

JULY 2020 COMMITTEE REPORT TO AMS COUNCIL:

AMS Governance Committee

July 10, 2020

Prepared by Sebastian Cooper, Chair



Please note that this report covers the time period from May to July. We meet weekly on Tuesdays at 4pm (Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/91681615917>) if you would like to join.

1. Works in progress:

Finance and Operations Committee Chairpersonships

Govcomm is considering the motion from Council that VPs Finance and Administration no longer be required to chair the Finance and Operations Committees, respectively. Govcomm has discussed the issue, as well as receiving input from Sylvester Mensah (VP Administration), Lucia Liang (VP Finance), Cristina Ilnitchi (former VP External), and Cole Evans (AMS President). Govcomm has also reached out to Finance and Operations Committees to receive input from their current membership. Pending that consultation, Govcomm will propose these changes be in place for the September reconstitution of committees.

Constituency Membership

Govcomm has picked up this project from the previous Govcomm (2019-2020). Some AMS members are not represented by constituencies, and others are represented by more than one constituency. The first issue presents an obvious concern regarding democratic representation. The second represents a concern regarding students in the same situation paying different student fees. Govcomm has examined the materials developed by last year's Committee, has spoken with Katherine Westerlund (Govcomm chair 2019-2020), and will be meeting with the GSS (who are currently looking at the issue of unrepresented certificate program graduate students).

Policy I-9 / Executive KPIs

Following discussion at the June Council meeting regarding the AMS Executive Goals for 2020-2021, Govcomm has begun discussion of Policy I-9, especially with regards to the requirement that the Goals include Key Performance Indicators (para 13). Discussion has focused on how we can ensure that the KPIs provide meaningful benchmarks against which Council can hold Executive members accountable, while recognizing that newly-elected Executives have limited experience to develop detailed KPIs, and must balance their reporting requirement with undertaking their work. Govcomm intends to continue examining the issue.

AMS Disciplinary Action / Ad Hoc Governance Committee Review

Govcomm has been mandated by Council to "Investigate new guidelines or procedures regarding disciplinary action at AMS Council and report back to Council with a report and/or relevant Code changes by the last Council meeting of August". Govcomm has begun discussion of the issue, and aims

to move forward by looking at the practices of other boards, the practices of other Canadian universities' student societies, and undertake consultation with Executives/Council Members.

Govcomm also discussed the work of the Ad Hoc Governance Committee, and is looking at also addressing the broader issues of accountability that its report raises.

Committees and Chair Transitions

Govcomm has discussed an issue of committee members and chairs not receiving adequate assistance with transitions. Thus far, Govcomm has looked at previous Code requirements for transition reports.

Committee Appointment Issues (Students-at-Large)

Govcomm discussed issues regarding the committee appointment process, especially with regards to accessibility, bias, and equity. A document was prepared outlining concerns and suggesting potential solutions, and subsequently shared with the AMS President.

2. Works completed:

Distance Education - Code Definition

AMS Code provides that Active Members taking only distance education courses are exempt from paying Society fees. Govcomm proposed a clarification to Code that distance education courses do not refer to courses that are regularly in-person but have been moved online due to COVID-19. (Definition adopted by Council on June 24).