



THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee on the 25th January, 2021

[25th January, 2021] [5:00 PM PST] on Zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/96991215514?pwd=NmFHk9QOWRoYUdwUllKSWNVd0cwUT09>

Attendance

Invited: Georgia Yee, Kalith Nanayakkara, Laura Beaudry, Joshua Kim, Jackson Schumacher, Mathew Ho, Mahmoud Borno, Saad Shoab

Present: Kalith, Laura, Joshua, Jackson, Mathew, Saad, Shivani, Georgia

Regrets: Mahmoud

Recording Secretary:

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:06 pm

Land Acknowledgement

Approval of Agenda

BIRT the agenda of the AMS Advocacy Committee on the 25th January, 2021 be adopted as presented

Moved: Joshua

Seconded: Laura

Passed Unanimously

Approval of Minutes

BIRT the Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee on the 4th December, 2020 be adopted as presented

Moved: Joshua

Seconded: Jackson

Passed Unanimously

Agenda Items

Chair Remarks

Discussion (20 mins, 10 mins each) [* Discussions with docket items]

1. From AVP Sustainability: AMS Sustainability/ Just Recovery Consultations

a. Discussion

- i. Georgia: Thanks to the sustainability team and members of my team for doing that. A lot of the discussion or questions asked were drawn directly from the principles of Just Recovery. A lot of current recommendations were made, so we are going to continue working to make sure the Climate Emergency Task Force can accommodate such feedback from students based on this document and the Just Recovery Climate Change document. Hopefully it will be centering perspectives that can be found in the document, since the principles were also embedded in the report, and should be funded and adequately supported.
- ii. Internally, there are aspects how the AMS can do better, such as hiring more folks with experience and expertise in indigenous ways of knowing and knowledge keeping, which can help the sustainability team at the AMS. That was a lot of focus on this in the report. There were also a lot of overlapping themes such as disability advocacy and accessibility audits, which is something we are continuing to advocate for, along with financial subsidies that we can touch on later on in our updates regarding athletics and recreation. A lot of these

quotes are related to that as well, when we talk about financial aid, which have usually often been band aid solutions. This will come in with affordability discussions with the VPS office.

- iii. Overall, a great symposium and looking forward to more opportunities to engage and direct with students to occur.

b. BIRT Advocacy Committee submit the report on the AMS Sustainability/ Just Recovery Consultations to Council

- i. **Moved: Joshua**
- ii. **Seconded: Georgia**
- iii. **Passed Unanimously**

2. Old business: Policy I – 11 Review (Tabled from last meeting)

a. [https://www.ams.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/I-11-Policy-Tuition-Consultation August 30 2017.pdf](https://www.ams.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/I-11-Policy-Tuition-Consultation_August_30_2017.pdf)

- i. Georgia: Committee looked at this summer, did not pass it.
- ii. Laura: UBC released survey on tuition increases. How is the university trying to justify the tuition increase amidst a pandemic?
- iii. Georgia: Good question. I can address the question separate from the Policy I-11 discussion and the general tuition consultation discussion. This is specifically on program tuition as opposed to their 2% increase.

b. Motion: Motion to Recommend I-11 draft changes to governance committee

- i. **Moved Joshua**
- ii. **Seconded Laura**

iii. Passed Unanimously**3. Working Group on External Policies Manual check in (Tabled from last meeting)**

- a. https://www.ams.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/External-Policy-Manual_Aug-2018.pdf

- i. Skipped by mistake. Oopsie Doopsie! Mabad.

