AMS Advocacy Committee Meeting Minutes
January 27th, 2020 in NEST 3511

Attendance
Present: Cristina, Julia, Nevena, Anne, Rashika
Regrets: Brandon

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 6:04pm

Adoption of the Agenda

BIRT the 07 2020-01-27 Agenda of the AMS Advocacy Committee be adopted as presented

Mover: Cristina
Seconder: Nevan
Result: Passed

Land Acknowledgement

Introductions

VP AUA Update

[Julia]:
- It has been a crazy month.
- Stand with Survivors Campaign is going very well!
- Most updates to follow in discussion.

VP External Update

[Cristina]:
- Month’s focus was the federal lobby trip preparation.
- Federally - AMS is part of the URCU, I [Cristina] am the Chair.
- University Endowment Lands is creating a development plan, which is said to include Student Housing Plan.
- AMS will be sending in a submission to reinforce the availability of affordable student housing.
- Another submission was sent to the UNA (Cristina sits on the UNA Board) about our position on the proposed bylaw changes.
The proposed by-law would remove AMS from the Board. AMS sent in a submission to again reinforce the need to have a student voice at the table for affordable student housing.

Discussion

UCRU

[Cristina]:
- Reaching out to all MPs in Ottawa in preparation for federal lobby trip:
  - Hoping to meet at least 75 MPs.
- Also reaching out to different Student Union Groups.
- The focus for the trip:
  - Supporting International Students;
  - Supporting Indigenous Student;
  - Affordability;
  - Funding Undergraduate Research.
- All parties committed to different types of student affordability plans during the election: UCRU will be pushing to see them put into action.
- Fact: Highest income percentile utilize Tuition Tax Credit for education more than lower-income percentiles:
  - We want to reinforce that this tax credit should be targeted to those who need the funding most (lower-income).

[Nevena]:
- Issues with the timing of these grants (ie: need to pay out of pocket and then wait for reimbursement)

[Anne]:
- Who is part of it [UCRU]?

[Cristina]
- 9 research-intensive universities from across Canada.

[Nevena]:
- Is the same system to allocate grant funding the same for student loan funding?
- There are issues with this: can’t get a grant without applying to student loans first.

[Cristina]
- On the federal level, grants and loans are usually integrated. Clearly an issue. I will consider this with UCRU

[Rashika]:
- What about international students/research?

[Cristina]:
- Very limited funding. Don’t have a lot of data on this program (ie.: demographics). Part of our ask last year was to include an Equity and Diversity piece to the program. We want a representative group of students who access this funding. This will give a more diverse group the chance to go to graduate school. We are asking for around $35 million in new money.
[Nevena]:
- Have you considered any other barriers to accessing this funding? What are the criteria for research funding?

[Cristina]:
- Awareness of this funding is very low. We want to expand this beyond NSERC to other research councils. Need a faculty sponsor, detailed research plan...

[Nevena]
- How do we help students connect with Faculty Sponsors?

[Cristina]:
- One aspect is pushing for better communications and awareness campaigns to get faculty/research councils to reach out to students and engage with them.

[Anne]:
- Would it be linked to WorkLearn?

[Cristina]:
- No

[Cristina]:
- Funding would not be for graduate students. Important context is that there is a gap of advocacy for graduate students at the federal level. Most of UCRU has only undergraduate students as constituents. That's why our focus is on undergraduate students.

[Cristina]:
- Supporting International Students:
  - Liberals changed the system for PR to make it a clearer process, we want to push for a change in policy to allow international students to use work experience gained during their education as part of their Permanent Residency application.

[Nevena]
- Is this to include common undergrad/graduate work (ie.: WorkLearn) as part of their PR application?

[Cristina]
- Yes.

- Ask around Supporting Indigenous Students:
  - In 2017, Liberals committed $50-million to support indigenous students (a federal mandate) + a 2% cap on this funding.
  - It doesn't make sense as indigenous [enrolled in post-secondary] growth is faster than 2%. Limits access.
  - Liberals committed $300-million in the past budget.
  - UCRU will be asking for another formal injection of funding to match the estimated number AFN has put out of over $1 billion in funding needed, as well as to include indigenous students as part of the feedback loop.

**Academic Experience Survey**

[Julia]
- Per code, I’m bringing the proposed question of this year’s AES.
We need better data to know what we need to advocate on
  ○ This is why some question is “turned-off,” condensed.
We added Empower Me as the AMS Health Services question.
We added questions surrounding Career Services.
Removed questions around why the student chose to attend UBC. UBC can ask those questions.
The added question surrounding Food Insecurity.
Added a 2015 question regarding the length of commute - will help with transit and housing advocacy. Bringing it back this time.
Added a new question around what forms of student financial support are most useful - will help to better our student aid advocacy.

[Cristina]
  ● Can we condense the commute length question?

[Julia]
  ● We could, but then we wouldn’t be able to compare it to the 2015 data.
  ● Can we try to pass a motion?

[Cristina]:
  ● When is the latest this should be passed by the Advocacy Committee?
[Julia]
  ● Friday, ideally.

[Anne]
  ● Who has access to data?

[Julia]
  ● It is held by my (VP AUA) office.

[Nevena]
  ● Changing the discrimination question might change the response.

[Cristina]
  ● How to we keep track of changes question, in terms of our tracking data?
[Julia]
  ● We lose it and we have to build it back up over a few years.

Motion:

**BIRT the Academic Experience Survey draft questions are approved as presented by the AMS Advocacy Committee.**

Mover: Julia
Second: Cristina
Objections: NONE | Approve: ALL | Motion: PASSES

AMS Policy Submission on Sexual Misconduct, At-Risk Behaviour and Retaliation Policies

[Julia]
- AMS preparing the statement in response to these UBC policies.
- AMS was not consulted:
  - Not a great sign of student consultation by UBC.
- Policy 131 (Sexual Misconduct):
  - More issues include:
    - Investigations (need better language, more clarifications), disclosures (institutional disclosures, UBC can become the complainant [not survivor centric]), lack of student survivor support in the policy, UBC needs to liaise with any service that the survivor wants to work with (currently only includes SVPRO), they need to commit to having a SASC seat at the table, staff+faculty have more rights under this policy than students, need more trauma-informed training for staff.
    - Good things:
      - Immunity against residence consequences while reporting, updated definitions of consent.
  - This all happened while the SVPRO Director was on leave.
- We had a great town hall earlier this year to walk through this policy and the changes.

[Nevena]
- At-Risk Behaviour: are we looking at the language of describing at-risk behaviour to avoid creating stereotypes? Is the language being used as a surrogate to mean something else, to not allow marginalized communities to be characterized?

[Julia]
- I was not on that committee, unfortunately. Will include bias-informed training for people at the decision making table.

**Wet’suwet’en Statement**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CMRmNLAzPw1SjiYizON7KuCz5AmiTFrZsZxO5lq8wU/edit?usp=sharing

[Cristina]
- We have already consulted with the Social Justice Centre and the Indigenous Committee.
- Purpose of the statement: there’s been a number of student walkouts in support of the Wet’suwet’en community over the pushback against the LNG project.
- Premier said the project will move forward, even though the UNDRIP legislation passed a few months ago.
- The statement has been reviewed by affected groups and allies/activists, we are ready to put the statement out.
- Beyond social media, we will be emailing it out to relevant Ministers and MLAs and there is a possibility of collaboration with other student unions.

**BIRT the Advocacy Committee approves the Wet’suwet’en statement as presented.**
Moved: Cristina
Second: Nevena
Objections: NONE | Approve: ALL | Motion PASSED

Adjourned at 7:06.

Next meeting: Monday, February 3rd at 6:00 pm.
08 AMS Advocacy Committee Meeting Agenda
Monday, February 3rd, 2020. 6-7 pm. NEST 3511

Attendance
Invited: Julia, Brandon, Nevena, Nicholas, Will (AMS AVPX), Anne, Rashika
Present:
Regrets: Cristina

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm

Land Acknowledgement

Portfolio Updates
1. AMS VP External [Cristina Ilnitchi]
2. AMS VP AUA [Julia Burnham]

[Julia]
- Worked 70 hours to finish policy submissions (AMS and SASC submissions)
- We had an eventful week: meetings with VP Students, AMS/GSS/BoG Reps re: BoG Agenda.

[Nick]
- What’s the next step?

[Julia]
- SC7 - Sexual Misconduct. Committee reconvenes with all this feedback next week.
- Can’t speak to other policies as AMS is not included, it must be a similar timeline.

Discussion

Student Evaluations of Teaching

[Julia]
- Feb 12 @ 3:30
- The AMS and Center for Learning and Teaching are hosting a town hall event in regards to student evaluations of teaching.
- These are used to improve instruction and tenure/promotion assessment.
- There’s been controversy on the validity of these surveys (ie: racial biases, students’ ability to respond to questions in a useful manner).
  - Still important to keep students involved in their academic experience.
A Senate committee is looking at how these evaluations, has 14 recommendations
- Have an event to give feedback in safe space
- Walk through of these recommendations

[Nick]
- What is an example of these recommendations?

[Julia]
- Don’t know them off the top of my head.
- Mainly around how questions are framed.
  - To limit the bias of students.

[Nick]
How important are these to the tenure process? What about once they are tenured?

[Julia]
- Very very important.
- Looking at how we can change from evaluation to an open conversation on increasing quality of in-class learning
- Also reaching out to TA Union.
- No impact once the professor is tenured.

[Rashika]
- We need a change in how these are conducted. Don’t know how genuinely students complete these surveys. We should have a student body running this. This might change the response rate.

[Julia]
- Not sure if this would change feedback. AMS is not really not involved in the decision making.

**Academic Experience Survey Policy [link]**

[Julia]
- I brought the AES questions to the Executive Policy, Chris Hakim brought up the fact that we are in conflict of AMS Code
- I put forth a motion to suspend this policy to AMS Council.
- 1a) does not reflect reality
  - In practice, there is a consultation with Academic Caucus
  - We spoke about potential changes to the AES
  - Moved away [in 2017] from faculty-specific questions (to save costs and get better responses)
We should continue to avoid the faculty-specific question

4) we need to talk to the finance committee
   - This is budgeted within my office
   - Did an RFP and environment scan
   - Asking Fin Comm is inefficient when I have staff who can do it
   - However, we send in these recommendations to Fin Comm

Appendix:
   - So important to maintain consistency year-to-year to get long-term data
   - Trying to transfer over AMS specific question to the NEST Experience Survey
   - 2019 did not have discrimination survey
   - “Knowledge of fees levied by AMS” question not to be reviewed (counter-intuitive)
   - “Why did you chose UBC”
     - Should be asked by UBC, not AMS

[Nick]
How do AES and Nest Experience Surveys differ?

[Julia]
- AES is really the advocacy survey
  - UBC Experience survey data is not made public
  - So it is important that the AMS has its own data
    - Very important for VPAUA and VPX’s effort (ie.: lobbying, submissions to BoG)
- NEST Experience Survey
  - Used to be quite operational
  - Now includes experience survey questions

[Nick]
- So are we trying to bring forward changes to this policy?

[Julia]
- Ideally, yes.
- Bring changes to the policy itself, as well as updating the appendix.

[Nick]
- Can you bring back policy change suggestions on February 24th?

[Julia]
- Yes, of course.
Adjournment
The next meeting will be held Monday, February 24th, at 6:00 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:39 pm.
10 AMS Advocacy Committee Meeting Agenda
Monday March 2nd, 2020, 6:00 PM, NEST 5113

Attendance
Invited: Julia, Cristina, Brandon, Nevena, Nicholas, Anne, Rashika, Michelle (non-voting)
Present: Brandon
Regrets:

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm.

Land Acknowledgement

Approval of Minutes
BIRT the 09 2020-02-24 Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee be adopted as presented.
Mover: Cristina
Seconder: Rashika

Portfolio Updates
1. AMS VP External [Cristina Ilnitchi]
   • Met with BC Ombudsperson last week
     ○ This office is important to students and has the opportunity to benefit students
     ○ Talked about communication information regarding the BC Ombudsperson and how our office can take part in this communication
   • Preparing a Submission to the Property Submission to the Board
     ○ Looking at building off-campus housing
     ○ Conversation with UBC and City of Vancouver
     ○ Will be looking at running a student survey about living/housing decision making
     ○ Asking the City to be a partner in this
     ○ Looking at the empty block on Blanca
     ○ Trying to integrate services in this Off-Campus Student Housing Plan
   • Preparing for the Know Your Rights Workshop
   • Supporting UBC 350 in a walkout in solidarity with Wet'suwet'en Peoples
     ○ Helping cover some minimal costs
     ○ Singing on to a joint-letter with Alliance of BC Students and SFU
   • Starting social media campaign about transit #nofarenough
     ○ Regarding SkyTrain, pan to end at Arbutus


- Bringing a proposal next week

[Nevena]
  - Do you have an update on the logistics of the Housing Survey?

