



THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

AMS HR Committee

Minutes for June 7, 2019 – 5:00 PM, NEST Room 3511

Members (Present): Riley Ty (Chair - Councillor), Michelle Marcus (Councillor), Kevin Zhang (Councillor), Kelvin Au (Councillor), George Kachkovski (Member at large)

Guests: Praneet Sandhu (AMS HR Manager), Leslie Tullet (AMS HR Coordinator)

Regrets: Osaro Obaseki (Ombudsperson), Max Holmes (Councillor), Chris Hakim (AMS President)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:07 pm.

Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are on the unceded, traditional, and ancestral territory of the Musqueam people. It is important to recognize that learning has happened long before ourtime here, and that we are very privileged to be on these territories that are not ours.

Approval of the Agenda

- Moved by Michelle, Seconded by George

Michelle:

- Wants to make a friendly amendment and add discussion topic about the jurisdiction of this committee and how it works with the HR Department

Approval of Minutes

Introductions

Updates from the Chair

Riley:

- Talked to Sheldon Goldfarb, Clerk of Council, in regards to reintroducing a previous HR Committee motion, which limits staff complaints to only the AMS HR Department (i.e. not the Ombudsperson as well) and notes it can be reintroduced at any time.

- Asks Praneet if she would like to come to the next council meeting, June 19th, to present about the motion given the HR Department's interest.

Michelle:

- States that the Agenda for next council is packed and suggests moving it to the top of the Agenda.

Riley:

- Suggests postponing it, to a council meeting with a less packed docket to enable Praneet to leave council at a convenient time.
- Heard back from Osaro stating he is looking forward to working with the committee.
- Will begin discussion of Ombudsperson Review system hopefully next meeting.

Selection of Vice Chair

- Due to lack of interest it will be postponed to next meeting.

Discussion: HR Committee Jurisdiction

Michelle:

- As a new member of the committee is curious how it is supposed to operate with the HR department and asks Praneet and Leslie for further elaboration.

Leslie:

- With regard to recruitment for all positions (permanent and student staff), they go through Leslie, with all JDs from various managers, execs, etc. going to her, she then posts them online through the IP portal.
- Also collects applications and sends them to their respective managers and does not generally take part in screening unless asked.
- In regards to the positions overseen by this committee, that is the appointed positions, are still done through the normal procedures and software like I recruit.
- Also drafts all the offer letters and the chair signs off, delivering it to the candidate.

Riley:

- How does the hiring of election staff work?

Leslie:

- Falls under Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) who will send the posting request to Leslie then she will send the applications their way.

Praneet:

- Things like minimum wage increased and the wage structure were topics discussed with the committee.

Michelle:

- What about general hiring practices and procedures?

Leslie:

- In regards to the larger AMS hiring, this committee will be on the advisory side for student staff, as some topics will be out of the experience and purview of the volunteers on the committee (i.e. labour law).
- Feedback and initiative, such as the employee feedback survey, our questions and the results.

Praneet:

- Prior to the survey released last year, we spent two weeks going over the survey for feedback as a committee before we sent it out.
- We then did a small presentation to the committee about the results, where we can improve in, what we did well and other such areas.

Leslie:

- We are also a resource here for you guys and to ensure things discussed in this committee are followed up on our side.

Praneet:

- Previously, an HR committee did request to see the wages of all permanent staff and this is not something we do.

Michelle:

- What about student staff? A lot of it is included in the budget, right?

Praneet:

- Yes and that is why we share things like the minimum wage increase with this committee.

Riley:

- A lot of the working parts of this committee is then in regards to the student staff?

Praneet:

- Yes, that is why when they asked to see the wages of permanent staff it was not a purview of this committee.

Leslie:

- Has an update regarding the CEO situation.

Riley:

- Offers a debrief for new members, Service Canada limits the amount of time International

Students can work off campus to 20 hours, whereas on campus is unlimited, problem is that AMS employment is a grey area and the CEO is an international student who will be working more than 20 hours during the election period.

Leslie:

- Correct! What we will be doing is contacting the CEO and letting him know that as an international student there are restrictions on how many hours he can work per week, he is then responsible for following up with immigration Canada to see if they can work more than 20 hours a week, as each situation is different and the onus is not on the AMS, but the student.
- They will then report back to HR and say whether they can or cannot work more than 20 hours, if no we will have to amend their contract, which will go through the committee.

Michelle:

- When does this take place?

Leslie:

- January 1st is when the 25 hours per week takes effect.

Kelvin:

- If the contract is at max 20 hours, will they be able to provide adequate support to constituency elections, as the response time previously has been slow?

Praneet:

- If we need another body to support a person then we have to justify it, get it approved by the finance committee, then we can hire another person.

Riley:

- Well the good news is that it is being dealt with very early on and previously Halla was working more hours than she could claim and was still able to provide good support.
- Once we know the situation with service Canada, we can discuss ways to help the CEO.

Michelle:

- Knows that governance committee is looking into ways to decrease the amount of election works, like posters, to help reduce the workload on the CEO.

Discussion: Committee Goals

Riley:

- Goal 4, better advertisement for better recruitment and inclusion

Michelle:

- Was mentioned in the transition report and expanded on it, not just focusing on numbers, but diversity as we see disproportionate representation in the AMS, such as the large amount of Greek Life employees and lack of other areas.

Riley:

- Would it be possible to go over demographic data of the student staff now?

Leslie:

- We do not currently collect any demographic data, such as faculty.
- Can take a look at employee feedback survey and check year and how they heard about the job in the first.

