



Student Society  
of UBC Vancouver

Office of the President

# Proposal for Governance Review

COUNCIL

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# 1 Executive Summary

The purpose of this proposal is to outline the rationale, method, and schedule for a governance review of the Alma Mater Society to take place over an eight-month period.

## 1.1 Rationale

The last Governance Review took place between 1993 and 1995 under the Committee for Organizational Renewal and Planning (CORP). CORP made many recommendations to improve the Society's operations and ability to serve its members. While many of CORP's recommendations remain in effect today, the needs of the Society require us to review our current operations and decision-making processes in order to better serve our members.

## 1.2 Method

The Governance Review will be conducted by combined efforts of the Governance Review Committee and an external consulting company, with representatives appointed by the Executive Committee and Council. The Governance Review Committee will also have staff members serving as ex-officio non-voting members.

The Governance Review will take place over an eight-month period, and will consist of:

- a. an external review
- b. public, constituency, and internal consultation, and
- c. a working period between the Governance Review Committee and external consultants to produce a final report and recommendations for Council.

The external review will be conducted by external consultant with the assistance of the Governance Review Committee and the Executive Special Projects Assistant, Governance, and will be comprehensive of the business operations of the Society, the manner in which the Executive Committee and Council make decisions, and how the Society represents its members. The external review will take place from August 2015 to February 2016.

The public consultation will be conducted by the Governance Review Committee and the external consultant, and will be aimed at soliciting the opinions, suggestions, and feedback of specific stakeholder groups of the Society and its members. There will be an online General Survey available to all members of the Society from 15 October 2015 to 01 December 2015. Also, the following consultation events will be taking place between October 2015 and January 2016 as part of the public consultation process:

- a. AMS Constituencies Consultation Day
- b. AMS Services Consultation Day
- c. AMS Council and Committee Consultation Day
- d. Public Consultation Day (open to all members of the Society).

The deadline to complete the Governance Review will be April 2016. A Final Report produced by the Governance Review Committee and the external consultant will be due on 31 April 2016, and will contain the results of the external review, consultations, as well as the recommendations made by the external consultant and Governance Review Committee.

## 2 Introduction

The Alma Mater Society was founded 100 years ago, and has been an integral part of the university community. In order to remain relevant to the university student body and the wider university community at large, the Society needs to re-examine its internal decision-making processes, as well as the way it engages its members and the wider university community. This is the fundamental rationale behind this year's proposed governance review.

The last major comprehensive Governance Review took place between 1993 and 1995 under CORP. Many of the recommendations made during this last review remain in effect today; however, the needs of our organization require us to review our current operations in order to better serve our members.

## 3 Proposed Terms of Reference for the Governance Review Committee

The Governance Review Committee will be responsible for spearheading the Governance Review process, and will have the following terms of reference:

- a. review and summarize the activities of the Alma Mater Society;
- b. review and evaluate:
  - i. the administrative structure reporting to the Student Council, including subsidiary organizations, services, governance, businesses, and administration;
  - ii. the Committee structure within the Society, and the actual student involvement therein;
  - iii. the Society's support structure available to student volunteers;
  - iv. the Society's support structure for advocacy within and outside the University; and
  - v. the structure of the Executive and Council.
- c. recommend to Council any necessary and expedient changes to improve the effectiveness, productivity, and direct student involvement of the aforesaid structures in the Society;
- d. suggest to Council any changes which may be incidental or conducive to the above recommendations; and
- e. engage members of the Society to encourage them to take an active role in the governance review process.

### 3.1 Day-to-Day Activities

The Governance Review Committee will meet on a weekly basis. In addition, the Committee may also meet with members of the Society who have submitted specific concerns through both the consultation day events, as well as the general survey.

### 3.2 Legal Compliance

The Governance Review Committee will also make recommendations that will ensure that the Society complies with any changes to relevant legislation, particularly the B.C. *Societies Act*.

### 3.3 Dissolution Date

The Governance Review will be dissolved on 30 April 2016. All activities of the Governance Review Committee must be completed by this date.

## 4 Membership of the Governance Committee

While members of the AMS executive will be members of the Committee, there will also be three members of Council as well as three students-at-large.

