented if you had a faculty representative!

Ich war ein Reifen!



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