[Cristina]
  - The price tag is heavy
  - In conversation with stakeholders to help with the grant process (UBC, City of Vancouver, Mayor’s Council)
  - Survey development should happen this summer

2. AMS VP AUA [Julia Burnham]

[Julia]
  - Part of search committees
    - Takes up a lot of time
  - Policy 131 Review Committee
    - Meeting again
      - At last meeting, we had SASC speak to their submission, was really useful
      - Sexual Misconduct Policy - completing the community consultations and beginning the second draft
  - International Student Fee increase for iMed
    - Had a conversation with stakeholders

[Nevena]
  - Can you speak to the health coverage and reasoning for the fee increase?

[Julia]
  - iMed offer an “in-between” of health coverage before getting on to provincial plan
  - Increase the fee by $15 per month
  - Met with the GSS about this
  - Questions surrounding injuries when under the use of legal substances
    - Still waiting on some answers: but these will now be covered.
    - Comes at an additional cost

New Business

Climate Strike (April 3rd) - Michelle Marcus

[Michelle]
  - Here to bring forward draft motion regarding the April 3rd climate strike
• Here is a [link to the motion](#).
• Students across the province are mobilizing to make April 23rd the biggest strike since September.
• The focus was on university action, now will shift towards provincial/federal advocacy.
• This motion’s “Be it resolved” clauses same as the AMS’s motion in September.
• The addition would be asking VP External [and the AMS] to sign onto the demands and help in submitting and lobbying for these demands to both levels of government.
  - Demands will be finalized by Thursday.
• Demand #6 speaks to acknowledging the impact of climate change on marginalized communities and expanding the economic social safety net.

[Cristina]
• I agree with all this.
• Entire AMS Exec would be supportive.
• Chris Hakim [AMS President] is aware of this motion, he is speaking to HR for giving permission to AMS Staff to leave work on April 3rd to take part in climate strike.
  - Will not be able to include in today’s motion, but will get back to you.
• Including demands in lobbying plan.
  - We want to submit something to provincial and federal governments regarding our stance on climate strike and how it relates to ongoing lobbying work.
  - Something that would be effective would be linking each of these demands to current/future government projects (ie.: Clean BC).
  - Be as specific as possible in what we are asking them to do.

[Cristina]
• We need to have a frank conversation on how we put out statements at the Advocacy Committee and how it can be involved in the conversation.
  - Re: pipeline
• Not in this statement.

[Michelle]
• We need a clear stance, as this strike has the opposition to fossil fuel projects as the core focus.

[Cristina]
• We need to bring in stakeholders for that conversation.

[Julia]
• We need diverse points of view in this conversation.
• How can we best use this committee to prepare for the opposition at AMS Council?

[Cristina]
• Pipeline discussion needs to go in tandem with this motion.
• We’ve already failed twice at reaching a consensus here on this issue.
[Michelle]
  • The difference here is groups backing these demands, not one person

[Nevena]
  • If these demands are accepted, the AMS needs to be clear on its stance.

[Cristina]
  • Michelle always does a great job of arguing for keeping fossil fuels in the ground.

[Nick]
  • Let’s have a conversation on the pipeline on March 15th

[Cristina]
  • I’ll reach out to stakeholders and put together materials for the committee.

[Cristina]
  • For March 11th Council Meeting, a joint presentation on what the AMS Support could look like
    ◦ How can AMS put this into action?
  • For March 25th: a formal motion could be presented to council

[Michele]
  • But if only voting on the 25th on formal motion, that gives us little time to prepare for the strike

[Cristina]
  • Give consultation presentation to Council on 11th, then.
  • Action items for VP X Office:
    ◦ Staring backend work
    ◦ Presenting to council on xx
    ◦ Stakeholder consultation and motion on 16th

**Adjournment**
Next meeting will be held Monday, March 9th.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:58pm.
11 2020-03-09 AMS Advocacy Committee Meeting Agenda
Monday March 9th, 2020, 6:00 PM, NEST 5113

Attendance
Invited: Julia, Cristina, Brandon, Nevena, Nicholas, Anne, Rashika, Michelle
(non-voting)
Present:
Regrets: Anne

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 6:03

Land Acknowledgement

Approval of Minutes

Portfolio Updates

1. AMS VP External [Cristina Ilnitchi]
   a. Participated in the Equity Enhancement Fund adjudication
      i. Up to $2,500 for equity projects on campus
   b. Finalizing the Equity Plan, creating JD for a student staff position to implement work
      i. Will send to Advo Comm next week so that the committee can see the finalized document
      ii. Will meet with stakeholders this week to get external feedback from key groups on campus (social justice groups, marginalized communities)
   c. Continuing conversations with UNA on bylaw changes to remove AMS from Board
      i. They sent us the final offer
      ii. Will be reviewed and approved at next UNA Board Meeting
      iii. We need to see representation and governance changes to see AMS, students and renters within the UNA
   d. Knowing Your Rights as a Protester event happened last week, considering a second event
      i. Came to life following advocacy from indigenous students and push from the Advocacy Committee
      ii. About 25 students came out - we want to increase this turnout next time
      iii. Considering a second event with a student panel, community advocates and activism leaders on campus
   e. Many AMS executives and student staff participated in UBC walkout for Wet’suwet’en
i. Sent in number of submissions to government and a letter of support to the Wet'suwet'en
f. Beginning transition with new VPX
  g. Planning for last lobby trip to Victoria, talking to Indigenous Committee this week about advocacy collab, feedback on BC Access Grant (upfront, needs-based grants)
  h. Prepping for end of March start to #notfarenough Skytrain to UBC campaign
    i. Presenting to Advocacy Committee on this soon (what this will look like and how this will work long-term)
    i. Prepping submission from AMS to UBC BoG Property Committee to formally look into building off-campus student housing

[Nevena]
  • BC Access grants - in our previous conversation, we were considering how to include students who may not want to apply for loans in accessing grant funding. Where do we stand on this?

[Cristina]
  • That was for our federal lobby asks.
  • We were told that the government wanted to maintain consistent infrastructure to reduce barriers to how students access to grants which currently requires students to apply for loans to be considered
  • Advocating for equity grants on provincial level (would not require applying to loans) as well as looking into other opportunities for debt-averse students

[Rashika]
  • Can you elaborate on the Not Far Enough Skytrain Campaign?

[Cristina]
  • We ran a small campaign similar to this last year
    ▪ Meant to educate and revive media attention to this project
  • This campaign will be to educate folks about:
    ▪ Fact: current plan for Sky Train will end at Arbutus
    ▪ Students will face problems getting from Arbutus to UBC
  • Asking for clear commitment from levels of government for business case to progress the Sky Train to UBC
    ▪ We need this funding to be infused by federal government - without it, the project will be delayed

[Nick]
  • When do you plan on bringing this to the committee?

[Cristina]
  • In two weeks.
2. AMS VP AUA [Julia Burnham]
   a. Special election timeline has been set for VPAUA role. Spending a lot of time this week/last week meeting with people who have questions/could be interested.
   b. AES still ongoing, reached 2000 survey completed as of today and we have a few more email blasts from constituencies planned. Need 3000 to meet our goal.
   c. Participated in adjudication for the Provost’s Education Renewal fund
      i. One time funding under Strategic Plan
      ii. Looking at ways to enhance programs - grad students were emphasized
   d. Met with CTLT to discuss plans for Open Champions 2020
   e. AVPAA + VP search committee meeting
   f. Met with Associate Deans Academic to chat emergency strategies to complete the term if campus needs to close down/go online due to COVID-19
      i. Adjusting syllabi, academic concessions, online exams....
      ii. Classes and professors re-equipped to complete their courses
      iii. UBC is being very proactive
   g. Able to fund honorariums for Indigenous speakers at the walk-out last week!

[Nevena]
   • Tell us more about the Education Renewal Fund, especially grad students

[Julia]
   • Looking at different MA and Doctoral degrees
     ○ How we can change these up to make them better
   • Not so much academic/research, but professional readiness

[Nevena]
   • Being seeing a lot of talk about preparing the student for careers instead of the academic route.

New Business

Update on Climate Strike support - Cristina

[Cristina]
   • Spoke to AMS HR and Manager about giving staff time off to go participate
     ○ The same thing as last year - sending out an internal memo to employees, supervisors will accommodate this time off
     ○ Sending this out this week
   • Spoke to AMS Communications Manager
     ○ Prepared to create digital content to promote the strike + UBC 350 communication
   • Please read over the document from Michelle re: UBC 350 demands from the strike
[Nick]
  • What groups have you invited? How are we planning on making this meeting an outcome driven meeting?

[Cristina]
  • EUS, Indigenous Committee, UBC 350
  • We want an outcome decision meeting
  • We want the Council to endorse the outcome
  • So many different advocacy situations we want flexibility outcomes (up to VPX and Executive)

[Brandon]
  • What about UBC Social Justice Centre?

[Cristina]
  • Yes, we can invite them as well.

AMS Advocacy Goals - Cristina

[Cristina]
  • Two parts to this:
    ○ Advocacy Committee Goals
    ○ Long-term External Advocacy
  • Long-term External Advocacy
    ○ VPX works on a long-term timeline for advocacy to achieve goals
    ○ We need consistency year-to-year to achieve goals
    ○ I've picked up a few things in two years as VPX that need continuity
  • Four main topics:
    ○ Federal Advocacy Gap
      ■ Mainly graduate students (not included in UCRU)
    ○ Outline/Standards for Consultation
    ○ Work with Indigenous Committee on Advocacy
      ■ Creating a timeline for advocacy for the next year
        • Action items, meaningful consultation with the Indigenous Committee
    ○ Advocacy Timeline

[Nevena]
  • I like timelines. We should get one at the start of each term.
[Julia]
- Need one for VPAUA as well.

[Nevane]
- Acronyms: would love some more context!

[Nick]
- Looking at the goals now (we need better transition for Chairs!), three of five goals are policy-based. With the lack of AMS Policy Advisor, we can hit the other two goals. I will make sure this happens.

[Cristina]
- I will keep to the Advocacy Committee updated on a possible draft partnership (MOU) with the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations
  - They have much more influence in Ottawa
  - Would be a win for UCRU (more influence, esp grad students) and a win for CASA (200,000+ new students under their wing)

Adjournment
Next meeting will be held Monday, March 15th.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm
AMS Advocacy Committee Meeting Agenda
[June 9th, 2020] [2:00PM PST] on Zoom https://zoom.us/j/99848447126

Attendance
Invited: Clara, Emma, Georgia, Joshua, Kalith, Mitchell, Saad, Morgan, Nevana, Shivani, Matthew
Present:
Regrets:

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 2:04pm

Land Acknowledgement

Approval of Minutes

BIRT the 01 2020-05-26 Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee be adopted as presented

Mover: Emma
Seconder: Kalith

Chair’s Remarks
1. Introductions
2. Re-election of Vice-Chair

BIRT Mitchell Prost is nominated as Vice Chair as of Jun 9.
Unanimously approved.

Action Item Recap
1. Committee Year Goals
Clara: Provincial Elections - Raising awareness and education
Nevana: This is something they did for federal elections. Clarification of when this would take place?
Clara: This would happen 2021.
Kalith: This would take place for next year, but we can help support next year’s VP External.
Mathew: Anti-racism work and making sure that council is not an echo chamber.
Mitchell: Continuing last year’s committee goals.
Mathew: Helping other groups that are trying to do advocacy work
Clara: Wanted to clarify about October 16th - but there are lots of signs that it might come early with the new election cycle (might be in the Spring.)
Kalith: Setting out a grassroots plan and see what would be able to be accomplished. From meeting with the Ministry of Advanced Education, they’re not expecting an election until October 2021.
2. **JustRecovery Principles**

Emma: They are good principles and cover all the bases of recovery from COVID-19. We should think about how we should be supporting student recovery from COVID - we should endorse these.

Joshua: They are great principles and we should stand by it when strategizing our advocacy plans. Planning to hold a Climate Change talks - inviting the climate change talks and consultation groups.

Mitchell: agree with the five statements - they are excellent. In terms of what we could do, release a statement.

Clara: Spent weekend on strategy retreat for JustRecovery. This is just the baseline of the core values, this may become a larger campaign. This is how we can incorporate them into our Advocacy Strategy and how we approach the university.

Emma: There's been a lot of talk of the effectiveness of committee - look at goals that we set as a committee. This is how our goal matches with - see if we're missing any of those principles within our goals.

Georgia: definitely think we should tie in the actionables - a statement is a great first step.

Matthew: hold politicians accountable for violence against Indigenous peoples. Make sure that Governments are working on these Principles. Keep them accountable.

Joshua: Two goals - have committee working on 1. Elections 2. JustRecovery principles + Actionables.

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**Portfolio Updates**

1. **AMS VP External [Kalith]**

Kalith: Working on Upass. Recent data from the survey sees 60% of the students are using transit. 40% don’t have access to transit. 2 options, UPass back in motion if Translink accepts the VPX office’s notice. If only get Upass back for August, is it worth it? Setting up subsidy for August and July Upass. Half a million dollars a month - it’s very expensive. Looking at over the summer. Working with the provincial government on UPass. Spoke with MAE - went over advocacy goals and finalizing Budget Consultation. SVPMA - Bill 23 - Sexual Misconduct Act. Dealing with UNA - making sure that we’re getting designated student seats. Had a meeting with Michael White and Robin Ciceri.

