

Report on the Activities of the CASCA Graduate Student Committee

May 31, 2004 (with updates current to June 22, 2004)

I. Current Membership of the Graduate Student Committee

The current members of the graduate student committee (GSC) and their university affiliations are:

Kevin Douglas, Chair (University of Calgary) 2000–2004
Douglas McNeil, Secretary (Queen’s University) 2000–2004
Michael Reid (McMaster University) 2001–2004
Pierre-Olivier Quirion (Université de Montréal) 2003–
Brigette Hesman (University of Saskatchewan) 2001–2005
Chris Ryan (York University) 2001–2004
Jason Rowe (University of British Columbia) 2002–
Louise Edwards (Université Laval) 2003–
Adam Muzzin (University of Toronto) 2003–
Laura Parker (University of Waterloo) 2003–
Alyssa Moldowan (University of Manitoba) 2003–
Catherine Lovekin (Saint Mary’s University) 2004--
Marjorie Gonzalez (McGill University) 2004--

We thank Tyler Foster (Alberta), Kathleen Labrie (Victoria), and Jennifer West (Manitoba) for their service during their time on the committee.

II. Sixth Annual Graduate Student Workshop in Winnipeg, Manitoba

The Sixth CASCA Graduate Student Workshop (GSW) is to be held on Saturday, June 12, 2004, prior to the Annual CASCA meeting. Image processing is the theme of the GSW, and it is anticipated that the sessions will be very educational and interactive for the participants. Jayanne English will share her expertise on colour image processing, and Daniel Durand will introduce the Canadian Astronomy Data Centre and the many opportunities for data mining and processing available from the CADC. A Panel Discussion featuring Greg Fahlman, Russ Taylor and Ralph Pudritz on the status and future of the Long Range Plan for Astronomy will end the workshop. We expect a good discourse on the opportunities that will benefit graduate students through the efforts of astronomers on behalf of the LRP.

III. Survey of Canadian Graduate Students on the Effectiveness of the CASCA Graduate Student Committee

An assessment of the effectiveness of the GSC is being planned by its Chair. The committee has benefitted from a core of active volunteers, and in an effort to measure the success of the committee a survey is being conceived that will be made available to all astronomy graduate students in Canada. One of the purposes of the survey will be to find out if there are areas in which the committee can be more effective, and whether the network of students is strengthened by the work of the GSC. A draft of the survey may be available at the CASCA meeting, but it is intended that the survey will eventually be available online so that all students may take part in the process.

IV. Website Development

The GSC website has remained largely unchanged since its inception. As part of the aforementioned assessment of GSC effectiveness, the content and style of the GSC website may be significantly altered if a majority of students feel it is warranted. While the GSC has perhaps the best website of all CASCA committees, we feel it must strive to be a relevant and dynamic resource to graduate students in Canada. With the constant turnover of graduate students, it might be advantageous to have the GSC website hosted on the `casca.ca` server. We invite comments from the Board with regard to this proposal.

V. Intercommittee Collaborations

Work between the GSC and the Education and Outreach Committee (EOC) has been a successful venture to this point, and we welcome such collaborations with them and other groups in the future. The graduate student representative to the EOC has been Kevin Douglas for more than two years, and an election to replace him is expected to conclude just prior to the meeting in Winnipeg. Alyssa Moldowan was elected to the position.