



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

AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of March 10, 2021

Attendance

Present: Cole Evans (President), Georgia Yee (VP Academic & University Affairs), Lucia Liang (VP Finance), Kalith Nanayakkara (VP External), Ian Stone (Student Services Manager), Keith Hester (Managing Director), Lorris Leung (Senior Student Services Manager), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Regrets: Sylvester Mensah Jr. (VP Administration)

Guests: Hong-Lok Li (AMS Chief Technology Officer)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 12:05 pm and took place by videoconference.

Agenda

- The agenda was adopted (Georgia, Kalith).

Minutes

- The minutes of March 3 were approved (Kalith, Lucia).

AMS Email System

- Hong:
 - Alarming situation.
 - Been using Microsoft Exchange for 20 years or so. No problems before.
 - But as it evolves, it is becoming complicated, expensive, and vulnerable.
 - We have seen this in the past couple of days.
 - We need to act quickly and move to something cloud-based.
 - Currently we are using Microsoft 2016.
 - The next version will be Microsoft 2022.
 - If we host it ourselves, it will cost more: there's going to be a subscription fee.
 - The recent attack on Microsoft Exchange was extremely bad.
 - We received no support from Microsoft.
 - We're not supposed to run patches by ourselves, but yesterday I went ahead and installed a patch, and things are fine now.

- But this is not a sustainable situation.
- We have two options:
 - UBC has offered to allow us onto their domain; that would probably be best.
 - Or we could move to Office 365: it has more storage, but is much more expensive (9 times).
- We need a secure, supported system.
- It's a huge risk if we can't get support.
- Cole
 - We're all enthusiastic about updating and moving to something cloud-based; we talked about that earlier in the year.
 - UBC FASmail is just email support.
 - Office 365 is a full suite.
- Hong:
 - Yes, that's why it is more expensive.
 - I also looked into G-suite, but there are issues. Our systems wouldn't work with it.
 - But if you want G-suite for certain groups, it can be done without email.
- Cole:
 - There'd be a cost of retraining and also incompatibility issues with G-suite.
 - Let's make sure our apps are cloud-based.
- Hong:
 - If you decide on 365, I can pursue that.
- Cole:
 - Do we pay a licensing fee currently?
- Hong:
 - We paid a one-time fee for the current version, but that's the last time for that.
 - The next version won't allow that.
 - Microsoft wants people to move to 365.
- Kalith:
 - This is a blessing in disguise, allowing us to shift to something new and better.
- Georgia:
 - Thanks for all your work on this, Hong. We are very appreciative.
 - Can we get an alternate email auto-reply for staff not coming to the office?
- Hong:
 - Another option would be to go to UBC email and also use Office 365 without their email.
 - But we need to act: this is the most dangerous situation I've encountered in my career.
- Cole:
 - Hong and Keith can come up with proposals.
 - I lean to Office 365.

- Probably have to go to the Finance Committee in the next couple of weeks.
- Hong:
 - Yes, it's our top priority to make ourselves safe.
 - The only concern about Office 365 is the cost.
 - It has features that a lot of people won't use.
 - Could make Office 365 available to staff on demand, not give it automatically to everyone.
 - That would save us a lot of money.
- Cole:
 - Maybe a hybrid option.
 - Work with Keith and Lucia on a proposal for Fincom.

Return to In Person

- Cole:
 - The news is that UBC, following guidance from the provincial government, is planning increased activity on campus in the fall.
 - They didn't quite say In Person, but it looks like more people on campus and some classes in person.
 - I met the UBC leadership before this announcement.
 - A lot of people will be excited, but some will be concerned over health issues and study permits for international students.
 - UBC needs to make plans to communicate to the students.
 - Faculty members may have issues too.
 - But we're cautiously excited.
 - For the AMS, it's good news: a healthier number of students will be good for our businesses.
 - We'll have to come up with our reopening strategy for the fall, for businesses and also clubs, bookings, people in the building.
- Georgia:
 - Looking to get student feedback about student comfort levels, returning to residences and classrooms.
 - The concerns may be more outside class.
 - Looking at doing a survey, a shorter one.
- Cole:
 - Most students will be excited, but let's identify concerns: personal safety and guidelines, vaccinations, testing. For our advocacy.
- Georgia:
 - Can start compiling a list of asks.

Updates

- *Kalith's update:*
 - Made decision to continue the U-Pass for the summer: seeing increased ridership; the province will be moving to Phase 4 of vaccinations, so we're expecting even more ridership.
 - The BC Liberals' Opposition Critic for Advanced Education, Coralee Oakes, has been raising our advocacy asks, which is good.
 - UCRU is consolidating the feedback on the proposed bylaws.
 - The audit report on U-Pass exemptions is being finalized.
 - SkyTrain to UBC campaign.

- *Georgia's update:*
 - Tuition consultation.
 - Educate and Activate campaign about microaggressions and bystander intervention.
 - International student time zone challenges.
 - Multi-language resources.
 - Working with Food Bank to destigmatize food insecurity.
 - Increasing diversity resources for mental health.
 - On the Provost Reappointment Committee.

- *Lucia's update:*
 - AMS budget reforecast.
 - Budget for next year.
 - Received feedback about a new budget format to address transparency and accessibility issues.
 - Responses from fee-receiving groups.
 - Follow-ups on subsidies.
 - WUSC allowance allocation being shifted to UBC from us; the same for the CUS co-op fees. This will make things easier for students.

- *Keith's update:*
 - Great news: New SASC Manager and Assistant Manager have been hired. SASC will be back to being fully staffed.
 - Lorris is working on an update to the Services Review.
 - Further to the news about in-person, going to redo the budget.
 - Orientations for Executives.

- *Cole:*
 - What's the latest on the Communications presentation?

- *Keith:*
 - The company is meeting us.

- A preview before coming to the Executive.

- *Ian's update:*
 - Budget for next year.
 - Hiring soon: for next Student Services Manager, a new person in my role; they will be shadowing me.
 - Hiring for Coordinators will be starting soon.
 - RBC Get Seeded at the end of the month.
 - Everything else is going along as normal.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:52 pm.