Nevena: OER - Twittersphere - considerations of anti-racism and taking the white perspective out of our. Push to take whiteness and make sure black representation in school - professors online. Pushing my own professors and pushing my own faculty to take a stance and encourage this.

Kalith: Looking at it mostly from a funding perspective. How those OERs are used - falling under Georgia’s portfolio.

Georgia:

2. **AMS VP AUA [Georgia]**

Georgia: Student-faced initiative regarding racism in consultation with the appropriate groups and offices. Working on whole bunch of submissions to the BoG. Policy SC 17 got approved by people community international committee Will get approval on June 16th. The creation of the implementation committee, VP students and VP resources will take charge on it. Will allow us to take next steps forward and addressing current policy gaps. We prepared submissions on proper student consultations and the Covid-19 plan. Ensure funding for student priorities.
Spicy thing we are working on; tuition increase rate reduction. Currently at 2% as a cap for domestic students and for international students 2-5% annually. CPI rose to 0.9%, down from 2.8% from last year. Higher Education Price Index went down as well. The inflation rate has gone down so that our argument is that in light of a financial crisis, students are organizing petitions to ask for refund tuition or parts of tuition or lower the overall cost. Trying to balance it since the university as well is going through a financial crunch. Decrease the tuition increase. Lower it to 0.9% in light of the inflation decrease. Create report that is accessible to students to show what the budget will look like after modifications made to tuition increase rate. Big win is allocating money to digital meal fund.

Emma: How long is the survey open for?
Georgia: for almost a months.

Emma: Another question: associate of EDI in the prez’s office, in the Faculty of AS we have an associate dean for equity and inclusion. Is it possible for other faculties to have this position?

Georgia:

Discussion

1. Discussion of Executives’ Goals
2. Climate Change Consultation Talk

Emma: What will be the intention?
Joshua: Discussing what AMS stance will be. This has been in the works in 2018.
Emma: Hard to have a consultative talk because it will be very echo chambery. Having a consultation discussion with the groups we have on campus is prone to agreeing a lot with each other with only parts of the issue. Advocate for the whole issue. As the AMS working with the JustRecovery principles - actionable for the AMS.
Joshua: Having the conversation is important to hear different opinions.
Clara: I hear what you’re saying - it’s not as simple as the fossil fuel industry has to end immediately. This could be a repeat of conversations and may not be. Figure out where students - as we look towards the green transitions of the oil industry.
Georgia: Having a consultation talk is to capture the wide perspectives of the student body and figure how to frame an open space discussion. Instead of an echo chamber, they’re free to express their opinion. Climate emergency dialogues have just resulted in agreements in the past. Draw upon the framework of climate emergency dialogues and tweak it to find how to involve those who might have hesitation and differing perspectives to feel safe and speak their mind.
Nevena: Historical perspective was that we can bring those perspectives to the table, we had very similar perspectives - would be able to have full range. We need to take some time to think about how we are approaching this. Plan it out and to look at understanding and respect diversity of opinions and to come up with tangible actions and understanding.
Mathew: Generally, original question was not having it in two weeks and not having a lot of visibility on the issue was concerning, concern about it becoming an echo chamber. For those in Alberta its important that it’s talked about, there are similar sentiments as before - it should be postponed to make sure consultation does not become an echo chamber.
Emma: Not opposed to having a consultation talk, there are people on campus with many opinions and its important to talk to each other, thinks there are a lot more groups on campus that would be on one side of the issue, difficult to find campus groups on the other
side. There are people in engineering working in relevant industries that would be more than willing to discuss this topic, but she doesn’t want to set us up to be engineers against the world. Thinks if we do want to have a consultation talk, don’t just include campus groups – include other groups. There are student organizations about pipelines (petroleum engineering chapters, sustainable engineering groups around Canada). Could focus on more as a committee in rather than saying “what do you believe about climate change” say “how can we responsibly use natural resources,” the industry contribute 10% of Canad’s GDP → change thought to how can these resources be responsibly used and incorporated into engineering classes, AMS thoughts. Set students up in their studies and thought. Clara: Thinks it’s important to include groups on campus who are not officially registered to get perspectives for meaningful consultation. Ultimately about what is important for students realities and futures. Does not agree on framing it around just natural resources. A more general question is “How can we as the AMS advocate more effectively advocate for students on climate change.” Emma: I agree, not always about the natural resources industry. There are many jobs (over 100,000) surrounding the energy sector. Make sure we discuss many facets. Joshua: General idea of what is being said is that we need more discussion before we can launch a consultation with the committee and stakeholders. He will make a folder and action item to better prepare.

3. Statement on Anti-Asian Hate Crimes
Joshua: 8x increase in anti-asian hate crimes in Vancouver. Not meant to detract from current racial issues. Call for stronger measures to be done and work on advocacy campaigns for students on how to be anti-racist. Kalith: Thinks it’s great, knows that asian folks are victimised especially amongst the pandemic. However, putting out a statement now might take some attention away from the BLM movement. Start preparing right now and doing our work, speaking with politicians and government officials on a daily basis. Can release a statement in a couple weeks, thinking of this from a PR perspective. Definitely think we can start work on releasing a statement and other actionables - releasing a statement should be postponed. Do something first, then release a statement.
Joshua: Releasing a statement right now might not be positively received and seen as diminishing the BLM movement and other indigenous work being done around Canada. Mathew: Concerned that it might detract from the situation going on in Hong Kong. Talked to a lot of students from Hong Kong, not happy that UBC has not said anything about that. Feels like we must keep in mind that a statement on anti-racist statement does not detract from what is going on in Hong Kong. Joshua: Felt that it was disappointing how long it took to see the university to release a statement after the first anti-asian act in February. Wants to talk about this more in the next meeting. Clara: Wanted to echo Kalith’s point that putting out a statement now might not be best, but also want to have the AMS do work on anti-racism. Wants to provide statements in a couple weeks on what the AMS is doing.

4. UPass Suspension
Joshua: Will be discussed next week as Kalith wanted to talk about this.
New Business

Actions Items:
  ● Go through the documents.
  ● Climate change consultation talk.
    ○ More thought on logistics.
    ○ Ideal to have before the summer ends.
  ● Work on Committee year goals
    ○ Just Recovery Principles
    ○ Provincial Election strategy

Adjournment

Next meeting will be held on June 23, 2020 at 2:00pm PST.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:21pm PST.
AMS Advocacy Committee Meeting Agenda
[June 23rd, 2020] [2:00PM PST] on Zoom
https://zoom.us/j/99848447126

Attendance
Invited: Clara, Emma, Georgia, Joshua, Kalith, Mitchell, Saad, Morgan, Nevena (left
at 3:00), Shivani
Present:
Regrets: Mitchell

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 2:05PM

Land Acknowledgement

Approval of Minutes

BIRT the 02 2020-06-09 Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee be adopted
as presented

Mover: Kalith
Seconder: Nevena

Chair’s Remarks
1. Introductions
2. Committee Goals + Climate Change Consultation Talk Plan

Portfolio Updates
1. AMS VP External [Kalith]
Kalith: Not much has changed. Finalized the goals and BC budget submission due on the 26th,
will be handing in on the 25th. Saad and Kalith will be recording the budget submission video
today. Transitioned to relationship building with federal level now. Appointing meetings with
different federal ministries. Equity-based grants work started.

Saad: Equity-based grants’ problem is that it lacks research in a global context. Designed by
Will Sheiling. Equity-based grants for provincial gov’t to establish for marginalized
communities in post-secondary education. Partnering up with AMS resource groups for a pilot
program to lobby the provincial government. This pilot program would be a part of supporting
a certain number of students with post-secondary education and will continue to next year’s
portfolio. Also, advocating for race-based data to the federal gov’t.

Kalith: UAC has started to meet. UCRU chair was elected and Kalith running for chair of
governance committee. Housing advocacy is being worked on and is talking to UBC VP Admin.
Working on UPass subsidy program budgeted at around $1 million. Relationship building with both the government and opposition parties.

2. AMS VP AUA [Georgia]

Georgia: Athletics and rec fee waived for 2020-21 year. Roadblock is that UBC IT system is old. Can't generate revenue through concerts, etc and need to meet operation costs. The fee is being deferred for the second term, it will be assessed based on credits being taken.

AMS Fee has been waived as well.
We are renewing empowerme in the fall as its last year is coming to an end - consistent mental health services (here2talk) provincial COVID 19 survey will close on the 28th
AES report in the next few weeks
Guiding principles for fall 2020 published on the keepteaching website → working with Kieran Forde to make a student-facing version to know what to expect
Michael Korenberg (former Board Chair) has resigned due to questionable tweets endorsing racist values - we are navigating how to proceed with the interim board chair.
What does this mean for our advocacy going forward?

Clara: Keep Learning website is not as engaging as they think - maybe use Canvas?
Georgia: the Athletics and Rec fee from UBC is still being charged in the W2 even though there is a lack of accessibility for students being able to go the gyms. Yet we still need to endorse health and wellness programs. Current IT system → can change all or nothing for the athletics fee. Students will not have to pay until the second term but they will be assessed the full year in the second term. We are advocating for refunds for W1 to get a refund. It will not be possible to completely zero this - W2 they will be charged at the full amount. It will be credit based → they are planning on opening the pool and birdcoop in reduced capacity. Until we figure out a solution, students won't have to pay.

Emma: what is the difference between AMS athletics fee and UBC rec fee?

Georgia: The AMS fee is 21$ and makes up 1 mill for the athletics and fee 232$ for full Rec Fee. They are relying on their expected fee to maintain operational costs due to the lack of concerts and events.

Emma: so it pays for facilities and staff? I see. I am sure the engineering executives will ask about this.

Georgia: we are currently looking at ways to reduce the athletics and rec fee.

Nevena; so they would have to do the reimbursement individually? I see.

Josh: Is there still an advocacy thing going on with the UNA?
Kalith: 2 weeks ago, we have worked with UBC to find a mediator - I can’t talk about it because everything is confidential. I will let you know as soon as I can ensure that student representation stays within the UNA.

Discussion

1. UPass Suspension

Kalith: We are setting up a subsidy to provide support depending on the application and need of the student. We don’t know what’s going to happen exactly but we have to work with UPass because the contract is constraining without a lot of loopholes.

2. Climate Change Consultation Talk + Statement on JustRecovery Principles

Josh: EUS clubs and organizations. Clara has been making changes on it but everyone needs to work on it. There is a google form being used if the AMS is publicly planning on endorsing principles. Please let me know if you are planning?

Kalith: Tomorrow morning we are having a meeting with Cole to learn more about the endorsement process

Joshua: it might be better to endorse the
ACTION ITEM: we can bring this up to the AVP sustainability - KALITH

*** Shivani, our note-taker had to leave for another meeting so the transcript is missing for the second half of our meeting. Apologies for the inconvenience, but here is a summary of what happened ***

Joshua, Kalith, and Georgia are working on a statement to accompany the committee motion endorsing the JustRecovery principles that will be sent to the council soon.

Climate Change Consultation Talk plan will be continuously worked upon.

3. Campaign for Anti-Racism

Various ideas were discussed. Joshua, the chair, will be contacting Niki and Eric for a potential social media campaign to promote anti-racism educational resources that will be published on the AMS website for students to access.

4. Academic Freedom

Georgia brought up a statement that she’s been working on regarding academic freedom, freedom of speech, and what the university should do to create a respectful environment. There were discussions of what occurred during the recent BoG meeting regarding freedom of speech and academic freedom and what the university should do to actively participate in a movement to combat racism after their recent pledge.
New Business

Adjournment
Next meeting will be held ---

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:18
AMS Advocacy Committee Meeting Agenda
[July 7th, 2020] [2:00PM PST] on Zoom https://zoom.us/j/99848447126

Attendance
Invited: Clara (resigned), Emma, Georgia, Joshua, Kalith, Mitchell, Saad, Morgan, Nevena, Shivani
Present: Saad, Joshua, Kalith (left at 2:30pm), Shivani (proxy for Georgia), Mitchell, Georgia (joined at 2:30pm)
Regrets: Emma (not notified), Nevena (not notified).

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 2:05pm PST.

Land Acknowledgement

Chair’s Remarks
1. Introductions
   a. Change in lecture times with the new term, 1 minute speaking times per member.
   b. Proctorio letter from Georgia.
   c. Emailing documents for anti-racism to be uploaded to the AMS website.
   d. Working with AVP Sustainability RE climate action.
2. June 23rd Meeting Minutes
3. Committee seat vacancy
   a. Clara had to resign.

Portfolio Updates
1. AMS VP External [Kalith]
   a. UNA mediating meeting.
      i. Successful in coming to an agreement with the UNA - 6 main points that will be enacted once the three board of directors approve it (UNA board, AMS council, UBC BOG).
      ii. Six points:
         1. The AMS has the right to appoint an ex-officio member to the UNA board of directors.
         2. The constitution of the UNA be amended to include a statement about the importance of students.
         3. If a student runs to be elected on the UNA board and needs to resign, the AMS can recommend a replacement. The UNA can ignore this recommendation, but still must appoint a student.
         4. AMS has the right to appoint a student to participate in any of the committees and working groups of the UNA, except the finance committee.
5. The UNA and the AMS are collaboratively working together to create a committee that will advise the AMS and UNA BoD on any matters relating to students.

