

March 25, 2021 Agenda of the AMS Governance Committee; 7pm

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

Attendance

Present: Sebastian Cooper (Chair), Ryan Wong (VSEUS), Sheldon Goldfarb (Clerk of Council)

Guests: Isabelle Ava-Pointon, Chief Electoral Officer

Regrets: Kamil Kanji (student-at-large), Katherine Feng (SUS), Danny Liu (SUS), Carter MacLean (AUS), Cole Evans (AMS President)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm.

Agenda Items

Territorial Acknowledgement

Approval of the Agenda

Moved: Seconded:

That the agenda be adopted.

[The motion carries.]

Approval of Past Minutes

Moved: Seconded:

That the minutes of March 18, 2021 be approved.

[The motion carries.]

Ad hoc committee on increasing student engagement

Original proposal:

- *President, Chair*
- *CEO, Vice chair*
- *Govcomm Chair*
- *Student Life chair*
- *3 members of AMS Council*

New proposal (following discussions with the Chief Electoral Officer and Chair of the Student Life Committee):

- *Membership:*
 - *Chief Electoral Officer, as a non voting member*
 - *One member of the Executive chosen by the Executive*
 - *One member of Governance Committee*
 - *One member of Student Life Committee*
 - *3 students-at-large (at least one of whom shall be a graduate student)*
 - *One non-Executive member of AMS Council*
 - *A current student Senator*
 - *A current or former student member of the Board of Governors*
 - *The Clerk of Council, ex officio*
 - *A representative from AMS Communications, ex officio*
- *Terms:*
 - *The Committee is to be constituted in May, alongside the other summer constitutions of committees*
 - *Once formed, Committee members shall put forward their names for Chair and Vice-Chair, to be voted on by Council*
 - *Members should endeavour to remain on the Committee for its duration*

Isabelle: Think that the CEO should be Chair. If it's elections-related, anyone of them could be running for an elected position. For the sake of impartiality, don't want the person in charge of the Committee to make recommendations that benefit their own future.

Sebastian: How many hours does the CEO work over the summer?

Isabelle: 2 hours a week in the summer, not doing much in the summer months, so attending a meeting is ok. But definitely not enough hours at other times.

Sebastian: Something you should raise with HR Committee. Wondering about capacity to chair - is there something in your JD that says "other duties as assigned by Council"?

Isabelle: I'm pretty sure there is. But it's also our job to look at student engagement.

Sebastian: Current language doesn't prevent the CEO from being the Chair, as they can still run. Leaves flexibility for Council to decide. Being Chair isn't about substantive knowledge necessarily, it's about operational knowledge. Hesitant without knowing who the incoming CEO is to make them Chair automatically.

Isabelle: There should be some sort of distinction between CEO and other members. Can the CEO be a non-voting member?

Sebastian: if you think that's best.

Sheldon: Can confirm that in CEO's job description it says that they can be referred items from Council. I think it's simple to solve voter turnout for the committee to consider: 1. End COVID. 2. Don't ban posters. When there were posters, we had 20% turnout. Then turnout dropped drastically.

Isabelle: Why did we ban posters?

Sheldon: Sustainability.

Isabelle: CEO should be non-voting or Chair. Kind of better to be non-voting because you want our expertise but don't want the recommendations being made from the CEO.

Sebastian: You have Gov Comm's ok (or at least the ones that our here)

Isabelle: I can bring it to Council or do you want to? Since I'm the Elections Committee, the Elections Committee approves of this.

Sebastian: Gov Comm will bring it to Council.

Faculty-student senators elections issue

Guest: Isabelle Ava-Pointon, Chief Electoral Officer

WHEREAS the decision made by the Elections Committee about elections for UBC-Vancouver, faculty-student senators cannot be reversed for the 2021 Elections; and

WHEREAS Council continues to believe that all student elections at UBC should be run by students as has been the practice for decades;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT AMS Council direct the governance committee to report back with Code amendments to best ensure the following:

THAT AMS Elections, along with constituencies, continues to run student elections for UBC-Vancouver faculty-student senators;

THAT AMS Elections, must meaningfully consult UBC-Vancouver Student Senators and Governors for any changes related to their respective elections;

THAT AMS Elections, must meaningfully consult constituencies for any changes related to their respective faculty-student senator election; and

THAT AMS Elections, must seek Council Approval if they plan on not running a UBC-Vancouver Student Senator or Governor election.