The Student-at-Large positions are designed to include members of the Society who have not taken an active role in the running of the Society at the executive or Council level, but may have taken on active roles in clubs, constituencies, or other organizations within the university community.

The Governance Review Committee will have the following members:

### *Student Members*

- a. *Executive Committee Member: President of the Alma Mater Society*
- b. *Executive Committee Members: One additional member of the Executive Committee, as designated by the executive Committee*
- c. *Council Members: Two Councillors appointed by Council, including one member of the Legislative Procedures Committee*
- d. *At-Large Members: Two Students-at-Large, appointed by Council*
- e. *The Executive Special Projects Assistant, Governance, who shall be non-voting*

### *AMS Staff Members*

- f. *The Archivist and Clerk of Council, who shall be non-voting*
- g. *The General Manager, who shall be non-voting*
- h. *The Executive Director, who shall be non-voting*

All student members of the Governance Review Committee must be appointed by 09 September 2015. The Governance Review Committee will appoint a Committee Chair from amongst its members.

### 4.1 Executive Special Projects Assistant, Governance

The Executive Special Projects Assistant, who will work 15 hours a week for the duration of the Governance Review, and whose purpose will be to coordinate the Governance Review Committee's activities, plan and promote the consultation day events, and serve as a liaison between the external consultant and the Governance Review Committee. The salary of the Executive Special Projects Assistant, Governance, will be included in the budget.

## 5 Timeline

| <b>Date</b>                         | <b>Event</b>  |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 29 July 2015                        | Governance Review Proposal submitted to Council.                            |
| 31 July 2015 to 10 August 2015      | Council consultation period.  |
| 20 August 2015 to 01 September 2015 | Hiring period for external consultant.                                      |
| 09 September 2015                   | Deadline to appoint all members of the Governance Review Committee.         |
| 11 September 2015                   | Accept bid of winning external consultant.                                  |
| October 2015                        | Consultation events. Schedule to be determined.                             |
| 15 October 2015 to 01               | Internal and clubs online survey available to all employees of the Society. |

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| December 2015                       |   |
| 15 October 2015 to 01 December 2015 | General survey available.   |
| November                            | Consultation events. Schedule to be determined. Governance Review progress presentation to Council.             |
| December                            | Process and review results of internal, clubs, and general surveys.   |
| January 2016                        | Consultation events. Schedule to be determined. Governance Review progress presentation to Council.             |
| February 2016                       | Constituencies month. Meetings will be held with stakeholders and campus partners.                              |
| March 2016                          | Data review month. Process and form draft Final Report.   |
| Early April 2016                    | Complete Final Report and submit to Executive Committee for review.   |
| 29 April 2016                       | Deadline to submit the Final Report to Council for approval.<br>Dissolution of the Governance Review Committee. |

## 6 Internal Review

### 6.1 Internal Online Survey

The AMS Staff Members of the Governance Review Committee will, with the assistance of the Executive Special Projects Assistant, Governance, create an internal online survey for all employees of the Society.

The purpose of the Survey will be:

- a. to receive feedback on the Society’s business operations from employees of the Society;
- b. to receive feedback from employees of the Society regarding working conditions and overall working experience with the Society; and
- c. to receive recommendations from employees of the Society on how the Society’s business operations can be improved.

The Internal Online Survey will be distributed to all employees of the Society via e-mail, and will be online from 02 November 2015 until 16 December 2015.

## 7 External Review

### 7.1 External Consultant

We will be submitting requests for proposal to various consulting firms in the Lower Mainland to provide the Governance Review Committee with structured guidance throughout the Governance Review process. An external consultant will give the Governance Review Committee an objective point of view and a fresh look at the current state of the Society. An experienced external consultant will also allow the Governance Review Committee to conduct the Governance Review effectively and efficiently, and will be able to make recommendations on how the Society can improve its operations.

We will be sending out a formal request for proposal to the various consulting firms in the Lower Mainland once the Terms of Reference for the Governance Review Committee have been approved. We expect that the external consulting firm will play an active role during the Governance Review process, particularly in both delivering the

consultation events that will be organized by the Committee, as well as helping the committee analyze the input generated from these events and the production of the Committee's final report.