Michelle:

- In addition to constituencies we should also reach out directly to groups on campus such as clubs, the resource groups and even hearing back from the students in general.
- A lot of people join the AMS through friends, it is more of a friend group rather than seeking diversity.
- Look into how the AMS interacts with the student populace in general and getting better feedback.

Riley:

- Approves, but wonders if we need to talk to comms first?

Leslie:

- Highlights it is a good idea to discuss with the current Communications manager, at one point, how the AMS currently reaches out to the on campus population.
- Thinks it is a good idea for this committee to consider options and analyze what groups the AMS is doing a good job of reaching now and needs to work on in the future.

George:

- Just wants to point that a lot of groups of campus, such as Residence Advisors and Student Ambassadors, do a good job of diversity and that we should cultivate relationships with them as one possible avenue.

Kevlin:

- Is it true we do not gather any demographic data now? How can we improve interacting with certain groups if we do not have the necessary data?

Riley:

- Asks Leslie if it would be possible to do a demographic survey now?

Leslie:

- Has the potential to be a large undertaking, we need to figure out whose demographics we are asking and are some people comfortable participating in this kind of survey, are there other ways we can look at collecting this data?
- The employee survey already looks like one way we can get data, we also do a few days of orientation for student staff, would this be the time to gather the data? We need to look at when is it a good time to collect this data? Does it make sense to come from the HR department or the HR committee? Also, high rate of turnover, but it is definitely a conversation worth having

Riley:

- We can just look at general ways of improving it for now and possibly mandate it in code that this be a continued priority moving forward, in order for it to be properly addressed.

Michelle:

- Thinks data is important, but that we are currently not advertising these jobs as well as we can and just focus on increasing applicants for now.

Kevin:

- In regards to Residence Advising and student housing, every government agency has an opt in, opt out system and declare they are part of a minority government group, but also agrees with Leslie that this will be a long process.

Kelvin:

- Knows that UBC does a demographic survey and that HR can hopefully do something similar to gather the data.

George:

- Rather than an opt out system, they can be asked if they want to participate or not.

Leslie:

- States the technical constraints, as icruit is a free system, but edits and modifications have to be paid for, which we cannot afford.
- Past issues include the fact that application notifications are sent even if you are not chosen for an interview, yet to stop this icruit wants \$4000 to change one sentence, did highlight in the job description you would only be contacted if you are selected for an interview, a few do slip through the cracks.

Riley:

- What about a low-tech solution, such as a physical paper they could fill out along with their Tax documents.

Leslie:

- Problem is we do not have the logistical time to physically do that.
- However, understands the importance of this and wants to look at ways of using current systems (i.e. survey Monkey) to improve the process.

Riley:

- Will keep it as a goal with the specifics being worked out at a later time and we will invite the communications manager to a meeting to see what initiatives are being take.
- Goal 5 regarding equity guideline for hiring.

Michelle:

- Just wants to know if there is already one in place.

Leslie:

- Yes we do, the commitment to being an equal opportunity employer is already in the handbook and a note at the bottom of all postings that we are an equal opportunity employer, encouraging all to apply.
- Depending on our job posting, we also encourage people of lived experience, like SASC, rather than academic experience, to apply.
- SASC is one of those ones we go above and beyond, but always open to continuing the conversation, legally though we are covered.

Michelle:

- Just wanted to check on it, but we do not necessarily need it as a goal.
- Would like the committee to review the hiring handbook.

Leslie:

- As it is an HR Department project, will focus on updating relevant sections first, then bringing it to the committee.

Michelle:

- Never got a copy of the handbook as former student staff, wondering if it is out of date?

Leslie:

- Still mentions Ross Gordon as AMS General Manager, so need to focus on areas like that and policy changes, such as what is the snow day procedure.

Michelle:

- How do the policy changes relate to what council passes?

Leslie:

- A little different and unclear at what point does a policy impact only permanent staff like the snow day policy.
- Will explore what does and does not need to go to council, as all handbooks need to be improved by council.

Michelle:

- Any idea when this occur?

Leslie:

- It will take place this year and with the updates of the payroll and HR system, things are moving along, but it is a priority.

Riley:

- Moving on to next goal about reviewing hiring process about appointees.

Michelle:

- Noticed a few odd things in code, such as inclusion on a campus publication, thinking of just going over code.

Leslie:

- Knows there is some code we abide for and some we do not, Sheldon did send her an email stating that certain postings had to be up before March and so forth.

Riley:

- Fellow committee chair suggested reviewing the transition process and possibly having the predecessor for some student staff positions staying around for a bit to advise their successor.

Leslie:

- Notes the value in it, but that we are strapped on budget, as we would have to pay 2 people for the job and finance committee will have to look into that.
- Also consistency, would have to do it for all student staff positions instead of just one, sees the value though and suggests if we can implement at least mandatory transition reports as a starting point.
- Will see later if we need to implement a one on one.

Riley:

- Methods to improve transparency, as a councillor was told just to trust HR Committee hiring practices in the past, realized a lot stuff is closed book and is brought to council near the finish line of hiring.

Leslie:

- Appointees is the area this committee directly oversees, so it can be discussed, but needs to discuss with Praneet how comfortable the applicants would be with sharing some of the info, as they do not always want people to know they are seeking a job.
- Would need to come up with good justification on why we hired one person over another, depends on how much detail we want to get into, that is we have x number of applicants and we chose this applicant for their experience with Robert Rules.
- This committee has the power with discretion of hiring, but can definitely explore how things can be more transparent moving forward.

Riley:

- Has received a few JD requests from the external portfolio and will send out a when2meet for next week just to finalize everything in time for both council and steering committee.

Other Business

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 pm.