4. Policy I-12 Discussion and Review (Added to the agenda)

- a. Georgia: I-12 is relating to policies around working groups, which proposed changes mainly focus on changing policy around L-4 and adding 4a. We plan to add a timeline of 7 days of consultation opportunity in consulting with stakeholders if necessary. I motion to recommend this to governance committee, and then go to council.
- b. Georgia: Policy I-12 Consultation should be made before the survey intended date, if they are included in the survey as well. This is just one of the smallest bookkeeping thing, involving 2 people. Effort has been made to make it broader, so it's not just on AES but on more surveys. We propose the purpose of the policy is to recommend VPAUA to do that in 2nd term of academic session, involving the process of and timeline for survey's development. This will likely guide how surveys may be conducted.
- c. Laura: Basically this requires a survey every year?
 - i. Georgia: Yes, and this looks at different categories compared to what we traditionally look at. This happens at same time as university's survey, and we want to do data driven advocacy, because we have sent out a lot of surveys, such as the AMS survey (Nest and AMS services, which is different from academic experience survey. That's one of the main points we

were thinking of, and why we want to make an independent survey through the policy.

- d. Laura: is there a section for survey results, and how would it be presented to students?
 - i. Georgia: That's a good question. I think there's a gap in information if regular students don't get it, with results already getting posted to students etc.
- e. Laura: Should there be an accountability section for students? Because I expect to see the results are made available. Even if it is already happening, it should be there.
 - i. Georgia: What do you want to see aside from presentation to council?
 - ii. Laura: Presenting a report to membership or having the results publicly available, so people know where they can find results and that they are there.
 - iii. Georgia: We will try to make these changes. Good for us to know (that info is hard to access).
 - iv. Laura: No recommendations for clause 2. I think that's normal procedure
 - v. Georgia: Yeah we will make sure there will be further consultation when the report is ready
- f. **Motion: BIRT Policy I-12 be moved to Governance Committee for review:**
 - i. **Moved Georgia**
 - ii. **Seconded Laura**

iii. Passed unanimously**Portfolio Updates (20 minutes, 10 mins per item)****1. AMS VP External**

- a. Kalith: Just ended lobby week last Friday. Got the opportunity to speak with MLAs from both the BC Liberals and NDP, where the conversations went well. We received overwhelming support from both sides, and the BC Liberals also tweeted about it. We will be meeting Green party MLAs in a few days. UCRU has been busy working on bylaws, which were being reviewed by lawyers earlier. Now that the lawyers have gotten back to us, they will be presented to each of the ad hoc member schools. AMS council and councilors will have the opportunity to express concerns discuss them and finalize them. A strategic plan is also in the works. UPASS is going smoother than last semester, being the first of its kind of to have exception programs, and after the trial run earlier, there are less things to work on. We will give a more detailed report as deadlines are passed.
- b. (cont'd) We have been raising awareness on the Skytrain to UBC initiative, with the rapid transit group at UBC working on knockout campaign with the BCFS and working on the potential upcoming federal election, such that BCFS has that prepared.
- c. (cont'd) Been meeting with the BC Housing working group to see what practices can be learned, particularly on quantitative research on operating grant reviews. Equity research grants are also being done by psych 421 and Geog 371 students on investigating best practices for Equity based grants, who will be making directions for what that will look like, in collab with the SEEDS initiative. Hopefully this will be beneficial for advocacy committee going forward.

- d. (cont'd) We have also been working with UTILE on feasibility study and research province wide on co-op housing, and we have been working with SFSS and UBCS etc to gather data on housing across the province for students, and figuring out feasibility of co-op housing. On the topic of co-op housing, we have also been talking with a professor who is researching on the topic, and who has been involved in a co-op research initiative, which focuses on areas surrounding co-ops, which just make sense to get a student perspective. Mitchell the AMS housing service coordinator will be a panelist in a web series on that topic, and so will the GSS, which we have reached out to them. That's everything from the VPX office. Any questions?
- e. Jackson: Did you say a psych class involved?
 - i. Saad: yes. It's the project kickoff with the PSYCH class will be working on best practices of research charter, which is a larger group than the GEOB class. Also forming a independent studies group on financial and health barriers research.
- f. Jackson: Awesome to be utilizing psych dept.
- g. Saad: Yes, the research charter is important to us in structuring communication around it, to be as concise as possible while addressing mental health issues faced by historical issues faced by marginalized communities.

