Present: Christine Peterson (CP), Clare Crosby (CC), Jeff O'Donnell (JO), Sam Parker (SP), Stephanie Juice, Elizabeth Palchak

Socially Responsible Investing Presentation
RGSA member Elizabeth Palchak (Sustainability Fellow and PhD student) provided an overview of UVM’s endowment, a history of socially responsible investing at UVM, examples of negative screening (blocking investment in tobacco, alcohol, nuclear power, gambling interests) and positive screening (investing in greater good interests such as renewable energy and human rights), and shareholder advocacy. Elizabeth also discussed the concept of local investment (community investing) and recent calls for fossil fuel divestment at UVM and other colleges and universities.

Elizabeth encouraged grads to submit ideas and comments at the Socially Responsible Investing Advisory Council’s (SRIAC) Town Hall event that took place on Tuesday, October 22nd. The Town Hall provided community members with an opportunity to voice opinions on how UVM’s endowment is invested. If you missed the Town Hall, SRIAC is planning another for the spring semester.

Dean’s Forum Update

CP – Exec. Committee is working on an online survey of potential Dean’s Forum topics. Currently there are nine topics. The survey will contain a space for comments and ideas. We’ll provide Jon with some general topics of interest to most grads (e.g. potential grad curriculum changes). Please send ideas for topics to: rgsa@uvm.edu.

SP – Sam is interested in discussing PhD committee requirement at the Forum. Rubenstein currently requires two outside and two inside members. At other universities, external reviewers can serve on committees. CP and JO will add committee requirements to list of topics.

CP - State of the School is next Monday (10/28), 12 – 1 in Aiken 103. Attendees are encouraged to bring a bag lunch.

Mini-grants

CP – RGSA fall mini grant applications are due **Friday, October 25th at 5pm.**

Chair Updates:

CC – Social gatherings at local establishments will henceforth be known as “social hours.” We have a social hour this Friday at Brennan’s at 5:30 p.m. This location is convenient for faculty and staff. Grad students should encourage faculty and staff to attend.
CC - Chili Cook-off is set for November 11th. Given the proximity to T-Day, we could select a food-related charity. Also, **we need more cooks!** Please e-mail Clare to sign up at: ccrosby@uvm.edu.

CC - Holiday party update: Clare is waiting to hear back from ArtsRiot. NorthEnd Studios is also an option. The party will be on December 12, 13, or 14. Thursday the 13th may be the cheapest option for renting space.

**Mentoring Update**

CP – Christine would like to get some pictures of mentor pairs meeting. If you're meeting with your mentee, please shoot Christine a quick e-mail, so she can run over to Henderson's and take a picture.

CP - The mentoring program is collaborating with the Stewards on a “Grad School 101” Workshop on November 15th. More details to follow. There will be five grad students on the panel. Carolyn will be there, along with a grad alum. We plan to do another workshop in the spring.

**GSS Update**

CP – Welcome Stephanie and Chester to GSS! At the last meeting, Elizabeth Palchak and Student Climate Culture (a fossil fuel divestment group) came to speak to GSS. Student Climate Culture asked GSS to support a divestment resolution. There was lively debate, and no vote was taken on the resolution. At the next GSS meeting there will likely be more discussion about endowment investing. For more info about Student Climate Culture see: [http://vermontscscc.blogspot.com/](http://vermontscscc.blogspot.com/)

Exec. Committee meeting participants briefly discussed the merits of fossil fuel divestment. Topics included ROI (return on investment), local investing, renewable energy, and the importance of UVM having a growing endowment. The economic challenges and moral and ethical issues of divestment were also discussed.

Grad Student Networking Class - Career Services is holding a grad student oriented networking class next Wednesday, Oct. 30th, from 11:45 – 12:45.

**Grad Student Office Supplies Update**

SP – The supplies have been delivered! Soon, each Aiken office pod will feature a supply tray with a stapler, tape dispenser and generous amount of paper and small binder clips. Get excited.