THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER  

Agenda of the AMS Governance Committee, June 1, 2020

**Attendance**

Present: Sebastian Cooper (Chair), Carter Maclean, Danny Liu, Nicola Vanderveer, Ryan Wong, Sheldon Goldfarb

Guests: Sylvester Mensah, VP Administration (regrets)

Regrets: Chris Hakim

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 pm

**Agenda Items**

**Territorial Acknowledgement**

**Approval of the Agenda**

Moved: Sebastian  
Seconded: Ryan

That the agenda be adopted.

*[The motion carries unanimously.]*

**Approval of Past Minutes**

Moved: Sebastian  
Seconded: Ryan

That the minutes of May 26, 2020 be approved

*[The motion carries unanimously.]*

**Election of Vice Chair**

- Nicola: “elected” with no opposition

**Chairs of Finance and Operations Committees (Discussion)**

Sylvester Mensah, VP Administration has been invited to share his thoughts at 4:20pm. Sebastian spoke with Lucia Lang, VP Finance, this week, and will provide her input to the Committee.

- Waited until 4:20 to discuss
- Sebastian: Lucia is in favour of these changes. She is concerned that the executive chairs the committee and views that the work to chair is a lot for the executives. For example, Finance has three subcommittees. She believes it takes too much away from her role as VP Finance. Executives do not get compensation from the extra work they do from chairing. It takes away from counsellors’ involvement if exec chairs. Would also give two qualified voices for council to question. Main issue she raised is accountability. As chair you can set goals, etc. Chair should be someone who is not the VP for checks and balances purposes. VP should still sit on the committee. Chair could be hostile to the goals of the VP, but Lucia does not believe this would be an issue. Lucia believes this change should happen soon, but not now. Perhaps post-budget. She suggested we bring in other voices such as Cole to discuss. As well as Cristina and Julia.

- Sebastian: It would be good to bring in other voices.

- Ryan: What are the differences in responsibility between the VP Finance and the Finance committee.

- Sheldon: Section 5 of the code and Section 6 refer to this. The VP Finance gets the budget together and brings it to the finance committee to approve. There is a history of discussion about this. Argument for executives chairing is that they are more knowledgeable. Some still chair committees, but it depends.

- **Action:** Sebastian: Will send out invites to the people Lucia suggested as well as Sylvester.

- Sebastian: Lucia also asked if VPs can assign work to committee members.

- Sheldon: There is no power to do that in the code right now, but it might destroy the oversight of the committee.

- Sebastian: Not sure the exact relationship between committee members and the VP assigning work to them. Maybe need to research that.

**Code Changes Regarding Defining “Distance Learning” (Discussion)**

Discussion of the first draft that Sheldon has provided.

- Sheldon: Old code said distance education. UBC defines it as distance learning rather than distance education. Students just taking distance education as designated by the university

- Sebastian: We want to be clear what we are referring to. We need to use the term distance learning to make it a lot clearer.

- Ryan: Article 3 Number 1. Why are medical students exempted from paying AMS fees

- Sheldon: Referendum in 1956. Medical students spend a lot of their time away from campus. If they’re so far away they can’t take the benefits of the program, so they were exempted.

- Ryan: In the spirit of that, shouldn’t the students who are not on campus, not pay that?

- Sheldon: You still get some resources even if you aren’t on campus. It’s a bigger philosophical discussion. In 1956, there were no services to access off campus, so the amendment passed because they were away all the time. To reverse that, you would need another referendum.

- Sheldon: What if the University designates all the courses as distance learning? Cole said it shouldn’t be an issue, so we shouldn’t have to worry about that.
Motion to vote to approve the recommended code change: Moved by Sebastian. Seconded by Nicola. Everyone nods and gives thumbs up. This motion passes.

2020/2021 Govcomm Goals (Discussion)

Discussion of the Committee’s short-term, long-term, and strategic goals, based on the draft document shared this week.

- Constituency Compositions
  - Google Spreadsheet and Docs in the AMS Governance Committee 2019-2020 Folder.
  - Danny: Might end up with awkward issues if there’s only one person in a constituency
  - Sebastian: Maybe someone take the lead on this. Breakdown the goals so that one person takes responsibility for one project.
- Sebastian: Asked Lucia about Finance Committee. Suggested we do a broader look at how we divvy up the work between committees and VPs. Can incorporate this in the Goals and how we approach the chairmanships of operations and finance.
- Action: Moved that we send this document in as our agreed short term and long term goals to Steering Committee for the governance committee. Sebastian: Moved. Ryan: Seconded.

Committee Appointment Process (Discussion)

Continuation of the discussion regarding ensuring equity and efficiency in the committee appointments process, based on the document drafted by Danny Lui.

- Sebastian: Cole and Justin are drafting something on this. We could either draft something ourselves and send it to them or keep it and use it as our reference to the draft Cole and Justin provide.
- Danny: When Justin and Cole draft the appointment method, be mindful what each appointment method selects for. Do we value accessibility, democracy, etc. Be mindful of the biases.
- Sebastian: Should also pay attention to how we get people involved in the appointment method.
- Action: We should send them this document and then also keep it as a reference for when we see Cole and Justin’s document.

Next Meeting
The next scheduled meeting is June 9, 2020.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:53pm.