2. AMS VP AUA

- a. Georgia: It is sexual assault awareness month. If you're not doing anything at 6, check out the SASC's event on online dating and consent during the pandemic. This will be going on for the next hour or so. A lot of our work right now is working on ensuring that there is adequate implementation on policy SC-17, where a lot has been on

capacity building and on what people can engage with, whether it's the pandemic or whether it's education on consent. There is also discussion of creating a SVPRO advisory group.

- b. (Cont'd) Another piece we are working on is tuition and budget consultation. The consultation did go out this afternoon, and we are hoping to organize with different student groups such as the GSS etc and other groups on campus to sign on a letter to oppose tuition increase, especially with a pandemic. This is a great opportunity to align with the UBC budget since that and tuition consultation are coming together. Whether it's the climate emergency or student finance aid board, the main issues continue to be the crisis and need for an affordability plan. It is going to be part of the student strategic plan consultation, along with affordability. We are going to meet with BOG in advance of the April meeting where both of these (tuition and budget) will be discussed to leverage and build those relations there. In regards to UBC budget, central units have been asked to find savings, and we kind of focused reports on funding on units and mitigating costs and areas on further support. Some of the areas are around invigilation and travel costs, especially about the problematic nature of carbon offsetting. Continued funding/ sustained funding is needs to be going towards the Centre for accessibility, campus Worklearn program, and we're also hoping to embed climate emergency implementation discussion there as well. Affordability and alleviating student poverty needs to be focused on, which we refer to another GSS submission on COVID-19 relief, particularly in regards to accommodate for time Graduate students haven't made to their degree because of research curtailment currently, along with funding that needs to be made to graduate students as well. Second area is about lecture recording infrastructure, and academic integrity. Third area is about anti-racism and decolonization, making sure the Inclusion action plan and

Indigenous strategic plan are well funded and supported. That's been the budget report as an overview which will be brought to Council.

- c. Laura: The tuition increase by the university has been tone deaf
- d. Georgia: Yes I agree, will bring it as a consultation item to both Council and UBC. There is also an academic integrity working group as well, which we will be participating in regards to Proctorio. Currently there has been an extension of the contract, which is not a renewal of the contract, though we are frustrated to see the extension. A motion will be going to senate to reduce use of Proctorio, and further down there will be work to stop it. On the athletics and recreation fee, the AMS is deciding to do a subsidy program, since UBC doesn't want to refund it. Therefore we're trying to see if we can use the tuition funding surplus to compensate students who can opt out if they're not on campus. Another part is creating culturally tailored resources for mental health. We are working with the health leadership team on that. I will turn to Shivani on exam hardship and the race based data collection at UBC.
- e. Jackson: Do you know what makeup of the academic integrity working group is?
- f. Georgia: I am unsure about that.. She knows they're deciding to put more students on the committee. Shivani?
- g. Shivani: I think Jackie's the one who's assembling the group on part of the provost's office. 7 – 10 maybe? Unsure. Fingers crossed there will be a lot of students present.
- h. Shivani: With the race based data, we have reached out to deputy registrar, and whether people will provide race data when applying, so we can see what trends we can make evaluation from in terms of challenges to students. They will keep AMS leaders in the loop. In

terms of Exam hardship, we have worked with ombudsperson and people in the provosts policy, and will be having first meeting with them tomorrow, and will go over that in a presentation with academic policy committee afterwards. As soon as material is done, hopefully it will be passed in senate before term 2 finals. Depends on their timeline. That's all we have

- i. Laura: I want to know if there is room for us to advocate for keeping online courses? Not to the capacity we have now, but it has resolved a lot of accessibility issues. It would be awesome if we can continue.
- j. Georgia: Yeah that's what we've been hearing of, especially around accessibility. That's something what can we make the most out of through hybrid learning. We have put down Lecture recording in budget asks, along with asking on how we can continue to support online learning, which has been brought up on how we can continue accessibility aspect of lecture notes and things to be accessible regardless of where you're living.
- k. Georgia: We can bring an update on that. There has also been a paper from the Centre of teaching and learning at UBC that we can share next week.

AOB

Submissions:

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is 8th February on Zoom

Adjourn

1. Moved Joshua , Seconded Jackson

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:01 pm

Action Items:

1. External Policy Manual reviews