

Graduate Student Committee report to the CASCA Board May 2007

I. Current Membership of the Graduate Student Committee

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

Kelsey Hoffman, Chair (University of British Columbia)
Pamela Klaassen, Secretary (McMaster University)
Mohaddesse Azimlu, Education Committee Rep. (University of Waterloo)
Alyssa Moldowan (University of Western Ontario)
Sukhpreet Guram (University of Calgary)
Helen Kirk (University of Victoria)
Sunne Dong (York University)
Louise Edwards (L'Université Laval)
Pascal Elahi (Queen's University)
Fernando Pena (University of Toronto)
Daniel O'Donnell (McGill University)
Catherine Lovekin (Saint Mary's University)
Sean McGee (University of Waterloo)
Delphine Quiévy (Université de Montréal)
Theresa Wiegert (University of Manitoba)
Colin Folsom (RMC/Queen's)

As of April of 2007 Kelsey Hoffman took over as the new Committee Chair. The Committee thanks Rachel Friesen for her work as Chair. We would like to welcome Sukhpreet Guram, Daniel O'Donnell, Fernando Pena, Colin Folsom, Mohaddesse Azimlu, and Helen Kirk to the committee and thank our outgoing members.

II. The 2007 Graduate Student Workshop and General Meeting

Following tradition, the CASCA Graduate Student Workshop will be held prior to the start of the annual CASCA meeting on Tuesday, June 5. The theme for this year's workshop is *Astronomy Through the Ages: A Grad Student's Perspective*, and has been organized by the graduate students at Queens and Royal Military College, including GSC member Colin Folsom. The workshop be divided into a set of talks in the morning with a set of workshops in the afternoon. The morning talks will focus on the history of astronomy as well as current hot topics. Invited speakers include Jaymie Matthews, John Landstreet and Doug Johnstone. The afternoon workshops focus on public outreach, alternate careers in astronomy, astrophotography and the SDSS interface.

After the workshop the Graduate Student Committee will hold the annual General Meeting, which all graduate students are welcome to attend. The committee also actively exchanges email on all topics of interest to astronomy graduate students including upcoming CASCA meetings and funding.

III. Graduate Education Overview

Mohaddesse Azimlu has replaced Alyssa Moldowan as the representative of the graduate students on the CASCA Education and Outreach Committee. The graduate student rep is involved with planning activities for public outreach for the year of Astronomy in 2009.

IV. Graduate Student Statistics

As nearly all Canadian Universities offering astronomy are represented on the GSC, we have recently been compiling statistics about the numbers of male, female, MSc, and PhD students in each astronomy program in Canada. These numbers will be updated each spring at or prior to the annual CASCA meeting. We are happy to work in an efficient way with others who may also be gathering similar information.

V. Coalition for Canadian Astronomy

Louise Edwards represented graduate students at a meeting of the Coalition for Canadian Astronomy in November of 2006. The goal was to discuss with several MPs and staff the continued funding of the long range plan and to update everyone on the current status of the plan. The idea promoted at the sessions of meeting was to urge all parliamentarians to work towards making it financially possible for the granting agencies to fund the participation of Canadian astronomers, engineers, technologists and industries in the largest and most powerful optical telescope the world will have. Louise Edwards attended meetings with Ken Epp M.P. (Edmonton-Sherwood Park), Luc Harvey, M.P. (Louis-Hébert), The Hon. Marlene Jennings, P.C., M.P. (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine), The Hon. Peter Milliken, M.P. (Kingston and the Islands), and The Hon. Bryon Wilfert, P.C., M.P. (Richmond Hill) and they were all aware of the long range plan and for the most part seemed interested.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelsey Hoffman
Incoming Graduate Student Committee Chair
30 May 2007