6. None of these points are in effect until all three boards approve this.

iii. Joshua: So students cannot vote?

iv. Kalith: Students can still run for a normal term and have voting power, but the AMS can appoint an ex-officio member.

b. Transit subsidy form goes live tomorrow (July 8, 2020).

c. New individual on the VPX team, Maya (sp?).

d. Meeting with John Horgan today (July 7, 2020).

2. AMS VP AUA [Georgia]

a. SC17 implementation meeting occurring today (July 7, 2020).

b. Student well-being fund, focusing on three areas:
   i. Meal donation program.
   ii. Training for community mental health.
   iii. Naloxone kits available for students.

c. Proctorio:
   i. Invigilation service.
   ii. Open letter going out today (July 7, 2020).
   iii. AUA Office is meeting with academic leaders.
   iv. UBC administration has said they are not terminating use of Proctorio.
   v. AUA Office is leveraging incident with Proctorio CEO over reddit - not privacy issue, but unprofessional. We cannot make a FIPPA claim over this.
   vi. There is a letter from the administration on the keeplearning website.
   vii. AUA Office is trying to create a student-facing version of this letter to increase awareness:
       1. Open letter signed by all VP Academics.
       2. Student-facing version of the guiding principles for increased student awareness.

d. COVID-19 Survey:
   i. Over 6000 responses.
   ii. Currently going through the data.
   iii. Creating a holistic presentation on reports to council.
   iv. Creating an executive report.
   v. Faculty-specific data to be sent to the academic deans to better serve their students.

e. AES report.

f. Two new additions:
   i. Chloe Andres - Policy and Research.
   ii. Hannah Edwards - Campaign and Events.

g. UBC naming Taiwan as a province of China.
   i. Georgia is working on this.
ii. Kalith: UBC released a statement that UBC was following the ISO procedures. Georgia is working on releasing a statement, not directly on this issue, but more on what the AMS’ stance is on issues like this.

**Discussion**

1. Proctorio  
2. Climate Change Consultation Talk  
3. Statement on JustRecovery Principles

**Joshua:** We will delay the discussion to the next meeting due to missing members.  
**Kalith:** We brought goals to the committee and asked for feedback, there was no feedback. There was feedback from the council. Having to work on the goals again delayed work that needed to be done. No one has given feedback on the updated goals yet, is looking forward to new feedback.  
**Saad:** Important that Advocomm gives feedback on these confidential documents. Advocomm must give feedback before these before they are presented to the council. Wants the chair to address this with the Advocomm committee members.  
**Joshua:** Will bring this up in the next email to be sent out to committee members.

**New Business**

**Adjournment**

Next meeting will be held July 21, 2020.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:29pm PST.
AMS Advocacy Committee Meeting Agenda
[August 4th, 2020] [2:00PM PST] on Zoom
https://zoom.us/j/99848447126

Attendance
Invited: Emma, Georgia, Joshua, Kalith, Laura, Mitchell, Saad, Morgan, Nevena, Shivani
Present: Joshua, Saad, Shivani, Emma, Mitchell, Georgia, Nevena, Laura
Regrets: Kalith

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 2:06 PM PST.

Land Acknowledgement

Approval of Minutes

BIRT the 05 2020-07-21 Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee be adopted as presented

Mover: Saad.
Seconder: Nevena.

Chair's Remarks

Joshua: Uploaded policy I-11 for review.

Portfolio Updates

1. AMS VP External [Kalith]
   a. Housing:
      i. Finally establishing goals with working group with Student Housing
      ii. Kalith is attending the UNA board meeting tonight.
   b. UPass:
      i. Still in talks if UAC will reinstate it.
      ii. Don't know what the fall will look like.
      iii. Current thought is the Upass suspension will not be in place after August 31st.
   c. Mental health:
      i. Creating research projects and working with theHere to Talk app.
      ii. Increased consultation with students.
   d. Federal advocacy
      i. Creating proposal to allow international students to experience entrepreneurial opportunities.
e. Equity based grants:
   i. Campaign for individual consultations.
   ii. Working to secure funding for individual consultation
   iii. Working with AVP Equity and Inclusion.
   iv. Working with SEEDs for equity based grants.

f. SVP Advocacy:
   i. Finishing research project in terms of discrepancies of SVP policy and will be submitted to the Attorney General’s office

g. Indigenous student support:
   i. First meeting with the Indigenous committee tomorrow (August 6, 2020).
   ii. Wants to establish relationships and goals that they can work on in advocacy at a provincial and federal level.
   iii. Saad: meets Thursday at 1:00pm.

h. Joshua: Is the VP External office doing work on interest rates?
   i. Saad: Working on signing onto the knockout interest rates campaign. A member from our office will reach out and work on advocating at a federal level. We have been proactive, but want to work with the BCSF on that. In terms of student loan repayment freeze extension, currently discussing with other student unions. This will be included in the submission. Such high unemployment rates are reason enough for extension.

2. AMS VP AUA [Georgia]
   a. Lots of conversations around systemic racism:
      i. Working on projects around connecting the different networks and people who will be champions of equity and diversity in different faculties.
      ii. Having comprehensive training and resources - reaching out to the Faculty Association to address equity topics keeping in mind academic freedom.
      iii. Current certifications are Privacy Matters and the Preventing Workplace Bullying and Harassment - work to create new resources.

b. Culturally appropriate mental health resources:
   i. Limitation is the current deficit.

c. Met regarding the Vancouver Scheduling Steering Committee:
   i. Looking at the different models on how we can reshape scheduling aspects to accommodate commuter students, students with disabilities crossing campus, and more.

d. Having more conversations about physical and digital food hubs on campus:
   i. Commissioned some research out of the food security initiative.

e. COVID-19 survey and the AES:
   i. Will bring the AES to the Advocacy committee in two weeks.
   ii. Benchmarking different recommendations from the AES from last year.

f. Anti-Racism Campaign review.

g. Climate Emergency working groups:
i. The recommendations for all the Climate Emergency working groups have been in progress.

ii. All at different levels, working on divestments and investment, teaching and learning, and more.

iii. Hoping to not just get low hanging fruit, but pushing for innovation and more radical change.

h. Nevena: talking previously about accessibility, saw the BC Govn’t is providing 2 million to support students with mental health and disabilities. Do you have any information around that?
   i. Georgia: Students need to be involved in the administration of those funds. I can reach out to Janet Mee to see if UBC will be a stakeholder in how these funds are administered. I will also check in with the GSS.

i. Joshua: Can you upload the two documents in the Zoom chat to the Google Drive so committee members can access them?
   i. Georgia: Yes.

j. Joshua: What exactly does Culturally Appropriate Mental health Resources mean? How diverse are they?
   i. Georgia: there are very few Black and Indigenous counsellors at UBC, and it’s difficult to explain where racial trauma comes from. You may find yourself trying to explain it, but if you have someone who already understands the racial trauma, it removes the barriers to accessing the culturally appropriate resources. Would include cluster hires of counsellors, which is included in Dr. Carry’s new health plan presented to the BOG in February. Gaining information on who provides training to the counsellors at UBC on Equity and Inclusion. Cluster hiring for people who speak more languages. Generally needs to be around more diversity and increasing the quality of the training, so that 1) the training be comprehensive, and 2) the training will be properly resourced.

k. Laura: Chinese students are feeling the burden of counselling due to lack of diversity, and there is one Indigenous Counselor with a two month waiting list.
   i. Georgia: Would be very interested in learning more about this.
   ii. Nevena: Do you mean that Chinese students are not accessing counsellors? What is the barrier?
   iii. Laura: Could be language, could be cultural. It just goes to show the lack of diversity.

l. Georgia: Heads up that the Ubyssey wants to do an article on the AMS’s endorsement of the Just Recovery principles.

Discussion

1. VP Students Communication Audit/Strategy
   a. Georgia: VPS office is looking to overhaul some of their communications and present what are some of the things you like about the VPS communications, what are some things you do not like. Help make the university communicate better. What are some things you like about it?
b. **Nevena**: Can you give an update on what the VPS currently does to communicate with students?

c. **Georgia**: I have a list: students.ubc.ca, ubc.ca, @ubc_studentlife instagram, VPS website, email communication from VPS, Athletics and Rec, UBC Life Blog, many more. What are some of the ways that they ways that the VPS communicates well and/or can be improved.

d. **Saad**: Thinks the emails that students receive are good - need to improve ensuring that emails don’t go into the spam. Length is important, we don’t want super long emails.

e. **Nevena**: If I am looking for something, I will go to specific websites. Email is the best way to get information to me - don’t follow UBC’s social media. Emails need to be short and concise.

f. **Joshua**: Tried to contact the UBC Student’s instagram account, but they didn’t read the message. Contacting VPS was hard.

g. **Nevena**: When I was looking for help to talk to someone without submitting a ticket, their website made it challenging. Even a phone number would be helpful. The grad student website could be fancier.

h. **Mitchell**: Listening sessions run by the VPS were very helpful, but communication to student staff has been very lacking, leaving a lot of students in the dark.

i. **Nevena**: Additionally, the communication has been largely focused on the undergraduate student population.

j. **Shivani**: RAs, CAs, Jumpstart Leaders, etc. were all in the dark regarding communication.

2. **Zoom & HK + Panel talk suggestions**

   a. **Georgia**: Hoping to put together an interview panel with various students in countries where they may face persecution, especially in the academic context. Recently heard about students in the Middle East facing political persecution for using dating apps, particularly members of the LGBTQ2S+ community. Brought this up with Santa Ono, there are limitations to what UBC’s actual advocacy powers are. How do we take those proactive measures? Alibaba started creating an online portal for students to access class resources. Also looking at policy SC-12 that is up for review. There will also likely be policy review and prioritization this year in terms of ranking BOG policies. If anyone has people they would like to recommend to be interviewed, let us know.

   b. **Joshua**: Will it be anonymous?

   c. **Georgia**: Yes, in all cases, people can maintain anonymity.

   d. **Joshua**: How will people be recruited?

   e. **Georgia**: Probably not an email. Reaching out to students. If they would like to be interviewed, it will be on a work-of-mouth basis to ensure there is adequate vetting of these kinds of panelists.

3. **Anti-Racism Campaign review**
a. **Joshua**: I provided a list of resources for review. Ideally, there will be a tab on the AMS website with resources etc.
b. **Laura**: Should there be a section on Religious racism?
c. **Joshua**: Sure, if you have any other resources, let me know. Was there any feedback?
d. **Nevena**: I liked how you identified Canadian resources. I would stress it being Canadian focused. I like that it is focused on specific groups. I would want to prioritize things that can be quickly viewed, because sometimes when you are providing people with information and asking them to dive into really hard subjects on their own, it can be a lot. Like videos that are easy to digest to help the learning process. Would like to see resources that apply to healthcare students. Could there be specific resources for racism in specific industries.
e. **Shivani**: Likes that idea, it is going to be quite a big project. What would be cool along with the idea of having a highlight provided by each faculty specified in their specific industries.
f. **Nevena**: Feminists Deliver did stuff on racism in Canada - a panel that was recorded talking about racisms and history. Perhaps some resources and even the recording may be helpful.
g. **Joshua**: Can definitely look into their website.

4. August Provincial Government Submission
   a. **Saad**: Our submissions are going to be split between COVID-19 advocacy and year-long advocacy. Wanted some ideas on provincial recovery. Following the provincial gov’t promise to collect race-based data. What are some ways we could support students through the pandemic and through a second wave. One category is student employment - talks of establishing a wage subsidiary.
   b. **Laura**: Like the CERB but for students who volunteer. This one is classist, assuming that students have nothing to do but volunteer. I believe that we should talk to the gov’t about it.
   c. **Nevena**: Could we move money addressing student unemployment away from volunteer work and to actually finding employment for students?
   d. **Saad**: The CERB will be ending soon. When we talked to Minister Murray’s office, she said that this was a way for students to increase their disposable income in the midst of the pandemic.
   e. **Laura**: Also, they’re encouraging people to volunteer during a pandemic.
   f. **Nevena**: Believes that any money being put towards volunteering should be moved to actually solving unemployment. Make sure that money is redirected towards that. Addressing the privilege not all have in volunteering during the pandemic and moving money to supporting student employment.
   g. **Saad**: We need to work on promoting the hiring of Black and Indigenous people of colour.
   h. **Nevena**: If people of colour are more likely to work in these jobs and work on the front lines, we need to look at this. Also look into technology needed.
i. **Saad**: Brought this up with the provincial gov’t, people in rural areas that have limited access to the internet, how do they work when more than half of work is online? These are issues that need to be addressed.

j. **Nevena**: What exactly are the issues you were already tackling?

k. **Saad**: Race based-data should have already been happening, sexual violence prevention, and student unemployment. We are looking for a fourth topic.

l. **Laura**: Is the SVP on campus?

m. **Saad**: It is with the provincial gov’t. Post-secondary institutions have a huge discrepancy between their SVP policies. Some institutions have minimal provisions. Our end goal is that the bill has minimum standards for all schools. The research project outlines what is necessary.

n. **Nevena**: Affordable housing for students, helping with financial issues for students. A number of people who are living in tent cities were putting together a lawsuit against the city to provide long-term housing and to not evict them. I’m wondering if there is a long-term strategy around housing.

o. **Saad**: It’s sometimes hard for students to get employed out of UBC. We want the housing working group as a precedent, so that next year’s exec team can create recommendations to the gov’t. The provincial gov’t is not going to intervene in a post-secondary institution’s internal affairs. Create separate legislation on housing.

p. **Mitchell**: I read somewhere that the eviction freeze didn’t apply to student housing?

q. **Saad**: the housing support was not for post-secondary housing. The RTA and eviction freeze is unclear for student housing. Will be something we bring up with Andrew Parr and the Attorney General.