The Governance Review Committee, with the assistance of the Executive Special Projects Assistant, Governance, will commence the hiring process for an external consultant on 20 August 2015, with the aim of a consultant being hired by 09 September 2015.

During the last major Governance Review in 1993-1995 under CORP, the initial consulting fee charged by Chancellor Partners was \$28,700; however, the consulting fee went above-budget when the firm took over additional duties, making the total consulting fee expense \$38,200. The budget for the Governance Review will anticipate that the Society will incur a \$38,000 consulting fee expense based on estimates provided by external consultants during the last RFP open session in late-2014.

## **7.2 Focus Group Meetings**

As part of the external review, the Governance Review Committee and the external consultant will be required to conduct focus group meetings with specific stakeholder groups concerned with the Society's overall operations. The purpose of these focus group meetings will be:

- a. to receive feedback on the Society's overall operations;
- b. to prepare for the Public Consultations events; and
- c. to receive recommendations from stakeholder groups on how the Society's overall operations can be improved.

The format of the focus group meetings for the external review will be determined by the external consultant, and must be approved by the Governance Review Committee.

Focus group meetings will be required with the following stakeholder groups:

1. The Executive Committee
2. Business Administration and Governance Board (BAGB)
3. Legislative Procedures Committee of the AMS Council
4. Executive Director and the General Manager

The Governance Review Committee and the external consultant may choose to conduct additional focus group meetings with additional stakeholder groups as needed.

The focus group meetings must conclude by 31 January 2016.

After all focus group meetings have been held, the Governance Review Committee and the external consultant will conduct a review meeting to analyze the results of the focus group meetings.

## **8 Public Consultation**

In order for the Governance Review to be effective, we need to ensure that we involve as many of the Society's members as possible in order to give them an avenue to make their views heard and their needs known.

Throughout the Governance Review process, we will be engaging with various stakeholders of the Society in order to formulate recommendations that reflect the wants, needs, and desires of our members.

The consultation day events for constituencies, Council and AMS committees will be run by the Governance Review Committee with the assistance of the external consultant. The input from both the consultation days and the General Survey will be analyzed by the Committee and will form the basis of the Committee's recommendations to Council. The Governance Review Committee will determine the schedule for the consultation day events.

Consultation day events will be organized by the Governance Review. The structure and programming of each consultation day event will be made in consultation with the external consultant. The consultation day events must take place between September 2015 and March 2016.

We will also be engaging with AMS clubs through an online survey accessible via OrgSync.

## **8.1 General Survey**

The General Survey will be a series of surveys administered online to the entire membership of the Society, as well as to certain stakeholder groups. This feature is designed to engage students, and to get their opinions on the AMS Student Government and the AMS Businesses.

The Executive Special Projects Assistant, Governance, will engage in a conversation with the external consultant regarding the tools disposable to them for conducting such a survey. If no tools meet the criteria or none are available, the Society will use its SurveyMonkey account at a minimal cost.

The General Survey will be created by the external consultant and approved by the Governance Review Committee. The General Survey will be online from 15 October 2015 to 01 December 2015.

The results of the General Survey must be reviewed by the external consultant and the Governance Review Committee by 20 January 2016.

## **8.2 AMS Constituencies Consultation Day**

This consultation day event will be open to AMS constituency leaders, as they represent students within their respective faculties and will be able to provide the Committee with information on how the Society can better serve students and better meet students' faculty-related needs.

## **8.3 AMS Services Consultation Day**

This consultation day event will be open to representatives of organizations classified as AMS Services:

1. AMS Food Bank
2. Safewalk
3. Speakeasy Student Support
4. Advocacy Office
5. Tutoring Service
6. AMS Volunteer Connect



## 7. Sexual Assault Support Centre

The AMS Services Consultation Day event will:

- a. provide a platform for the Services to examine their primary objectives, and determine whether these objectives are being met;
- b. examine the current state of each Service;
- c. determine whether the Service needs to alter its primary objectives; and
- d. determine ways that the Society can provide better support for the Services.

## 8.4 AMS Council and Committee Consultation Day

This consultation event will be restricted to members of Council, as well as members of the Governance Review Committee.

