

SIGMAS Meeting Minutes
Friday, January 18, 2019, 17:30
DTB A202 (Math and Stats Assistance Centre)

President: Mackenzie Wheeler
Vice President: Dan Hudson
Treasurer: Laura Teshima
Secretary: Joseph Horan

Director of Communication: Laura Teshima
GSS Representative: Joseph Horan
CUPE 4163 Steward: Laura Teshima
Math and Stats Department Rep: Joanna Niezen
MS Equity and Diversity Committee Rep: Felicia Halliday
Tea Chancellor: Flora Bowditch
Poet Laureate: Dan Hudson
Exam Sales Coordinator: Flora Bowditch
Webmaster: Joseph Horan
Peacekeeper: Joanna Niezen
Safety Captain: Brittany Halverson-Duncan

Present (in no order): Laura Teshima, Joanna Niezen, Mackenzie Wheeler, Hyungeun Shin, Rongzheng Xie, Mitchell Haslehurst, Joseph Horan, Kevin Hsu, Mark Piraino, Daniel Hudson, Flora Bowditch, Chi Kou, Felicia Halliday, MacKenzie Carr, George Lee, Dina Buric, Kai Yzenbrandt.

Regrets: Kurtis Menke, maybe others. Felicia's cat Luna isn't on probation right now, but is getting there again slowly (and probably shouldn't come to these meetings anyway).

The meeting is called to order at 17:47 by SIGMAS President Mackenzie Wheeler. There is all sorts of wonderful food and drink available for the 17 (!) members in attendance, including fruits and veggies, a bread bowl, samosas and pakoras, and a variety of sushi. We forgot to do introductions; this would've been helpful for Kai, who is the only newcomer at the meeting. Welcome, Kai!

Equity and Diversity Committee: The Department has formed a new committee intended to advise the department on matters of equity and diversity. The committee consists of the Chair, three faculty members (two of whom must be female), a staff member, a graduate student, and an undergraduate student.

Nominations are opened for the graduate student position on the committee. Joanna Niezen and Felicia Halliday are both nominated, and both accept. Brief speeches are made: Joanna is passionate about these topics and excited to help suggest policy on equity issues as this is a new committee and an area where the department could rapidly grow, though she is already involved in the department meetings and rather busy, and Felicia is interested in issues of equity and diversity and wants to get involved in the department. After a brief question period, it is verified that voting shall be by show of hands, the President will only vote to make or break a tie, and the two nominees are not required to leave the room. We proceed to a vote:

- Joanna Niezen - **3 votes**;
- Felicia Halliday - **7 votes**;
- Abstaining - **7**.

Thus, *Felicia Halliday is elected the graduate student member of the Equity and Diversity Committee.* Thank you!

Department Report: Joanna gives a brief report about department goings-on. We still haven't seen the results of the Academic Program Review; it is currently with VPAC. January's department meeting was cancelled for lack of agenda items.

The Department has joined the *Association for Women in Mathematics*. They have offered to pay for individual memberships for graduate students; the AWM is open to people of all genders, so feel free to take advantage. For more information, visit the AWM website; they also have some grad-and-post-doc-specific resources! The deadline for contacting Elaine about membership was October 19, 2018, but maybe one can still e-mail and see.

GSS Report: Joseph reminds members of some of the things the GSS and the Grad Rep Council does and that there are many events going on! Some issues coming up include an upcoming fee referendum (for Anti-Violence Project support and UVSS Clubs participation) and collaboration with department student groups to figure out how to best support them in elections and whatnot.

CUPE Report: Mark doesn't recap information from the orientation from half an hour ago, but does suggest that anyone interested in the upcoming bargaining join the Contracts Committee, with the first meeting on Thursday, February 7 in the Halpern Centre, at 4:30 pm (16:30).

Treasurer's Report: Laura opens the report with the usual "So, we have money." Exam Sales profits were strong last term, and even though we tried to spend money and our Exam Sales cost went up (even the staple fee went up! "It was the steel tariffs!", claimed Mackenzie), we still could do more. For instance, if anyone has any good ideas for gifts for our department staff, we would be all ears.

Some members suggested custom SIGMAS mugs ("SIGMAS torii" according to Joseph, potentially with a toral embedding of K_5 if Dan gets his way), and while in-mailbox treats were popular, it was a fair amount of work and we'd need someone to take care of doing it. Flora mentions that in-mailbox treats have been discussed recently, so maybe those make a return soon. [After the fact: Could we do SIGMAS-branded clipboards, the kind where the clip *isn't* underneath the front cover and breaks immediately? Some residents of DTB A554 are very interested in this.]

Exam Sales Report: Flora adds on to the Exam Sales commentary by thanking everyone who helped out last term. Next time, we might try to make sure we have a table; our options include snagging one from the downstairs lobby area (no tables have firm places, so they move back and forth), renting one from the UVSS, or potentially borrowing one from the GSS. Also looking into getting a fourth bin, or new bins. Flora will let us know when there are new exams that need solving; send her an e-mail if you are interested in helping out!

