

**THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER**

Agenda of the AMS Governance Committee, July 19, 2020

Attendance

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

Guests: Justin Zheng, Associate, Policy and Governance; Cole Evans, AMS President

Regrets: Christopher Hakim

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at _____ 4:04 pm

Agenda Items

Territorial Acknowledgement

Approval of the Agenda

Moved: Ryan Wong

Seconded: Carter Maclean

That the agenda be adopted.

The motion carries.

Approval of Past Minutes

Moved: Ryan

Seconded: Georgia

That the minutes of July 7, 2020 be approved

The motion carries.

Recommendations to Governance Committee & Policy I-21 Review (Discussion)

Justin Zheng will present on the AMS President's office's recommendations to the Governance Committee, and on the draft Policy I-21 (Policy on Committee Appointments).

- Cole has begun with the Policy i- 21, we took a lot of the recommendations from Governance and council and created a pretty good plan on how to handle committee appointments
- In the policy there is a system for a timeline of nominations to open for student at large, the precedens office to be approved once again,

THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

- we would open it for both student at large and council and electronically distributed as well the council would be able to vote for 48 hours for the nominations
- the successful nominations would be included on the next committee appointment agenda, the weird examples of when there are the 4 or more appointments being accepted, so that they can drop out of the committees if he needed

Question period was opened at 4:12

- **Sebastian:** Explore what the benefit is of the difference of having this as a policy instead of a code? Doesn't reduce the number of material that people have to reference, they just have it separate now because now you have to look at both
- **Response Cole:** have a limited amount of procedural code and more so policy can advocate for accessibility, and where the policy is separated by numbers for the university so it's easily accessible/ organized
- **Response Justin:** Westerns USC their code document has all of their policies in one document that's 400 pages long and they have procedural advice and how this is quite difficult to even look through the table of contents, the benefit to having internal policies is that it's easily accessible.
- **Re: Sebastian:** Student at large are unsure possibly still of hwy they have to go to multiple source son the website
- **Sebastian:** Ranked ballot system, and how it says the person has the highest vote on average (usually if you get over 50% you will get it nominated) but here we are saying "on average" that people are put on committees. If it is supposed to be
- **Response: Cole:** we didn't specify the system, it's sort of dependent for the person that is in charge, we are not attached to the method of selection that is being used and it's nothing that they are too worried about. We could take out the average and that way whatever person is in charge that year is able to select a way that works best.
- **Re Sebastian:** The candidate, when selected it switches back to first past the post
- **Re Cole:** hard to do a rank system in a live meeting, this first past the post system was introduced as a way to continue ease throughout the changing times of whether it's in person/ virtual. Tried to strike a balance between fairness and the simpleness of it.
- **Ryan:** I would personally be in favour of a system that is more consistent year to year versus the president being able to switch the system every year that they are nominated. Would there be a way to be more consistent? As well as if there is a way to make the systems more coherent, and then implement a system of tie breakers?
- **Re Justin:** Would that then be a criteria as in if it's a certain situation then we go to the set way of breaking that tie breaker?
- **Re Ryan:** Yes, I'm not sure what that exactly looks like but it would be nice to have a more coherent way of documenting this
- **Sebastian:** Have you looked into a virtual system of voting?
- **Re Cole:** During the time of the voting system, we have explored other virtual systems of voting (Ex you X system when _____ happens)

THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

- **Justin:** It would likely be better to decide which system works better for us, like software first versus what works best for us.
- **Sheldon:** If the aim is to reduce the amount of governance material that committees need to sift through, that perhaps we could do without. The definitions of the voting systems are just repeating what's in code in addition to run off elections. As it is now there is a lot of redundancy
- **Re Cole:** We could remove some things from Code, yet there would be
- **Re Justin:** As of right now there is nothing set in code on how exactly, system wise, to go about nominancies
- **Sebastian:** One thing we want to emphasis is that the main point should be accessibility

Recommendations (4:29pm)

- Identified that there is a weird type of plan called framework policies (such as AMS sustainable action plan, where we are expecting them to be binding and yet they don't align with our current plan)
- Code nor I-1 gives any validity to framework policies, Justin has created a structure of how these new policies are supplemented throughout policy documents
- Vote tallies on recommendations, We thought it might be valuable for this committee to figure out a plan for analyzing the amount of votes/ percentages
- Committee reporting, and how recently it has been announced that every committee submitted a monthly report to council so what were recommending is a better system on a meeting basis and instead of a monthly committee reports, and instead we could do in the council meeting that could be half a page in order to stay in communication in council, as well as the quarterly AMS report
- Senators and Board of Governance are not voting committee members, since they don't have judiciary duty to the society they only have judiciary duty to the University which is a separate, they are no longer eligible to seek committee of committee members and instead they can seek appointment as a student at large
- Policy on transitions, a lot of chat on various committees about making a more robust transition outline, a more streamline process to make it more consistent year after year which would make it more involved in this committee, the president's office, council and HR committee

