

August 18, 2020 - Agenda of the AMS Governance Committee

Attendance

Present: Sebastian Cooper (Chair), Carter Maclean, Georgia Yee, Nicola Vanderveer, Ryan Wong (left at 4:45), Sheldon Goldfarb

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

Regrets: Danny Liu, Christopher Hakim

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 pm

Agenda Items

Territorial Acknowledgement

Approval of the Agenda

Moved: Sebastian Seconded: Nicola

That the agenda be adopted.

[The motion carries.]

Approval of Past Minutes

Moved: Sebastian Seconded: Ryan

That the minutes of August 4, 2020 be approved

[The motion carries.]

Policy I-21 Review (Discussion & Vote)

Following discussions at the July 20 and August 4 Govcomm meetings, Justin Zheng and Cole Evans will present on a revised draft Policy I-21 (Policy on Committee Appointments).

- Justin: The most discussed change to policy I-21 was the inclusion of a vote to approve committee appointments - that has now been included.
- Sebastian: Need to discuss the issue Sheldon raised about Paragraph 13 of the policy, that the AMS Code does not allow for general email votes, only in extraordinary circumstances.
- Justin: Don't necessarily agree that Council must approve committee appointments, but this is the most efficient way to do it.

- Sebastian: If we allow for email votes, we should not decide that right now, as it is a larger discussion. However, understand the importance of an exception for this.
- Justin: Having email votes helps with expediency
- Ryan: Can we just amend the email restrictions in code to include an exception for committee appointments.
- Sebastian: Any objections to the ⅓ objection requirement to bring appointments to an in-council vote?
- Ryan: What exactly does rejection look like?
- J: The language in the policy is loose. 'In objection' includes just voting no.
- Sebastian: In the policy, it is a requirement that this vote is in email format. Could we change it to say that the policy could be email. Including, but not exclusively an email vote.
- Sheldon: Could just say in email or in person. Can look through code to see if the code can be changed to say email votes are only held in extraordinary circumstances, and for committee appointments and draft a change.
- Sebastian: Paragraph 15, why is the "if requested" needed?
- Justin: Rationale is that if the councillor requests, but we could just have it mandatory in council
- Sebastian: I would prefer that it is mandatory to present the results.
- Sebastian: Can we approve I-21 now and do an email vote to approve the other code changes just discussed?
- Sheldon: Yes
- Sebastian: Move to approve policy I-21 and recommend it to council.
 - The motion passes unanimously.
- Sebastian: will send code changes tomorrow.

Council Discipline (Discussion)

Discussion on the issue of Council discipline, based on the research compiled by Justin Zheng.

- Sheldon: The other schools have mechanisms like committees for discipline. That is sometime the governance committee might want to think about.
- Ryan: I agree with Sheldon on this. Western's system seems to work. Disagrees with some of their specific things. Overall makes sense and we should consider expanding them into AMS
- Sheldon: Interesting that these other schools are bicameral. Oversight committee could be something similar to discipline committee, but it was loathed.
- Sebastian: Why was it loathed? Are we at risk of duplicating that.
- Sheldon: Money/bonuses for executives was tied to work of the committee, and there were bad feelings. Might not have done too much discipline though. Should this be an ad hoc disciplinary committee or a standing committee?
- Carter: Could have a standing committee where we have a disciplinary committee that always exists, but only called upon when needed.
- Georgia: This would be better, since an ad hoc committee could run into issues. For example, councillors would need fairness training.

- Sheldon: Should the Ombudsperson be involved?
- Ryan: I agree. Who hires and appoints the Ombudsperson?
- Sheldon: Council appoints on the recommendation of HR Committee.
- Sebastian: Should make clear that if there is an investigation, the investigation doesn't necessarily mean anyone has done anything bad. What form should this take? Code change, policy, guidelines?
- Ryan: Should have Justin or someone put together a policy similar to Western's. Direct someone to go this and then get into the more nitty gritty debate. We see the value of establishing the process.
- Sheldon: Could be in code as an extraordinary committee? Mainly, we would want a mechanism.
- Sebastian: If you are willing to put a draft together that would be great.
- Sheldon: I will do that
- Sebastian: What are extraordinary committees?
- Sheldon: Well the committee should be permanent in some way. Extraordinary committees are hired more so than appointed. Each one is different. Should it be like that or a regular standing committee?
- Sebastian: Should be more of an extraordinary committee.

Recommendations to Governance Committee (Discussion)

Discussion of recommendations of the AMS President's office.

- Sebastian: Policy I-1 seems like it is something that should be pursued.
- Sheldon: The code is put higher than internal policies. Policies are considered an extension of code.
- Sebastian: Vote tallies. Do we want to include names of people voting against or for something in committees? Seems like a reasonable idea. Would this be in code as well?
- Sheldon: Can draft something in code under the committee section to include this.
- Sebastian: Could just put this in the rationale form from committees.
- Sheldon: Rationale documents aren't even in code.
- Sebastian: Could include in chair transitions.
- Ryan: Agree with most of the next recommendations. Need to investigate more the committee appointments of Senate and BoG policy.
- Sebastian: Yes, we should invite more people to discuss this.
- Sebastian: We left committee reporting with Cole and Justin - they're drafting examples of what they want.
- Georgia: Policy I-1, there is room to fit in the external policy manual, but this manual has not been updated for a while which could be a problem. We should fit this into the policy on policies.
- Sheldon: I believe the policy on policies already includes this.
- Georgia: Would this be in framework policies?

- Sheldon: Would fit into the same box as internal. They have to follow the same format and procedures. This may also require a code amendment. Could look into this.
- Georgia: The external policy manual is a bit of a mess and our stances have changed. Would it be necessary to separate it out of external and internal policies.
- Sebastian: This issue may not be for the discussion of the policy, but for the advocacy committee.
- Sebastian: Committee appointments of BoG and Senators. We should look at this over the next few weeks and invite people to committee to discuss (Chris Hakim, Alex Gonzales, Max Holmes, Jeanie)

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is August 25, 2020.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:53 pm.