**New Business**

**Adjournment**
Next meeting will be held August 18, 2020.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:33 PM PST.
AMS Advocacy Committee Meeting Agenda
[August 18th, 2020] [2:00PM PST] on Zoom
https://zoom.us/j/99848447126

Attendance
Invited: Emma, Georgia, Joshua, Kalith, Laura, Saad, Morgan, Nevena, Shivani
Present: Georgia, Joshua, Kalith, Laura, Saad, Nevena
Regrets: Emma, Shivani

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 2:06PM

Land Acknowledgement

Approval of Minutes

BIRT the 06 2020-08-04 Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee be adopted as presented

Mover: Kalith
Seconder: Laura

Chair’s Remarks
  1. Mitchell’s Resignation
  2. Last Meeting!

Portfolio Updates
  1. AMS VP External [Kalith]
     - Kalith: last week we filmed a video with Joyce Murray, an explanation of what their office does and filmed it in the Nest. Video is being edited and released sometime next week. A good way to warm students up in regards to what Joyce Murray does as Minister of Digital Government. During times like this, it is important that she gets a platform to discuss what she does. The fall situation regarding U-Pass is looking clearer, meeting with the UBC transit team on Thursday. Last committee meeting, the U-Pass will be reinstated and students that live outside the Lower Mainland will be apart of an opt-out system. We will have our regular subsidy program running for individuals who cannot afford the regular U-Pass. Happy that Translink has worked with us on this. UCRU: gave a presentation on UCRU to tell councillors what UCRU is and what it does. I am the Chair of the Governance Committee. We are going to go over the proposed bylaws as we get closer to formalization. Mackenzie, the Chair of UCRU (Western), will be present at our upcoming council meetings to explain what formalization means. We were just in a call with the
BCFS, the BCFS is gearing up for a provincial election soon, looking at a get out the vote campaign, still having discussions as to whether we should sign-on. We will be working with all student unions in the province collaborating together to get the vote out. BCFS hired Barack Obama’s first campaign communications manager and they will be working with BCFS on the campaign. Pledge to vote system and emailing local MLAs. Students will be able to select issues and emails to their local MLAs. Meetings coming up with the Rapid Transit Team

- Nevena: Can you clarify on the U-Pass situation? How is the Transit Subsidy Going?

- Kalith: Really good questions! Essentially, we will be reinstating the U-Pass, everyone will have access to transit. The only difference this time will be is if you live outside the Lower Mainland, and you’ll be opted out of the U-Pass. We are working with Translink if they’re going to require students to show proof of residence. Either way, the aim is to make sure that students outside the Lower Mainland can opt-out. If students need it and can’t afford it, we will have the back-to-normal U-Pass Subsidy.

- Nevena: Is there going to be communication to students?

- Kalith: we’re working with UBC comms to ensure that the work gets out: newsletter, UBC and AMS, we need to get the word out! I know I am going to get emails from students outside the Lower Mainland so it is important we get to them before they get to us. In terms of our transit subsidy, they posted again today; we’ve been trying to get it out as much as possible. Some students say they don’t know about it. We have reached out to campus organizations such as the Calendar to get it out. AMS Comms has new staff, we’re trying our best to get this out. External Affairs communicates with Comms every day. We have 100% acceptance rate, we don’t even look at the financial hardship. Initially, the number we came up with was $65,000. We have been giving it to everyone.

- Nevena: I wonder whether the “financial difficulties” marketing is the right way to go. If we could change the marketing to “for anyone who has to purchase a U-Pass”, we have more money to spend and we wanna give it away to students. If you purchased a U-Pass, we want to give it away to students.

- Kalith: We have identified some of these problems, we kind of learn as we go. I’m not trying to blame our Comms team, but it takes time to do something. We need to change some things internally.
- Nevena: If we can maybe create a plan to do a drastic push of the funds, and have that be a part of the AMS advertised through UBC emails and if it could be combined with all the packages.

- Kalith: I will reach out to them today, we are past August 15th and that is another problem.

- Nevena: I get how Comms can be extremely frustrating.

- Kalith: getting the word out on the fall plan, GSS VPX is looped in on all meetings and have learned some lessons from my experiences, we will be marketing correctly for the fall.

- Nevena: the whole idea for the last-minute push for that fund - maybe communicating with the GSS, most of the Summer subsidy - that would apply to grad students the most.

- Kalith: 75% of [transit subsidy] applicants have been grad students.

2. **AMS VP AUA [Georgia]**

- Georgia: Some of our updates, I put some of the supporting documents around both the study space and what we need to do around the internet connectivity enhancement for students in China, that is mostly the piece I want to get feedback on. Other business: Is the Climate Emergency a specific item of its own, Josh?

- Josh: Yes it is [a discussion topic].

- Georgia: Engaging with the climate emergency working groups and task forces, we recently had a meeting about research with regards to equity and undergraduate, for example, what does the peer program look like. UBC has also started partaking in Dimensions, a new program about EDI, which talks about hiring, research, how do we make research an equitable space? We also moved into the Undergraduate Research Org: discussion about having some centralized hub, barriers associated with getting into research; meaningful paid research. Some entry-level paid positions; how do you create research opportunities and how do you compensate people for their effort? We are also working with the President's office on anti-racism workshop projects for education about that going forward, so I can update a little about that. Josh has created really cool resources about that. The remote exam invigilation principles document is coming together and will come to the next Advocacy Committee. We will have a draft that we can present. Thank you for your feedback on a lot of stuff like remote exams, etc. The document is set to
endorsed for September Senate Agenda. August senate was cancelled. Discussion around food security initiative having conferences and workshops; provide more details about that. Meeting with SVPRO and some of that education piece as to what the new online atmosphere looks like. We’ve been working on how some campaign strategies work and how survivor-centric campaigns work to shape it in an online atmosphere. Some of those online atmosphere applications are what we are targeting. Terms of reference for SC17 which will be engaging all campus partners and survivors. Some of the confidentiality pieces and how they are transferred from units to units; what does this implementation committee look like? We have been working on the COVID-19 and AES reports and will be on the docket for the next council (clarify this). There has also been the rec centre that is being built, we recently had our first steering committee meeting and making sure it’s going along smoothly and how making sure the construction costs are going down. The piece that I want consultation on or guidance is the internet connectivity for students in China [attachment 3B]. Ali Baba Cloud which is the Cloud Enterprise network is in tandem with UBC VPN is to create an accelerator and existing network authentication and encryption resources. A student in China that can’t necessarily access Youtube normally and would be able to use UBC VPN and the Ali Baba network to access their resources.

- Joshua: What does allow by default mean?
- Georgia: The VPN will allow certain resources to be accessed by the students in China, it is up to UBC to allow whether or not the students should be granted to access a specific resource.

- Georgia: Thoughts?
- Laura: Does anyone know anyone in China or HK who have been affected by this?
- Georgia: we have been involved in those discussions with Pheonix who attended our previous council meetings, we’re still waiting to hear back from some of these students as to what the most sensitive way to talk to them.
- Laura: there are other countries that have these issues as well.
- Georgia: This one specifically with Ali Baba, this one is directed to Chinese students. In discussion with Vice-Provost International, there is a suppression of the internet in India, targetted attacks to Queer students in Russia and Saudi Arabia. Since its an internationally intertwined discussion, UBC is hesitant to take a stance.
- Nevena: I feel very lost in this conversation, this is just a thought. I'm wondering about access to the internet. How we are thinking about that in relation to student access to courses. There was a particular dictator-like person who used Facebook to use it as propaganda. The idea that Facebook might be readily accessible by people as opposed to something other than ways to access the internet. I forget the details of this and I'm wondering what we are thinking about how we are supporting students overseas especially when less democratic places have financial barriers to repressing access to information online.

- Georgia: Yeah definitely! The tech bursaries are continuing into the fall as well; financial barriers is another way that participation is limited as well. 3A attached the technology discounts to remote learners; data cards, etc. Obviously, those providers are not necessarily in those countries always but that is one of the options that kids are in discount for. We're currently kind of monitoring the current uptake and usage of this before tossing more [money] into it.

- Nevena: Something else to think about! The idea when we're giving that out.

- Georgia: they say about 2-3 business days for funding but if you have an exam, it would be a pain. I think that it is something that needs to be looked into further for some of the delivery for some of these things as well. Academic concessions as well in light of COVID. They may be able to add in an extenuating circumstance; technology or connectivity issues.

- Josh: Do you know which [Ali Baba] plan the UBC admin is considering?

- Georgia: Starting with the smallest one: 100 MB per user.

- Nevena: Something that came up in conversations that may be related to advocacy. Some departments are looking into the tier of how TAs are paid, going from research to academic assistant. If we are not changing professor salaries, why is UBC considering TA pay decreases? This is more of an idea to give to you Georgia if you do not have much information about that Georgia, if we are able to kind of follow up on that, we should.

- Georgia: Let me do some digging around that. Have not heard about restructuring the pay structure.

- Nevena: it is mostly the code you provide to payroll. It seems like a fishy way to lower how much a TA might be getting paid. That is probably still within the policies of the university.
- Josh: question regarding the internet thing. Is UBC planning on signing contracts with different VPN services in whatever authoritarian countries students are in or is it just China?

- Georgia: I don't think they're connecting with other countries. It is mostly Ali Baba that is state-owned that created this and said here's this service that is available. On the VPN end, it will be operating through UBC’s own personal VPN but this would just be using the Ali Baba accelerator which would improve internet access.

Discussion

1. Updating the External Policy Manual
   - Josh: since no one filled out the survey, we will be doing a review of the manual.

2. Policy I-11 Comments
   - Josh: I have seen Emma commenting on the policy documents on Google, I have not seen any other. I'm going to assume everyone is okay with the policy feedback.

3. Climate Emergency Materials Discussion
   - Georgia: for context, UBC declared a climate emergency and from that, they started consultation pieces. They had different themes around well-being, teaching, learning, and research. They also talked about divestment and climate justice. I will go over the strategic priorities that they have identified. Will touch base about John Madden about embedding climate justice discussions into Climate Action Plan 2030. Other strategic priority is centre conversations at UBC. One of the pieces of feedback at the community consultation was creating fellowship programs, etc. Recognizing alternate forms of scholarship. Foster a culture of engagement and advocacy. Enabling community engagement. For strategic priority D, support community well-being in the face of a climate crisis (eco-anxiety, provide resources around the climate crisis). E, expand education resources for UBC Community and the broader public. Being able to provide those resources in terms of climate education and all that. G, climate emergency lens. H, support BIPOC community-led climate initiatives. I am of the belief that priority H should be there and highlighted throughout all the priorities.

- Nevena: Alternative forms of scholarship. Steps and ideas shared about this. It is a little bit of an unknown topic.

- Georgia: That is where we really want to engage with alternative forms of scholarship. Some of the brief overviews is a communication from BoG, Deans, Directors, and Senate in support of public scholarship. Creating
awards for engagement in academic and community learning. Developing outreach scholarship programs.

- Nevena: something shared a lot on twitter: Black professors end up mentoring Black academics and the additional difficulties of being Black in Academia, whether the number of students you take to mentor because students from other universities and don't have Black mentors if we're looking at the broader picture and contributions you can make.

- Georgia: mentorship for communities and BIPOC academics. I really like that idea! What are the current mentorship programs available for Black students in academics?

- Nevena: activists in academia talk about mentorship.

- Georgia: UCRU talked about this as well.

**New Business**

**Adjournment**
Next meeting will be held September

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:27
Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee on the 30th October, 2020

[30th October, 2020] [5:00 PM PST] on Zoom
https://zoom.us/j/96991215514?pwd=NmFHYkJ9QOWRoYUdwUllKSWNVd0cwUT0

Attendance

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

Present: Mathew Ho, Laura Beaudry, Joshua Kim, Kalith Nanayakkara, Jackson Schumacher, Morgan Mahmoud Borno, Shivani, Georgia Yee, Saad Shoaib

Regrets:

Recording Secretary: Chair, Vice Chair

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm

Land Acknowledgement

Approval of Agenda

MOVED by Laura, SECONDED by Joshua

“BIRT the agenda of the AMS Advocacy Committee on the 30th October, 2020 be adopted as presented”

– Passed

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

MOVED by Georgia, SECONDED by Laura

“BIRT the minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee on the 18th August, 2020 be accepted”
Agenda Items

Chair Remarks

1. Introductions

   Made by the new members to the committee: Mathew, Mahmoud, and Jackson.

