

THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY OF UBC VANCOUVER

Agenda of the AMS Governance Committee
October 16, 2017 – 2:30PM

Members

Christopher Hakim (Chair), Jeanie Malone (Councillor), Cameron England (Councillor), Julian Villafuerte Diaz (Councillor), Kevin Doering (Councillor), Hadi Chaudhry (Vice-Chair), Sally Lin (Executive), Sheldon Goldfarb (Clerk)

Absent: Jeanie Malone, Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:33 pm

Agenda Items

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved: Chris

Seconded: Cameron

That the agenda be adopted.

Unanimous consent

2. Approval of Minutes

Moved: Chris

Seconded: Cameron

That the minutes from the June 20 and September 22 Governance Committee meetings be approved and sent to Council.

Unanimous consent

3. Student Services Manager Reporting

Moved: Chris

Seconded: Kevin

That the code changes titled 'Code Changes 2017 Student Services Manager in Exec Reports' be recommended to Council.

Unanimous consent

4. Speaker of Council Term Dates

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Moved: Chris

Seconded: Julian

That the code changes titled 'Code Changes 2017 Speaker of Council Term Dates' be recommended to Council

Unanimous consent

5. Steering Committee

BIRT the Governance Committee recommend to Council to amend Article V, Section 7, 2(a) to state "coordinate the goals of the Executive...." (strike "approve and").

Requested by Max

[Sally]: Steering Committee didn't approve any goals and only coordinated in practice in my last year on the committee

[Chris]: Steering Committee doesn't convene in time for 'approval' to be valid

[Kevin]: Last year Steering Committee didn't exist, and now this new committee's practices have just been approved, but my problem is that why was 'approve' included if it wasn't important or traditional to the committee's function

[Julian]: If our arguments are based on the fact that Steering Committee doesn't follow code 'in practice', then they could be seen as inaccurate as Steering Committee was only just established and we're substituting Steering Committee for Oversight Committee

[Kevin]: I see the problems the executives have with this amendment, and also am reluctant to approve because we only just included this in code.

[Sally]: Better to check in with Max, Marium, Sheldon, etc. to get more insight before we make any decisions. Decide later.

Motion to suspend and revisit at next meeting

Moved: Kevin Seconded: Cameron

Carries

6. Discussion

- Student Court.

[Chris]: Student Court doesn't reach its intended purpose properly without being cost efficient or effective; I still firmly believe it doesn't serve a meaningful purpose

[Julian]: Since Student Court is subsidiary to council, any time it makes a ruling council doesn't like, council rejects it anyways, so what's the point?

[Cameron]: I agree with Julian, perhaps make it harder for council to reject, however even that adds complication

[Sally]: if we make changes to give an external body to the AMS teeth, and consequently power to significantly affect us, it may make things a lot more difficult

[Cameron]: Perhaps make the majority to reject decision harder to reach

[Kevin]: What would be the merit of keeping Student Court?

[Chris]: As a body of appeals, but we already have so many appellate body (ombudspersons, petitions, etc.) and other ways to garner council's attention. Furthermore, we can delegate interpretation of bylaws to others in council rather than require an external body.

[Julian]: Judgments, especially the one given in 1977 exemplify how risky having a Student Court is

[Chris]: Should we get rid of Student Court through referendum? (informal motion)

Unanimous consent

[Chris]: How can we make this effective, or word it in a way that ensures it's more likely to be passed in the referendum

[Kevin]: It's fairly easy, reference the bylaws rather than use specific wording, people shouldn't have an issue. Let's forward this to council to discuss, let's not put forth a motion already

[Sally]: There are a lot of procedures and checks for referendum language, we don't have to worry too much about this

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[Kevin]: We should collect materials to be able to combat the barrage of questions to be asked in council

[Sally]: Chris should prepare a memo or document to submit to council regarding the background and our decision on Student Court

- Steering Committee

[Chris]: Don't believe steering is fully useful currently. Exec goals already go through council, adding another step to that may waste time. Either choose a way to fix it, or delete it.

[Kevin]: If a very good executive exists then there's not really an issue, but occasionally, when useless people sit in the office and need every piece of code to keep them in check. Steering committee is necessary during those bad executive's terms; if we don't have Steering Committee, we'll regret it at that point in time.

[Julian]: It's important to keep Steering Committee

[Cameron]: Removing or keeping Steering Committee is different to the argument of whether its efficient

[Chris]: If council exists, why do we need Steering Committee?

[Julian]: Steering Committee acts as a screening process for what comes to council

[Cameron]: I agree with Julian

[Kevin]: Existence of council is for executives to have road blocks

[Julian]: Returning to Kevin's point, if things hits the fan, Steering Committee will be necessary

[Chris]: Something needs to be done to make it more efficient, and we should discuss this later

[Sally]: Policy I-9 may help us shed light on the intention of Steering Committee's role, and we may want to use it as a reference

- Equity & Issues Caucus

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[Sally]: Don't want this caucus to exist without serving its purpose and exist for the point of existing

[Chris]: I agree; identity politics is not useful.

[Cameron]: People don't really seem care too much about the AMS and caucuses haven't been useful

[Kevin]: Our original thought was that they'd provide insight that we don't have

[Chris]: We've done what we can on our end, but still is working properly

[Sally]: We tried very hard to revise, clarify and review over the past year

[Julian]: Was it ever asked to students whether they needed this?

[Sally]: There was a consultation in the governance review

[Hadi]: Governance review may have made a useless recommendation, we've tried our hardest to implement this, especially Sally, however this seems inherently flawed, perhaps it's best we ditch it all in all. Do we have to follow the governance review?

[Sally]: Other recommendations by the review haven't necessarily been overly useful

[Chris]: Let's try not to delete it, how can we amend the caucus?

[Hadi]: How hard did Sally and the External office work on this? Is this unfixable?

[Everyone]: a lot

[Hadi]: Should talk about deleting, seems unfixable

[Sally]: I'll bring it up to Advocacy Committee, I can work to get rid of this

Action items:

- [Chris] Make document to submit to council regarding Student Court and GovCom's decision
- [Chris] Talk to Max, Jakob, Sheldon, etc. regarding Steering Committee and the Governance Review

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Next Meeting

Biweekly; Monday, 2:30 (30th October)

Adjourn

Moved: Chris

Seconded: Julian

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 3:25PM