The Council and Committee Consultation Day event will:

- a. provide a platform for Council and members of AMS Council Committees to determine their primary objectives, and determine whether these objects are being met;
- b. examine the current state of existing AMS Committees; and
- c. determine ways to improve Council and Committee decision-making processes.

## 8.5 Public Consultation Day

This will be the final consultation day event, and will be open to all members of the Society.

The Public Consultation Day event will:

- a. provide all members of the Society with an opportunity to contribute to the Governance Review process; and
- b. will enable the Governance Review Committee to consolidate the inputs of all other stakeholder groups, including a draft of the final report, prior to meeting with the broader membership of the Society.

## 8.6 Final Report

A report containing the results of the Internal Review, the External Review, and the Public Consultation will be submitted by the Governance Review Committee and the external consultant to Council.

The report must contain:

- a. minutes and results of the public consultation day events;
- b. results of the General Survey review; and
- c. the external consultant's recommendations for improvements to the Society based on the Internal Review, External Review, and the Public Consultations.

The Final Report is due on 30 April 2016.

## 9 SWOT Analysis

The Governance Review Committee’s terms of reference are the Governance Review’s objectives. Below is an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the Governance Review in relation to its objectives.

|   | Helpful to Achieving the Objective  | Harmful to Achieving the Objective  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Internal Origin</b><br>(Attributes of the Society)         | <b>STRENGTHS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>People power:</i> Society has access to student labour and staff that can conduct and complete the Governance Review.</li> <li>• <i>Financial capability:</i> Society has funds available to pay for a paid student Executive Special Projects Assistant, Governance, to assist the Governance Review Committee in its objectives and to hire an external consultant.</li> </ul>   | <b>WEAKNESSES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Decision-making processes:</i> Society’s decision-making processes are inefficient.</li> <li>• <i>Lack of time:</i> Governance Review Committee’s student members will be working as volunteers.</li> <li>• <i>Lack of buy-in from Council:</i> Council may have concerns about the involvement of an external consultant in the Governance Review.</li> </ul>          |
| <b>External Attributes</b><br>(Attributes of the Environment) | <b>OPPORTUNITIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>External consultant:</i> Having an external consultant with an extensive background in Governance Reviews for non-profit organizations will allow the Society to access a wide range of knowledge and expertise.</li> <li>• <i>Student engagement:</i> The Governance Review will be an opportunity for the Society to re-engage its members, and can also be an opportunity for its members to shape its future direction.</li> </ul> | <b>THREATS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Other priorities:</i> Executive Committee and Council members of the AMS Committee may have other commitments which may prevent them from devoting attention to the Governance Review.</li> <li>• <i>Lack of student support:</i> Members of the Society may not have enough buy-in to participate in the public consultation aspects of the Governance Review.</li> </ul> |

## 10 Budget

| Expenses       | SEP 15 | OCT 15 | NOV 15 | DEC 15 | JAN 16 | FEB 16 | MAR 16 | APR 16 | Totals |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Consulting Fee | 19000  |        |        |        |        |        |        | 19000  | 38000  |
| Food/Beverage  | 200    | 750    | 750    | 100    | 750    | 750    |        |        | 3300   |
| Communications | 300    | 600    | 600    | 100    | 600    | 600    |        |        | 2800   |
| Flexible       | 110    | 110    | 120    | 110    | 110    | 120    | 110    | 110    | 900    |
| Grand Total    |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 45000  |

Consulting Fee: We estimate all consulting costs to be \$38000. Should this number increase, other budgets would be adjusted accordingly or funds would be pulled from the Flexible budget. If the selected external consultant offers a lower bid, the Grand Total would be adjusted accordingly.

Food and Beverage: Focus groups, booths, and meetings with the external consultants are only some of the events which will require food and beverage in order to more effectively increase involvement in the Governance Review. Nearly all orders will be placed in-house at AMS owned and operated facilities.

Communications: In order to effectively reach the Society's members, constituencies and stakeholders, as well as clubs and partners, the AMS must use multiple channels of paid communications. This may include but is not limited to, the Ubysey, SurveyMonkey, and other mediums. Email and print advertising will be used, and all efforts will be made to decrease costs without risking exclusion of knowledge to any groups.

Flexible: This money will be appropriated where needed. It is entirely possible that some or all of this budget may not be used.