2. Logistics + Contact Info

   Voting and communication procedures presented by Mathew

   Gmail accounts of Mahmoud and Jackson shared to the Chair, and then to the Vice-Chair

3. Election of Vice Chair

   Vice Chair: Technically to represent the chair when the chair is unable to attend committee meetings, and take meeting minutes. Will help coordinate with chair in arranging meeting minutes and agendas, and connect with interested student clubs and campaigns as listed in committee goals.

   - Joshua: As Vice chair, would like to help give feedback to the Chair and support him, even though he stepped down as previous chair of Advocacy Committee. Also a fast typer, if that helps.

   - Mahmoud: As Vice chair, would like to use prior experience as Vice-chair of Operations Committee. He is a Fast writer, and will work directly with the chair to efficiently run the advocacy committee meeting for results. He also hopes to bring in experience working in the AMS bureaucracy, in resource groups.

   - Results: Joshua (4) vs Mahmoud (2)
4. Committee Goal overview and review + Year Plan

Mathew: Introduced committee goals established by the Advocacy Committee in the Summer, as included in the docket before the meeting.

Georgia: In regards to the goal related to Just Recovery Principles, there is a working group on running a Just Recovery symposium that will be integrated with the VP Admin’s Sustainability Symposium. They will centre around what a just recovery from COVID will be like, in collaboration with the Climate Hub and Climate Justice UBC. More details to come. Feel free to reach out to her if interested in the symposium.

Portfolio Updates

1. AMS VP External

Kalith: Provincial elections had been quite of a surprise to the portfolio. Successful projects such as the candidates’ debate across platforms were organized, along with the Get out the vote campaign, that included social media, and postering. With an NDP government, most work at present is researching the NDP platform, and identifying the AMS’s key asks.

Kalith (cont’d): He will be meeting with the Student Union of UVIC, SFSS, GSS, ABCS to align advocacy aspects, such that they can be on the same page. So far the work has been going well. He will also be scheduling meetings with relevant MLAs as soon as possible, putting together a welcome package about the AMS, and methods of reaching out to the AMS, such that they can be comfortable with having these consultations. One MLA they are waiting a response from is David Eby. Provincial advocacy is its early stages but the AMS will be drawing from party platform points.

Kalith (cont’d): The portfolio has compiled a report derived from the NDP platform, including areas such as housing affordability, and TRFs. This time around, future programs will include students living in UBC housing, and will be used to hold the government accountable.
One area of focus are Operational funding reviews. As the NDP didn’t promise any changes to operational funding, but promised that they would review it, the AMS will try and advocate on the issue and highlight how it can impact tuition rates. Work will be done in conjunction with the VPAUA’s portfolio.

Kalith (Cont’d): Another area of focus is on UCRU in the federal stage. UCRU is officially incorporated now. There is work on by-laws, and policy constitution documents. The University of Ottawa has joined the conversation in UCRU. Alireza from the GSS is working with the AMS to push for the creation of a graduate equivalent, GCRU. Currently all 15 schools talking about this possible creation, which is incredible. Other work include budgeting and restructuring. There is not a lot of tangible info yet but a lot more will come soon.

One aspect of advocacy through UCRU is the review of the Canadian Express Class Entry Program for employment of international students, which should be changed, such that there is promotion of entrepreneurship in international students. More updates might be posted in the near future.

Kalith (Cont’d): The Upass conversation is ongoing, with no updates. AMS is working with other schools to get things together and come to a decision soon. The portfolio is aware of Upass related emails from students who are unsure about opting out, so there is a need to improve the process. A lot of research on Upass has been done by staff.

Kalith (cont’d): A Presentation about UCRU and elections is to be made to Council. The portfolio hopes that there will be presentations to council about the overall advocacy situation, and sexual assault support in the near future.

Mahmoud: How are our relationships with other unions, as poor relations may have been due to miscommunications?

Kalith: It’s a lot harder to build these relations due to miscommunication, with SFSS being one of hardest to get a hold of, as there has been no response in getting some emails. However, there are strong relations with UVIC, along with
BCFS, where we have connections to Douglas College and some other institutions, who have a lot of good relations with us, thanks to GSS. On federal level, the AMS is very close with Western, U of T, University of Saskatchewan, and University of Manitoba. However, acknowledges that sometimes getting people on board is hard.

Mahmoud: Comments expressing appreciation. Hopefully there is going to be connections along the line of BC Student unions in the lower mainland, since UBC covers most of the BC student population across province.

2. AMS VP AUA

Georgia: One of the things that they are working on is pushing for understanding on what follow up plans are regardless of people and outcomes of the investigations.

Georgia (cont’d) : The AUA portfolios have also been working on an MOU with the Ombudsperson. Morgan and Georgia have worked on creating resources on anti-racism, and creating campaigns on how to report mistreatment.

Joshua: Highlights educational resources on AMS Anti-racism resources page

Georgia (cont’d) : There has also been a combination of tuition and budget consultation processes. Due to COVID, there has been an opportunity for tuition and budget consultations to align. The portfolio is against tuition increases, and has been working along with SUO and GSS on making submissions to the Board to pressure UBC administration to consider other models of funding in advance.
Georgia (cont’d) : Another area is on operating grants for post secondary institutions.

Georgia (cont’d): Proctorio remains controversial due to its tabs, and other sagas. There is an RFP process for alternatives.

Georgia (cont’d): There is also work on a sexual assault awareness fund. In addition, Thrive month is 2 days from now, from NOV 1st to 30th, which is dedicated to mental health awareness, and research on culturally appropriate mental health.

Georgia (cont’d): Also working on research on mid-term scheduling and assessing impacts on student wellbeing.

Jackson: For Proctorio, as we’re trying to get seed on the consultation process, when will they look for in a new service, and what are we asking for in terms of wanting the new ‘proctorio’ interface to look like?

Georgia: For possible replacements of Proctorio, there are a variety of applications for remote proctoring, such as Examplify, Lockdown Brower, Proctor U. The difficulty is that they have a lot of same capabilities of Proctorio, which is something that needs to be looked at. Analogy: Is it essentially just as same dog? In a pet shop, while it has a different colour, does it still has the same potential of biting?

Georgia: The AMS is calling for an equity stance that should be approached with when looking at software procurement, especially watching out for AI algorithms that have skewed biases embedded within. In regards to proctorio replacements which hope on negating that matter, is the software a pass fail thing? Can it be made to cut down to adhere to requirements? What is the stance of the company, and how do they accommodate for equity in software? Is their CEO going to attack students on twitter, just like how Proctorio’s CEO attacked technologists?
Jackson: Sees a lot of work that is needed on advocacy committee. From the perspective of the GSS, work is needed on determining what the next ‘Proctorio’ is like, which is hopefully not like putting lipstick on a pig. Is interested in how it will develop.

Mahmoud: What are the options that VPAUA has outside of Proctorio?

Georgia: This is going to be part of proposals process. There are a variety of options. Remote invigilation at UBC is currently run through proctorio and lockdown browser. The latter is less invasive but there are still privacy concerns. To adhere to the addressing of these concerns. Exemplify also needs cut its requirements down down (no camera, voice recording) to meet minimum standard requirements. Examity, soft touch invigilation, zoom are problematic.

With software such as Proctor U, I Dream (open source software created by Canadian institutions) etc, there is an abundance of software. But a lot is needed to ensure privacy and equity standards

Motion: MOVED by Kalith, SECONDED by Mahmoud

“BIRT this meeting be extended for 15 min extension”
- Passed unanimously

Discussion

1. AES Survey Report Draft Feedback (in combination with GSS survey results)

Georgia: For 2021, drafts for the AES survey will hopefully make some changes to content. Changes include:

- Taking out questions around their experience of the AMS (since there will be an alternate survey), services
- Specifying questions such as ‘Where do you experience discrimination’, and online specific as well.

Georgia (cont’d) Would love to hear some of the feedback on what you would like to see next year. Hopefully the draft, being a part of the docket, has been looked at. Will bring back several drafts regarding this. Portfolio is planning to add other questions where students might face, such as mental health challenges. The main question is: Are there any feedback on this draft?

Laura: Does the survey talk about racism in classroom?

Georgia: In the past it didn’t talk about areas such as where you have experienced racism, so we are now planning to see if we can put more, such as in AMS clubs, classrooms, varsity athletics etc, which will be one detail to look into and how to gain more information. It’s a long survey, with 100s of questions. We are trying to max out questions that can be asked. So we are exploring mechanisms that make it easy to fill out, particularly if students want to elaborate on their experiences as well.

Laura: Even under disability experience demographic, more questions like have you experienced discrimination in the classroom due to disability, and details can be made.

Georgia: Marking it down as suggested question and option

Mahmoud: How will you get survey out, due to AMS surveys being often ignored? Previously, the student population has not really cared as these surveys take a long time and are intrusive. What is the approach that will be taken with the survey? Will it be in the same way it has been in the past?

Georgia: How do we better promote it? That is a good question. Currently the Ratio in UBC distribution of surveys is 13% of students
(Laura: better gift cards!)

Georgia (cont’d): Gift card options is a good one way of doing it. 2 years ago, they were added into the elections survey. Aside from that once reps are elected people can be directed to that survey. The core of issue is recognizing survey fatigue, and the fact there are a lot of surveys. In person questions are not possible currently, but there are ways we can explore the reduction of survey fatigue. Often something we will consider is, if it is very long, and if there are parts that we can make optional potentially (e.g. the part about sexual assault, due to sensitivity about traumas and triggers). parts which are optional and whether it can be taken out. Furthermore, does it affect integrity of research if these questions removed. Ultimately, it can be balanced, and suggestions are welcome.

Mahmoud: A suggestion that he would like to give in relation to past surveys. The AMS should use relations with clubs and subsidiaries to have a middle man to reach out to student population. Based on his first year at UBC, clubs have been 1 thing of the AMS that introduced him to the AMS world. If not for that, he would not be sitting here today. Therefore VP AU can work with VP Admin to have better AMS surveys rather than just general emails.

Jackson: Question on the structure of survey question. If you say no, you can skip x and go to thing y

Georgia: Yes you can create branches, where if x applies you can ask further questions

Jackson: Yes this can help reduce fatigue a lot. Cole mentioned an AMS canvas page. If you can put the AES on canvas page, more people may fill it, since people stare at that every day.
Georgia: yeah, can be considered. Campusbase has also been considered in addition to that.

Laura: Response options such as strongly in favour, partly in favour etc makes surveys annoying. Yes, no, maybe, and kinda, are more relatable to students.

Georgia: is interested in best practices and better ways of fixing the issue.

Mahmoud: The Geography Department is one good place to consult for surveys than ones we have right now

Georgia: One other concern is that the survey is 8 years old, and there is a need for replicability, so some questions can’t be changed too much. Otherwise, results will be harder to analyze.

Georgia: We will follow up, send out reports from insights west, and academic experience survey, with issues with questions on including online atmospheres, and questions like where you experience discrimination, and areas in regards to opportunities to learning about Indigenous Culture: whether you feel like you have that opportunity to learn and engage with that, and would you like more of that. There will likely be a follow up on that will probably be on the docket of future meetings for pre-reading

2. Provincial election (Advocacy Priorities post-election)

Saad: Work is being done on provincial and federal lobbying, particularly strategies for provincial lobbying after elections. This presentation will focus on Key areas from collaborations with other student unions and other campus, and What they want the NDP to be accountable towards

Saad (cont’d): The first area is Housing affordability: The issue has gained traction during elections. BCers are facing financial difficulties. Key
promises from the NDP are rent freezes for 2021, and cap increases to inflation. The Common formula at present is 2% but the new government wants to amend that. While talks about Renter’s rebate for households earning up to 80,000 dollars is ongoing, our work is to make sure it includes student housing. There may be eligibility restrictions, but aid should be accessible to all housing. One main thing using is that in the AMS all candidates meeting Eby mentions that all further rental support programs will be inclusive of student housing. Therefore, when sending demands to attorney general and MLAs, the AMS will be making sure they are inclusive of student housing, and if not, figure how to work with the ministries to address that.

Saad (cont’d): Another area is the NDP commitment to investment 500 million to new homes for Indigenous people, Saad will be meeting the AMS Indigenous committee to talk about that, learning from their perspective on the matter in pushing accountability on the issue.

Laura: Is the govt meeting on that?

Saad: We need to wait for ministerial mandates at end of November. As the Writs of elections are going to return to the Chief Electoral officer by Nov 16th, we hope mandates will be out by end of Nov.

Laura: Can we lobby them until then?

Saad: Yes. So the AMS’s strategic plan with lobbying is to meet at least 58 MLAs, which is all NDP MLAs and all Green MLAs. There is no point in meeting Liberal MLAs, as they haven’t been cooperative in the past. The BC Liberals have focused a lot of fiscal and monetary policy, and anything on additional spending not going to get passed. Nor will they hold the government accountable for their promises.

Laura: Not understanding why people getting 400 for rent, esp when first nations don’t have running water, or even homes.
Saad: The NDP is establishing a new homes for BC plan, with a stress on working on Co-op Housing which is useful in addressing the housing crisis in Vancouver and lower mainland. One thing that the AMS is doing, is to work with student services manager to work on commitment and potentially AMS co-op Housing projects.