Sebastian: Could you describe the decision made to let UBC run it?

from this point on I = Isabelle, S = Sebastian, R - Ryan

I: AMS Elections is happy to run it usually. Under the University Act, it's UBC that has to run elections for senators. In senate rules, UBC can delegate student senator elections to other organizations. That's what we've done in the past: given it to the faculties/constituencies to run. One of the problems is that constituencies don't always align with the faculty senator (ie. Kinesiology not being able to vote for Education senator). Registrar's office wasn't comfortable with constituencies running the elections this year. Either AMS Elections does it or UBC does it. Main concern was timing of the election. People really liked that Faculty Senator were after Senator at Large. But there was an issue with capacity and timelines. Didn't have the capacity to do that. We said then, that UBC can do it. Technically we're only supposed to run elections for outside organization when we have a contract with them, so technically we shouldn't even be running it. Hopefully a contract done this summer, clarifies this ambiguity.

S: do you think it's better for AMS Elections to run it or constituencies?

I: constituencies, because they have more communication with their constituents. Closer connection. We proposed a sort of hybrid solution of AMS Elections kind of overseeing the constituencies running it. But they were still uncomfortable with it. For example the Sauder Senator, MBA students was confusing. The constituency didn't advertise to ALL students in the Faculty, despite them running the election.

R: common issue, all the schools that don't align with the faculties.

I: Constituencies, better at voter engagement. AMS better at voter engagement than UBC.

Sheldon: what was the voter turnout?

R: Arts student senator won by 75 votes.

S: Law student senator won by 47 votes this time, 215 last year.

I: LSS is usually good at running elections, didn't want AMS to take over. In past years, over half of the student senator elections have been acclaimed

S: some of the issues are specific to certain faculties, so what about going on a case by case basis for who runs them? Problematic ones are run by school, others are run by constituencies.

I: could work

Sheldon: What's the process to address this?

I: Who signs contracts?

Sheldon: Could be Keith, could be the Exec. But to note, we've run the elections many times, and have never had a contract. Tried to make a contract some years ago, wherein AMS would also use webvote, and the University wanted us to pay \$25K. It's the AMS who created the requirement for a contract.

I: That could be changed. This is all a lot of work for the Registrar's office.

Sheldon: Who is going to negotiate the contracts and sign them? Who's going to know these issues? We should ask Keith on this perhaps.

I: Still working for all of April.

S: Which Exec would be responsible?

Sheldon: There's a financial aspect, so could be the VP Finance. This year it was Sylvester who negotiated with the colleges.

I: the other colleges just sent me their Excel files. In recent years there was an opt-in. We need to negotiate with all the colleges.

S: during transitions, we can try and encourage one of the Executives to take it up as a goal. It seems like something AMS needs to negotiate with the university. Seems like something VPAUA is responsible for. Isabelle, you could mention this as a priority as your transition. Max was saying there's some benefit to having UBC participate, like the email broadcasts.

I: we shouldn't underestimate the pandemic impact.

S: in terms of anything specific to do with Code, Gov should look at if the Code requiring contracts is necessary. Isabelle, do you think there is anything else Code-wise that we should be looking at?

Sheldon: I think Max was most interested in consultation with Senators.

I: How much of it is consultation and how much of it is veto power? Maybe we should've consulted them more, but I don't know. If we run into a situation, who do we consult, what does this consultation look like.

S: is it as simple as, just putting into Code that if there are changes to Senate and BoG elections, that they must consult with the relevant people i.e. constituencies and Senators and Governors?

I: Yes, I think so.

I: Make sure language is "relevant constituencies" as it's not always a 1-1 match up.

S: I don't think this will come back to Council this term, but I can let the incoming Gov Comm know.

Policy I-9: Executive Goal Setting and Reporting Policy

Up for review. Policy: <https://www.ams.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Policy-I-9-exec-goals-february-may-2019.pdf>

Discussion of proposed Code amendments and potential template.

Postponed.

Proposed Code changes

Discussion on proposed changes to bring Code into line with practice and Bylaw changes.

Postponed.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is April 1, 2021.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at __ pm.