Agenda of the AMS Governance Committee, July 7, 2020

Attendance

Present: Sebastian Cooper (Chair), Carter Maclean (Councillor), Christopher Hakim (Councillor), Georgia Yee (VP Academic), Nicola Vanderveer (Student-at-large), Ryan Wong (Councillor), Sheldon Goldfarb (Clerk of Council).

Guests: None.

Regrets: Danny Liu (Councillor).

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:07 pm

Territorial Acknowledgement

- The Chair acknowledged that the AMS is situated on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam People. The Chair encourages its members to ensure that we are mindful that our approach is impactful in relation to Indigenous peoples and that our work should be striving for reconciliation.

Approval of the Agenda

- The agenda was approved (Ryan, Nicola).

Approval of Past Minutes

- The minutes of the June 30, 2020 meeting was approved (Carter, Georgia).

Discussion: Chairs of Finance and Operations Committees

- Sebastian:
  - Attached to the docket is a copy of the report to Council regarding the Code change that would reflect that the Chairs of the Finance and Operations Committees will be open to Councillors being appointed to.
  - Are there any additional thoughts on this report?
- Georgia:
  - It would be good to add the costs if a Councillor becomes a Chair since they will be paid a wage.
- The Committee approved the Code changes regarding changing the aspects of the Chairships of Finance and Operations Committee.

Disciplinary Action at AMS Council
Sebastian:
- This discussion comes from a referral from AMS Council to investigate new guidelines or procedures regarding disciplinary action.

Sheldon:
- This topic stems from previous censures from the AMS Council and the most recent changes we have made regarding disciplinary action was from Dylan Braam that added new requirements (timing, threshold).

Sebastian:
- In terms of roadmapping, how would we like to move forward with this project?
- Should we take a look at what other organizations do and speak to predecessors to see their perspective?

Chris:
- How to respond to different issues is context dependent; how we respond to corrective action hasn’t been as developed as with other boards - other boards do coaching etc and request the executive at issue reports back to board
- Doesn’t have to be as drastic as censuring
- Should look to standard practices; there is difficulty in ensuring that executives can go through the process in a one-year tenure
- In thinking of how to respond, should remember that how we deal with these issues, the response might need a lot of leeway.

Sebastian:
- Where should we be looking for this information? I checked some other student unions but there isn’t much that I found that would be applicable.

Chris:
- Yeah, most other student unions, including ourselves, haven’t grown in terms of its governance.
- A couple student unions come to mind, Waterloo and Western Ontario, might have useful information.
- In addition, it would be best to see what other professional boards and consultants do.

Sebastian:
- What type of action should we recommend from this then? I would imagine whatever option we provide will become the new “censure”.

Chris:
- I would recommend not framing this as there being only one alternative option but instead a list of different ways to respond to mistakes, negligence, malicious actions.
- This can be from coaching, formal KPIs, warning letters, etc.
- It would be good for us to create guidelines that provide these options that are informed from our research of what other institutions are doing.

Sebastian:
- I’ll reach out to Justin, the Governance Associate, and discuss the research work with him.
Sheldon, if possible, please compile the information of how the AMS has responded to this topic in the past.

Chris, if you have any information from your past research, I would be more than happy to see it.

Discussion: Policy I-9

- Ryan:
  - I wanted to follow-up on the discussion at AMS Council regarding KPIs in Executive Goals.
  - I believe that Cole mentioned that if the AMS Council has issues with how Executive Goals were presented and prepared, the Governance Committee should take a look at it.
  - A quick Google search of the definition of “Key Performance Indicators” will tell you what they are.
  - So, do we feel the need to define this in policy?

- Chris:
  - Definition isn’t necessary; Execs can find out what KPIs are; others parts of the AMS develop appropriate KPIs

- Ryan
  - How do we instil the change of culture?

- Chris:
  - AMS heavily relies on precedence; Execs don’t necessarily have the time or experience at the beginning of the terms necessarily to develop good KPIs

- Georgia:
  - Time crunch is a barrier to developing good KPIs.
  - The inexperience is a factor too, because Executives will develop a better understanding of the feasibility of their goals later into their term - long past when their Executive goals are due.

- Chris
  - More abstract issues, such as advocacy, can be measured. Can set dates, the number of people engaged with. But fresh Execs look to previous goals. If we want to make changes, we can state that KPIs should be connected to goals, to student impacts.
  - What if we brought someone external to explain KPIs to new Execs? Biggest thing that has benefited has been experts providing skills. We should look at Executive orientations - should bring in an Executive coach: how to function in the roles, how to measure impact.

- Georgia:
  - Have to ensure Execs have the time to do the work as well as write the KPIs.

- Chris:
  - Bringing someone in, developing a framework would be helpful.

- Ryan:
Another tangent, does the Managing Director provide any goals in terms of the business aspects of the AMS?

- Sheldon:
  - They do provide financial updates, such as the budgets and quarterly reports, but not others that I can recall.

- Chris:
  - It would be good for the Council to be aware of the Managing Director’s goals.

- Georgia:
  - I agree, it’s a good point that Ryan brings up.
  - I’ll bring this up with the Executive Committee for discussions.

- Ryan:
  - Please keep us updated on that.
  - Back to Executive Goals, I would like some sort of motion regarding the Executive Goals.
  - There are edits in the Executive Goals that I feel like needs some work, and I would like something done about it.

- Georgia:
  - It might be good to email Executives before Friday to see if they can make any changes in time.

- Chris:
  - Agreed, emailing beforehand would be useful.
  - If there are still issues by Wednesday, you’re more than welcome to raise your concerns or bring a motion.

**Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting is July 14, 2020.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:33pm.