Mahmoud: One small suggestion in regards to Renters rebate in MLA discussion. There’s a need to highlight indigenous student challenges on campus,

Saad: This is one thing he wants to meet Indigenous committee on. Having met them 2 times before elections on youth and care program and emergency funding program, he hopes to join their meetings once again and in turn make lobbying and asks relating to things that the NDP have committed to.

**Motion:** MOVED by Saad, SECONDED by Mahmoud.

“BIRT the meeting is extended by 10 minutes.”

- Passed

Saad (cont’d): Another topic is COVID19 recovery.

As the NDP government is planning on running a huge budget deficit, making sure that BCers are prioritized instead of the economy, as made clear by John Horgan. Accountability for COVID 19 recovery is needed. There are several key points the AMS wants to make sure are fulfilled by NDP Commitment:

- The $1000 commitment to families, and $500 commitment to single people. The portfolio doesn’t think these figures are adequate enough. This will be something they will be trying to fight for in incrementals for that. As a budget deficit isn’t something NDP is concerned for, they should do more to help BC people.
Jackson: What will support for International students be?

Saad: This leads to the next point on international student perspective, which is on the federal level. One way has been done through working with UCRU on fast track Permanent residency which has been successful.

Saad (cont’d): The Next thing is the BC Access Grant. There are a lot of lobbying points, that are being in collaboration with the GSS because it doesn’t account for graduate students. The AMS is making sure the NDP govt should make grants to support student loans and financial wellbeing. They are also going to work with ministry of advanced education to come up with measures to encourage expansion.

Saad (cont’d): With student employment being terrible, and students being the hardest hit demographics, one thing to work on after the elections is to work for wage subsidy for students (Manitoba has done that). The portfolio has been meeting with U of Manitoba student union to see ways of engaging with the government. The AMS is collaborating with GSS too.

Saad (cont’d): The next part is Post secondary policy and operational funding:

- One thing back in June raised to the government is related to problems with operational funding. Currently the Province funds 30% of funds, whereas in the 1980s and 90s it was 80% percent. Universities are forced to make up for it in tuition increases. As the NDP promises a funding review, the AMS believes if it can be nudged in right direction, it can revolutionize how the provincial govt fund postsecondary instiutions. Therefore, the AMS is working with other student unions on that and working with provincial govt on possible plans.

Mahmoud: Shouldn’t that be directed more at UBC administration through the VPAUA, particularly on ways on how they can run their budget more
effectively? Suggestion to hold UBC more accountable to run budget more efficiently

Saad: We have been working with Georgia’s office on that. However, work on the provincial side is more important, as UBC doesn’t have other financial choices. This is not something of change that is happening overnight. It will take reviews, and legislative reviews, which take a long time. The AMS will be working with them on this, and try to provide a realistic timeline.

**Motion:** MOVED by Mahmoud, SECONDED by Saad

“BIRT the meeting is extended for 15 minutes”

- Passed

Saad (cont’d): Another point being made in conjunction with working with the Indigenous committee is on youth in care, particularly on lifting age restrictions. One thing the AMS has noticed in NDP platform is tuition waivers don’t apply to all youth in care. So there is a need to make sure it applies to youth in care no matter their age. Saad hopes to work with Indigenous committee on the matter.

Laura: It is also about the type of care and length of care received. Because, in the program there are some conditions such as being in a stranger’s home.

Saad: There is a preliminary brief on the subject, which will include areas on what needs to be worked on. This will be included in either the November or December submission to government, to make sure everything runs smoothly in regards to their commitment.

Jackson: Great work, particularly on federal funding for university being an existential situation. In regards to youth in care, the AMS Impact Grant committee is currently funding a researcher on the university experience of
former youth in care. When she presents her results to GSS, the Impact Grant Committee would be happy to loop AMS in on the findings.

Saad: The last point is on Sexual violence protection. The Misconduct policy act ensures post secondary institutions have policies, but there no minimum standards - just a report mechanism, complaint mechanism, complaint to report, and report to complaint mechanism. UBC has a lot of comprehensive sections while a lot of small colleges only have barebones. The AMS is working with a lot of groups such as the BCFS and other student unions to establish minimum standards with government and move to legislative amendments. Ending gender based violence for sexual assault response and establish centres is a priority. In recommending standards, certain institutions have more resources than others, thus, with the budgetary promises NDP made, we can have the government help institutions with less resources establish dedicated offices for sexual violence prevention. One staff will be presenting in next couple of weeks to council on the sexual violence discrepancies project, which surveys all post-secondary institutions in UBC, all the way to smaller colleges that have non-existent policies. One of the problems we’re facing right now in presenting that to the government, is pointing out that this is a problem they have no choice but listen, as the government currently only has a working group which doesn’t function, so there is a need to nudge them in the right correction. Saad looks forwards to suggestion of amendments.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is 13th November, 2020 at 5:00pm on Zoom

Adjourn

1. Moved Jackson, Seconded ___________ laura

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at __6:42__ pm

Action Items:
AMS Advocacy Committee

Minutes of 30th October, 2020

1. AES Survey Draft Feedback

2. Committee Goal Review Feedback
Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee on the 13th November, 2020

[13th November, 2020] [5:00 PM PST] on Zoom
https://zoom.us/j/96991215514?pwd=NmFHYk9QOWRoYUdwUIlKSWNVd0cwUT09

Attendance

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

Present: Mathew Ho, Jackson Schumacher, Laura Beaudry, Georgia Yee, Saad Shoaib, Shivani, Morgan, Joshua Kim, Mahmoud Borno

Regrets: Kalith

Recording Secretary:

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm

Land Acknowledgement

Approval of Agenda

BIRT the agenda of the AMS Advocacy Committee on the 13th November, 2020 be adopted as presented
- Unanimously passed

Approval of Minutes

BIRT the Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee on the 30th October, 2020 be adopted as presented
- Unanimously passed

Agenda Items
Chair Remarks

1. Introductions

Discussion (30 mins total, 10 mins each)

1. Presentation on Just Recovery/Sustainability Symposium by the Admin Team (Questions and Themes) (Are we inviting the right people etc)

Georga: The symposium will tie into a lot of areas such as solidarity, taking a stance against authoritarians, sustainability, with the main focus of the symposium is not just on being able to go back to normal before COVID, but to move forward to determine what a just recovery from COVID 19 is, particularly for those in need. The discussion hopes to provide background on what this is on, and a bit of consultation on what this means and what AMS continues to advocate on this issue. The Sustainability and Advocacy committee’s goal is to use one of admin team’s sustainability symposium on dec 4th from 4pm to 530pm and a way to gather feedback on how AMS can move forward and how it can shape future policy regarding AMS. This also relates to the external policy goals of AMS that were created years ago and are currently outdated, particularly in supporting immigrants, along with areas such as values and principles as well.

Currently, the AMS has received some questions and gathered feedback. If people are interested in what kinds of questions they would like to see asked, and if anyone would like to be a co-facilitator, please feel free to let Georgia know. The AMS would also be interested in inviting different stakeholder groups as well. An example of a topic considered so far have included energy transition: What will the process of transitioning out of it be, and whether and how we will advocate on that. How will it be implemented, and what kind of questions we would like to look at moving forward in developing a strategic plan that comes out of consultation talk? The AMS would like to hear from everyone from this symposium.

Mahmoud: Question on Recovery plan: Is there anything addressing the need for an increase of mental health resources? One of the biggest impacts is, after COVID, is long term mental health issues and maybe the AMS should address that. The resources we have are currently minimal, is not very effective. Secondly, mental health issues are also related to the teaching quality of professors. As professors aren’t experts in giving help,
there may be a need to give training on the matter, rather than just giving a google link to some UBC resource, just his input.

Georgia: Acknowledging the issues, some of the areas that should also be considered is what the best ways of creating that infrastructure are, especially for BIPOC students. Currently, there are lots of counsellors at capacity, and there is a need to redo the ways of providing emotional support. As it is one of the resources for those students and for instructors as well, there is a need to figure out how these referrals should be made, and how to encourage instructors who can then might provide that support to this area.

Laura: Question: It seems very broad and I am unsure what the symposium is targeting, COVID-19 relief, environmentalism etc – what exactly are you looking for?

Georgia: The scope of the symposium is a green and just recovery. And this prompts and questions on how UBC should take action especially in regards to energy transition and worker rights, and how the AMS advocates on those issues. And make sure they are informed by the community. We hope to have a focus on making the campus sustainable, particularly on how UBC will continue to pushing after their declaration on the matter, and pushing provincial and UBC on making a just recovery.

(Laura: text : Idea about a guest speaker for the symposium: Autumn Peltier, an Indigenous youth climate change activist :) )

Georgia: Will provide honorariums for people to speak, and it is especially to foreground the conversation with the voices of indigenous activists.

2. AES Survey Follow up

Georgia: Now that people have looked at questions last week, if they want to give feedback on that, it is also ok, but I want to make sure committee has all the pieces in the policy regarding the academic experience survey.

Secondly, something which Jackson would be interested in, is on the combination of AES with GSS student experience survey. There’s a need to factor ways of including graduate student experience. Especially since AES has been collecting similar experiences. There is an opportunity to see how goals from the two areas can be aligned. There was a discussion on this at GSS’s version of the advocacy committee

Jackson: They still haven’t met but will do so. The GSS currently has a survey from the student satisfaction survey on top of the AMS survey, along with other one time
surveys. With all this data, the questions are different and anonymized, so there no way of correlating one survey to another survey. This makes it a data analysis nightmare, as there is less power to look into intersectional issues, equity impacts and funding. There is a strong argument for consolidating all surveys under one umbrella. And one way is to do that with AMS, and increasing the length of AMS survey, and handle logistical issues like coordinating. That’s where the discussion in the GSS is so far.

Georgia: In terms of the timeline, it’s a bit late in the game to be starting to figure if there is room or opportunity for that framework for the next year. One of the big obstructions is that we have the policy I-12, which governs the academic experience survey, that gives guidance on what to keep in the survey for example, and what to ensure is surveyed on, and to provide continuity as well. It will take a sheer amount of effort, to consolidate the survey, when the AES is pretty much well a oiled machine already. So there’s kind of an attitude of ‘don’t fix it if it ain’t broke’, and messing with the AES could break it further. There is more opportunity to collaborate with the GSS as well, but one of the biggest questions remains. If we want to support more Graduate student initiatives, how do we support that? Another area is figuring out how to ensure an appropriate length of the questions without tiring people out, or without having more students feeling fatigued and not filling out other parts of survey. So there is a need at the end of the day to have as many students to be surveyed as possible, but there are also other possible areas to explore.

Furthermore, I encourage to share the draft with your undergraduate societies, even though the information at the present is relatively closed loop.

3. Provincial Government Advocacy: Operational Funding Strategies

Saad: Just got off a meeting with the ABCS, and we have fleshed out on what the strategy looks like, on top of meeting with other student societies and groups. Currently, ABCS and AMS are aligned on what they want to look for. We have agreed on drawing on what our talking points are, and what to communicate to other student unions in outreach. Our strategy on operational funding is not going to be a student centered approach, as we will try to include faculty, staff, and the university side into the discussion.

We have met with the VP Finance of UBC to get better understanding of financial situation. Currently, UBC as an institution, is an anomaly compared to others, as they have been able to recover from financial impacts of COVID, as compared to other
postsecondary institutions. This confirms a need for a sector wide approach other than a UBC approach. We will be proposing a white paper/policy paper on an outline what this approach will look like and it will be part of the February round of lobbying. There will be a lot of asks, and we definitely do keep it under wraps. There is a lot of data behind this and most importantly it ties to the fact that the provincial government funds at least 50% in the past, compared to the 30 to 40% currently.

As mentioned last meeting, the provincial working group currently that forms best practices is not something that AMS cares for, as we want enforceability measures that the provincial government can force on themselves. We want representation from the student side, administration, faculty and staff. These 4 groups need to have representation, the AMS wants to make sure that this would happen. A decrease in operational funding impacts intl students and marginalized communities, and there is a need to find out about these areas.

To update on post-election strategy, we have met with the indigenous committee and they will be giving feedback at end of the month. We also met with climate hub, and took a look as to what climate advocacy will look like going forward. One project with climate hub is the solution of continuity problem, and is related to establishing what the AMS’s goals of external advocacy should look like in regards to climate action, and the AMS would like councilors in council and in this committee to look that

Furthermore, another area is mental health, which is a key part in operational funding strategies. The VP finance of UBC mentioned that mental health fees is currently covered by UBC, when it’s technically not their jurisdiction, as it is part of the provincial government to do that, especially during the COVID 19 pandemic. UBC has funded 7.8 million dollars to mental health, but they want provincial govt to front that.

Jackson: Question: if the government funding goes up to 50%, what happens? Will tuition decrease, or stay the same?

Saad: The Federal govt only funds 10%, and the Provincial govt currently funds more at 36.4%. When you increase operational funding, it stabilizes tuition, and increases of tuition go down, which increases predictability for international students.