Question period opened 4:38pm

- **Ryan:** if the problem is that they don;t have a judiciary duty to the society and that the committee should be doing what's best for the society, why do we allow student at larges at all
- **Re Cole:** How can we guarantee that student at large are acting at the best interest in the society, we have considered in the past to remove them completely or allow them to sign something
- **Sebastian:** We could not make them voting members, but allow them to sit on the committees
- **Re cole:** They do take up a voting seat, it might overcomplicate things since student at larges

THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

- **Sebastian:** First interaction with AMS could bring a great amount of diversity of views to AMS, as well as denying them members could deny a more broad sense of views/ backgrounds. Many senators and BOG reps have an institutional background which allows the risk that only one point of view is being represented.
- **Re Cole:** That burden falls more on the individual council instead of society as a whole. From a governance perspective it would make sense to remove them completely, but of course then we lose that perspective.
- **Sebastian:** Policy and transitions, the first policy on policies, who comes out with these framework type policies? Where is it originated from? Committees or executives?
- **Re Cole:** Student driven by sustainability policy but it could not fit in. Possibly Sebastian would know more
- **Cole:** Usually these come from committees
- **Ryan:** Policy on policies, my concern is that internal policies are very black and white and a lot of the overarching themes are overarching goals or futures goals. Wondering in terms of an accountability type of situation,
- **Re Cole:** I understand, the AMS used to have a structure where we would say we have more accountability and we would follow up etc.
- **Ryan:** For your equity plan, is it planning to follow a similar plan for ASAP
- **Re Cole:** It might be similar to ASAP as it might be more strategic/ holistic document versus a policy
- **Sebastian:** Committee reporting, I like the idea of more accountability/ knowledge about communicating with students. The drawback is that if the issue is too much burden on council chairs, wh
- **RE Cole:** Move monthly reports to become quarterly reports, and written update to council instead of spoken updates
- **Re Sebastian:** This doesn't reduce the burden on as chair's are getting paid 3 hours/ week and this would obviously exceed this limit
- **Re Cole:** maybe we provide a template for committee chair's so that it doesn't take more than 20-30 minutes to do their every meeting updates
- **Ryan:** when you advertise for student at large, then all the committee member appointments at large

Broader Recommendations Discussion:

- **Sebastian:** The issue of many council members being unable to view the AMS emails, a suggestion could be someone has a gmail please check your spam, A disclaimer that *most AMS emails go to spam*
- **Justin:** If someone was not appointed councillor then they would be automatically off the meeting, of said meeting as they would need another appointment

THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

- **Sebastian:** Put in a procedure to be able to remove their name from the running if they are appointed to more than one committee. There needs to be a system where the president can email everyone saying you are on ____ committee.
- **Justin:** Say the president sends that out on Friday and the council member would have until Sunday to let them know then if someone else was waiting for an appointment.
- **Sebastian:** Prior to september/ appointment where there is a rule where student at large cannot be on more than one committee and therefor
- **Justin:** I will recommend figuring out a more clear system a preference system and max number of committees you want to be on in nomination procedures
- **Sebastian:** In this document it alludes to chair appointment, we recommend that we strike with statements
- **Ryan:** Or add chair statements?
- **Sebastian:** I believe it would be better with candidates with statements being stricken.
- **Justin:** What are we adding exactly?
- **Sebastian:** A line clarifying that someone appointed to a committee remains on the committee until their replacement as well as taking out the “notwithstanding” in one of the paragraphs due to it making it redundant

AMS Discipline (Discussion)

Discussion of the report on censure history & on the review of Policy I-9.

- Interesting as it gives examples of what AMS voted not worthy of voting no
- Sebastian, of what passing censure was firing the director behind the director or going against united nations
- How
- Policy i-9 or KPI's, sheldon has pointed out that we have been mandated, we will have to review i-9 anyways and we won't necessarily have to focus on this right now
- Maybe it's something we can wait until November (when executive has to report)

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is July 27, 2020.

Adjourn



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The meeting was adjourned at **5:56 pm.**