

November 2, 2020 Agenda of the AMS Governance Committee; 4pm

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/91681615917>

Attendance

Present: Sebastian Cooper (Chair), Danny Liu (SUS), Carter MacLean (AUS), Kalith Nanayakkara (AMS VP External Affairs), Kamil Kanji (student-at-large), Sheldon Goldfarb (Clerk of Council)

Guests:

Regrets: Ryan Wong, Katherine Feng

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:06 pm.

Agenda Items

Territorial Acknowledgement

Approval of the Agenda

Moved: Carter Seconded: Kalith

That the agenda be adopted.

[The motion carries.]

Approval of Past Minutes

Moved: Carter Seconded: Kalith

That the minutes of October 19, 2020 be approved

[The motion carries.]

“Discipline” Committee

Addressing issues raised during Council consultation: chair, name, *ad hoc* mechanism, extraordinary vs standing.

For reference re/ a potential *ad hoc* mechanism:

“4. An Election Appeals Committee shall consist of:

(a) the Speaker of Council, who shall be Chair;

(b) one (1) representative of the person appealing the ruling, interpretation, or decision referred to in paragraph 4 above; and

(c) one (1) representative of the Elections Committee.”

Sebastian: Extraordinary vs standing?

Carter: What is the difference?

Sheldon: Not a lot of difference; currently have three Extraordinary Committees (Elections, Indigenous, Advisory).

Sebastian: They all have different mechanisms for appointing their members than the Standing Committees, which use I-21. We’re proposing a unique membership of this Committee so maybe it makes sense for it to be Extraordinary.

Sheldon: Will redraft.

Sebastian: Got feedback that “Discipline Committee” would be an inappropriate name considering the history of colonialism, and looking from an EDI lens. The other options that were brought up were “Ethics” and “Accountability.”

Kalith: At first Discipline Committee seemed like a fitting name, however after much consideration other options might work better.

Sebastian: We could merge “Accountability” and “Ethics”

Sheldon: The word “discipline” is mentioned multiple times in the proposed code changes. We could potentially leave it there and just rename the committee.

Sebastian: Maybe Sheldon we could see what names other schools/student unions have for similar committees?

Sebastian: We could remove the word “discipline” from the introduction and text, since it’s a problematic term. We can name this committee “Ethics and Accountability Committee.”

Committee agrees. Sheldon to redraft.

Sebastian: Cole mentioned that it would be problematic to not have representation from the side at issue in the allegation present at the meetings. Cole suggested that we could do it similar to the way the Elections Appeals Committee, which involves one representative from the matter in proceedings. If we were to pursue this route, every other member would be decided prior similar to other committees, but on an ad hoc basis, representatives from the respective issue would join the committee when it considered an issue.

Carter: Having people attend that are biased could be unnecessary. These individuals will still have their voices heard as both sides need to be considered anyway.

Sebastian: That is true.

Sheldon: Some history on the Elections Appeal Committee. Created about 20 years ago on an arbitration model - with the vision of having one person from both sides. However the reality is that the vote split leads to one person - the chair - breaking the tie.

Kalith: We could have them as non-voting members?

Carter: The danger of having involved people constantly there is that it could deter people from speaking freely.

Sebastian: I will reach out to Cole and see if he has more thoughts on the matter, since he brought this to our attention. What I'm getting from this conversation is that we should not change the make up of the Committee, but could amend the language to more explicitly state that the Committee must hear from the party whose conduct is at issue.

Committee Chairs Memos

Consideration of proposed policy language: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-bdXfEKbHmGgzya5s6xIVTbJ-MoT5O60WkWcTptyQ_M/edit?ts=5f9a8d46

Sebastian: This is kind of fun, but I guess that's what being GovComm chair has done to me - finding this fun. This something we have been discussing since the summer. I shared this with outgoing chairs at the end of summer and again with incoming Chairs. I have heard back from three Chairs (Matthew, Lucia and Charissa). I also think there's an advantage in doing this because it also provides a strong historical record. Any thoughts?

Sheldon: Seems to be based on the old code.

Sebastian: Yes, I made some amendments but for the most part it is based on the old code. This will be a lot of work for Chairs at first, however over time it should be easier as a result of continuity and consistency.

Kalith: Transition reports will be very helpful and serve really well. Chairs would take their role more seriously and continuity between Chairs will help for more efficient transitions.

Sebastian: I will look to make sure this includes transitions between all terms, including summer.

Sheldon: In the old transition stuff, payment and honorariums were included. Have we considered this?

Sebastian: This is something that is expected from the role, this initiative from us formalizes this, and I don't think an honorarium is necessary. However, I can put it in my transition report that the next Govcomm should review the issue and quality of transition reports to decide whether an incentive is necessary.

Sebastian: Danny mentioned holding back pay until these reports are completed.

Sheldon: No, we can't do that due to employment standards.

Sebastian: I will bring this to our next Council meeting and consult on it.

Policy I-1 and Strategic Plans

Consideration of proposed Code and Policy amendments to include reference to Strategic Plans.

Update from the Chair.

Sebastian: We have an ongoing responsibility to review Policy I-1. I reached out to the Executives to get feedback on whether they thought anything should be amended. Sylvester responded saying there was nothing that needs to be changed from his perspective. Kalith, are there any additional changes you think should be made?

Kalith: No.

Sebastian: We have 2 proposed changes that we can bring to the next Council meeting.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is November 9, 2020.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:46 pm.