SIGMAS Policies: Joseph informs the meeting about the list of SIGMAS policies that he has put together, including our money policies (reimbursements, subsidies, donations, emergency travel bursary, the discretionary fund, etc) and our Tutor List restrictions. After looking at the SIGMAS Tutor List this year, Joseph found what he thought were some issues: what about 500-level courses, and the language only restricts courses for which the member is TAing. The first is addressed very quickly; given that there is no academic integrity reason to prohibit grads tutoring other grads and that some might really appreciate it, there is no need to restrict anything. On the second issue, Chi suggests that maybe it would be better if we followed his guidelines: he does not tutor any students who are enrolled in courses with which he is involved (TAing or sessional instructing), even if the student wants tutoring in a different course where there is no overlap. It is agreed that this is a good choice, for multiple reasons (including optics and the chance of unfortunate situations). After some wordsmithing, we have the following wording: *Any member of the SIGMAS Tutor List is prohibited from tutoring students in any course they are teaching or for which they are TAing.* This change goes to a vote, and is *approved*.

Joseph also asks about the reimbursement for Tea supplies for the Tea Chancellor and Poet Laureate, and it's agreed that it should just be put there. Done.

Events: The last item on the agenda is events! Mackenzie asks for event ideas for this term, potentially with an eye towards holding a bigger event during Reading Break. Earlier in the meeting, we were reminded that an unofficial rule is that SIGMAS events should be open to all members, and should be budgeted with an eye to roughly three-quarters of all members attending (so right now, around 40). Some events were discussed:

- SIGMAS goes to a Victoria Royals game! There is a game during Reading Break, and the tickets are \$16 to \$20, which is pretty accessible. Mackenzie suggested he would figure out logistics.
- Axe-throwing! There is a place on Government Street called Axe and Grind where we could throw axes and hatchets and whatnot. There was interest from members, but we need to check how many people could be accommodated.
- Billiards at Peacock's is another option; we're told that that we could reserve a number of tables and release some of them when we get there? We should check.
- There is a company called West Coast Brewery Tours in Victoria that offers tour service to various places in Greater Victoria. This could be a good way to work trips to various breweries and distilleries and wineries, because bus travel is often inconvenient and it's hard to find drivers.
- A trip to the local cidery would be fun! Dina insists that we do this. Either through WCBT above or just getting us there. Joseph had previously done some research into what the GSS has done in the past, and they use the St. Michael's University School bus service, interestingly enough. It's somewhat expensive, however.
- 10-pin bowling is an option! The Sidney 5-pin lanes are hard to access and smaller and people don't like 5-pin as much ("hmp", says Joseph). Flora says this has been priced out a little bit, so we could get this going; members are definitely interested.
- Hosting a Board Game Night would be fun! The GSS event is on a bad day for people who live further away, so this could be better for some. We could book the AC, or make a reservation at Interactivity. (It should be noted that we tried to do a SIGMAS Board Game Night at Interactivity last year and all of two people showed up, so maybe instead of letting Joseph plan it, someone who is actually capable of getting people out to things should do it.)
- Another Pottery event would be appreciated! Felicia insists that Mackenzie finish his Shrek mug.
- Dina suggests that we could start a "Math and Crafts" event that happens consistently, where people hang out and do math-themed crafts. Mark asks if the crafts would be chosen ahead of time; probably not, but if you come and don't have any ideas we could find something for you. Mackenzie realizes that he was confused: he heard "Math and Carafes", and figured there was wine involved.
- A trip to Vancouver to see Michelle Obama was ruled out on the basis of there probably not being any tickets left, but maybe we could go see Ariana Grande? Maybe? Dan was excited about this.
- During the summer, we could do a camping event, say at Goldstream. Dan hopes that it would be a better "grad" event than his grad camping trip at the end of high school, which

involved... things. Many sketchy things. The one unfortunate part is that “there aren’t any chalkboards, so you can’t continue to learn about the Central Limit Theorem from Mark”. Thanks for that, Dan.

- We probably can’t get washed-up rappers to perform for us for cheap, but Dan thought it was funny to mention.
- We could run another skating event!
- SIGMAS can always help members attend GSS events, for reference. There’s a GSS Skating event coming up in February that members could be reimbursed for attending, and a Math and Stats team at GSS Trivia could be reimbursed their team cost and the cost of a shared pitcher. Joseph should remind people of this in his e-mails.

Be sure to tell Laura and Mackenzie about events that you want to run! That way, we can get budgeting and funding figured out and spread the word to the membership. You don’t have to be an Exec member to organize an event (thanks for the reminder, Joanna!), either, so get on it!

The meeting adjourns at 19:07. Thanks to everyone who came out and ate food! And took some of the leftover food home.

Summary of Tasks:

- Joseph to update the policies document, type minutes, and update the website;
- Joseph/someone to rework the old L^AT_EX template to come up with an FGS compliant version [held over];
- Brittany to create Safety Posters [held over];
- Mackenzie to look into the Royals game and axe-throwing;
- Felicia to instigate another Pottery event;
- Dina and Felicia to instigate Math and Crafts (Maths and Crafts sounds better...);
- Dan to ask his mom about sweet SIGMAS mugs (and maybe discounts);
- Joseph to send out notifications about SIGMAS funding for GSS events;
- Various people to look into other events!
- People to perform the duties of the roles they volunteered for/were elected to do;
- Everyone to be awesome!