Another thing operational funding increase does is make sure services aren’t being cut, from mental health to tutoring, including health and wellbeing. Therefore, in asking for operational funding increases, another ask it will be paired with will be regarding tuition policy. Whether it should be a tuition limit or an ask about international student
strategy that BC has is something to be determined. When we want to make recommendations of strategy, we can make budgetary asks, including tuition. However, it is tough to say what we want to do, and starting the conversation, and the need to keep it going, but that has been the challenge for at least 3 VP Externals. What data shows us is an operational funding increase will ensure that either tuition stays the same, increases, or be cohorated.

Mahmoud: Since Mental Health is not in UBC’s jurisdiction, if the provincial government upfronts costs, will the 7.8 million dollars will be withdrawn, and is it against UBC’s principles to lift their hands off on mental health of students

Saad: When the university is given money for mental health (not happening this year, as it is not like the provincial govt will do it immediately) there is a need to start conversations now to revolutionize the way mental health support is done. If UBC has 7.8 million dollars, and if the provincial govt matches it, the money would be redistributed. Georgia would be better to answer that on how it would look like, what the language is like. Bottom line is, the provincial government is responsible, as we are the future generation, and therefore they are responsible for our success and that of generations to come.

Georgia: Since the conversation is pushed back to Feb, we are likely to jointly sending asks on behalf of SUO, AMS and GSS in the push to Board. Since the tuition conversation usually happens in November and December cycle. It will be a boon if they are able to consider reducing tuition increase as much as possible, and we have had a lot of conversations with them. Although they are looking at an increase, we will be working to make sure that any increase is allocated towards students needs.

Laura: Question: Another interesting area I would like to ask is on the capping of professors’ salaries.

Georgia: We are unsure around that area. This an interesting prompt, especially in regards to tenured faculty, but for contract faculty without security, this would affect them greatly. Conversations on imposing those restrictions will get into a lot of problem with faculty associations, but it is nonetheless an interesting question on considering what UBC can spend less on. At the end of the day, it will be about how you create those connections, particularly on international students needing help outside of community, the need to write to Board, and the need to collaborate with AMS VP External’s Team
Portfolio Updates (10 minutes, 5 mins per item)

1. AMS VP External

Saad: We are finalizing our post-election strategy, what we want to do is publicize the post-election strategy to the public most likely at end of this month, to start of next month, to let students know what we are advocating for, and especially what the external affairs office is doing to achieve those goals.

In terms of equity-based grants, advocacy on the issue is on their way to graduate level course. We have met with the Graduate level studies rep on SEEDS, some 500 level courses will be analyzing research equity based grants, while a 3rd year psych class will be holding in class conversations on what it will be like for them and in the general public.

The Sexual violence discrepancies project (mentioned last meeting) is done, and is undergoing proofreading by our policy researcher. We are planning to publicize this to council sometime this month or next month, and we want people to understand the findings made in this project. To clarify, the project analyzes post-secondary institutions and the lack of minimum standards in provincial legislation in sexual violence policies and infrastructure.

Another area is in regards to developing a climate strategy, where we have sent over a brief for climate consultation. We would like to meet sometime again, and would want to know what the recommendations around that are going to look like. We are targeting MLAs in the NDP and green caucus to fight for the separation of BC govt from LNG. There is a need to see a non- fossil fuel and clean BC economy, and making a Clean BC initiative on readiness, and we will be fleshing out more and talking more about that in the next committee meeting.

Mahmoud: Comment: On publicizing a strategy that is open to student population, there is a need for some infographic or graphic on how AMS and UBC works. Which is different from UBC administration, and what societies are, especially given current low engagement. There has been hostility between students and AMS from these misunderstandings, and students need to know what’s going on. Therefore, there is a need for modern way for infographics or ways to inform the student population.
Saad: one thought that comes to mind is potentially working with VPAUA office to make a campaign, and showing students what AMS is doing on provincial and university level. Will definitely look into potential collaborations.

Shivani: One suggestion is using the CSIC, and their Community building module to introduce students to leadership positions, land acknowledgement, and values of UBC, academic integrity, and collaborating to work on anti-racism. There is a potential in hoping to develop an AMS module, and sections for students to learn how they can get involved, and leverage social media, which can be a better form of information.

2. AMS VP AUA

Georgia: We are advocating for more funding for an intake coordinator for the Centre for accessibility, because it’s hard for students to register for support there. We are also hoping to get more exam invigilators with training in invigilating students with disabilities. The Rick Hansen institute of UBC, which is different from the foundation, has been reconstituted, and works on spinal cord injury. The institution has been turned to Praxis, which is a trust fund, with the hope of transferring the institute into an accessibility Centre. We are hoping to push for creating a more holistic view for the institute as a function of the Centre for accessibility. We are excited to work on them. We are also working on looking for funding on anti-racism initiatives, and are looking for projects as well.

Another collaboration is on the climate emergency task force and hub, with the response fund being the 1.5 million mentioned in council earlier, that will be going towards these initiatives. To push for more money to be contributed, some things need to be highlighted, such as the possibility of a Climate institute, and some other things to foreground. If it’s a research institute, or campus operations, there may be an opportunity hire students, and keeping that up and running next year.

We have also communicated with the Equity and inclusion office regarding the BC budget, and have been looking for cool initiatives as well, especially training, such as anti-racism. Other conversations have been on gender diversity, and other areas, such as ways of making more culturally appropriate resources.

The Proctorio conversation continues to go on, even though there is a very low chance that it will be returning in term 2. We are scoping for the different things we want to look for in a Proctorio alternative, and are pushing the university to use ethical and noninvasive tools. Some packages and letters about that are here, however an obstacle
has been the fact our meeting with the UBC senate has been pushed to December. Hopefully will be able to present more packages and information. Digital teach-in against surveillance is mentioned by an acquaintance of the letter, who is the UBC employee that is being sued. We would like to spread information across various communities if anyone wants more info on these remote invigilation software, and Proctorio.

Other than that, we are working on some chart on an intro to UBC. We are excited to support student activists that want to raise their voices, and how to navigate UBC and levers of the administration. We are also working on other areas such as BOG submissions on areas such as food security, and submitting on housing, and tuition as well. The Housing piece is mainly about the stadium road neighborhood development project, and urging UBC to get the ball rolling on campus vision 2050. Mental health resources could be something to be added to next week’s agenda

AOB (10 minutes)

1. Feedback

2. Introduction to External Policy issues, Code (5 mins)
   - (Was not discussed due to meeting adjournment. Will be moved to next week)

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is 27th November, 2020 on Zoom

Adjourn

1. Moved Jackson, Seconded __________ saad __

   There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at ___6:07___ pm

Action Items:

1. Just Recovery/Sustainability Symposium Feedback

2. AES Survey Draft Feedback
Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee on the 27th November, 2020

[27th November, 2020] [5:00 PM PST] on Zoom
https://zoom.us/j/96991215514?pwd=NmFHYk9QOWRoYUdwUllKSWNVd0cwUT09

Attendance

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

Present: Georgia, Kalith, Laura, Joshua, Jackson, Mathew, Mahmoud, Saad, Morgan, Shivani, Justin

Regrets:

Recording Secretary: Joshua

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 27th November, 2020 be adopted as presented

Moved: Laura Seconded: Kalith

Passed Unanimously

Approval of Minutes
BIRT the Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee on the 13th November, 2020 be adopted as presented

Moved: Joshua         Seconded: Kalith
Passed Unanimously

Agenda Items

Chair Remarks

1. Introductions

   a. Additional meeting before end of term to accommodate on final updates on provincial lobbying

Mathew: External portfolio still needs some time to provide updates on provincial lobbying so we will have our last advocomm meeting next Friday.

Georgia: Amendment to agenda? Budget consultation to next week’s meeting. Motion to remove the budget consultation item to next week’s agenda and then a motion to add the credit/D/fail and winter break extension to our today’s agenda.

   Motion to remove the budget consultation item to next week’s agenda

Moved: Georgia         Seconded: Jackson
Passed unanimously

Motion to add the Credit/D/Fail and winter break extension to today’s agenda

Moved: Georgia         Seconded: Jackson
Passed unanimously

   b. (Suggested: BIRT the AMS Advocacy Committee meets on 4th December)
Discussion (50 mins, 10 mins each) [* Discussions with docket items]

1. External: UCRU Lobby Week 2 *

   a. UCRU Policy Brief

Kalith: Couple more meetings with MPs next week, but officially lobby week ended. Different representatives from UCRU split into smaller groups to have 30 min-1 hour discussions with MPs from all over the country. Saad will now provide his experience lobbying. Meetings held in Ottawa time. I was held with prez of USask Union and UOttawa Union and Western Uni Student Council. Some MPs from SK, ON, and BC and met with MPs from different parties. 4 main areas were discussed in the meetings: I focused on student financial support. Investment of 230 million dollars per year to implement a 2 year grace period on all federal student loans for new graduates. The average student accumulates $28K in debt while pursuing an undergrad degree. Highlight financial stress. Very simple plain ask that made a lot of sense. Push the gov’t to allow new graduates to settle down and accumulate some wealth and look to new investments to finally be ready to pay back the debts. Everything that we ask for, being an organization that is tailored for research-intensive unis, all our info is backed by stats. Helpful when advocating conservative MPs, we are not asking for free tuition or interest-free student loans, all we are asking for is a grace period for interest rates and give students time to pay the debts back. Invest $1 bil to increase the 2019 Canada Student Grants by $1200 dollars per student for the 2021 federal budget. Make sure we keep access to post-secondary as accessible as possible. Make $20 mil available to support Student Work Placement Program opportunities for both int’l and domestic students. MPs I spoke to did not resonate with this idea too much, most MPs I met were conservatives. We made our points, though, backed by stats. Autumn, USask prez, asked as an indigenous student to provide a stronger perspective. Prioritize international students .... (i missed it) Invest $15 mil per year to expand the Undergrad Student Research Awards Program to 3.4K students annually in health, humanities, and social science research. Wanted to help our arts faculty regarding this research program. Prioritize projects that fulfill.... Expand funding for the Post-Secondary Student Support Program. Most MPs supported the student support program regarding student debts. Wished UCRU had a chance to advocate for mental health. Some MPs brought up mental health themselves and so UCRU discussed mental health advocacy strategies today. MPs agreed to send a letter regarding at least one of these asks (access for indigenous students, and support for student financial programs)... Minister for
Culture. We got support from conservative, liberal, and NDP MPs to write letters. A lot of MPs mentioned that letters don’t do anything; they will talk to the Minister of Culture themselves. Lack of advocacy on mental health and climate change was brought up.

Saad: This week was absolutely a huge success for the AMS. AMS got to build relations with different MPs across Canada. Pragmatic asks to be continuously analyzed by federal MPs is our (UCRU) mission. A lot of meetings with conservative and liberal MPs, one meeting with an NDP MP. Conservative MPs surprisingly supported the support plans for int’l students. While these mental health asks are important on the federal level, it all trickles down to the provincial level. Climate change to be brought up on the provincial level as well.

Jackson: Sounds amazing and successful! For students coming out of UBC, a grad student-centric advocacy arm seems needed. Any thoughts on how we can address this?

Kalith: Fair question! Asked by other prominent grad students. First time in a very long time where the AMS and GSS have collaborated. Met with Alireza on provincial advocacy. On the federal level, we haven’t collaborated much with the GSS, mostly through UCRU. I’m not sure if I should be mentioning this, but we have been supporting the GSS in creating a graduate arm of UCRU, GCRU. Doing our best to support the GSS, provided the model of UCRU to help them form the GCRU. Don’t have any updates other than the fact that they’re working on their bylaws.

Saad: Federal advocacy is an open ball field. 58K students is a really small fish in a big pond. It’s a big win that we get to advocate with UCRU. That’s why we are supporting the GSS in forming GCRU as it will be beneficial for them as well to have a federal advocacy group for grad students.

Jackson: Good to hear!

Laura: Are any politicians on any level perceptive to abolishing student debt?

Kalith: We haven’t really gaged the interest from the politicians on this matter. Conservative MP on ask for a grace period for student loans: “Have you compared our great country to other countries that aren’t doing so well? Germany or France?” I got heated up because he is wrong on this. Lack of awareness and care for post-secondary students on the federal level was a big takeaway from my experience. AMS can start working towards building that awareness for
politicians. It’s definitely a good news that we have received positive receptions from a wide range of politicians.

Saad: We’ve met around 50 MPs.

2. **External: Updates to Advocacy Strategy/ Provincial lobbying**

Kalith: Post-election advocacy strategy: it’s done pretty much waiting on the final recommendations from other student groups or things based on facts. Changes in the position of Minister of Education, etc. are the reason for the delays.

Saad: We just got our feedback from the indigenous committee with our indigenous asks. Create indigenous students support section. Budgetary allocations of $150 mil(?) for the construction of homes for indigenous students and indigenous ppl at risk. 4 priorities: housing affordability and Covid-19, tuition .... (I’ve missed the rest) ... planning on hitting 50 MLAs (NDP and Green) It seems like the Mandate Letter looks great. Working with the GSS on this one. They’re creating a section on BC grad scholarships (?)

Kalith: We will still be meeting up with some BC Liberal MLAs, but the main focus on BC NDP MLAs. We’ve run this by various student groups and the GSS will be attending all our meetings from now on, and meetings focused on specific asks will have the appropriate student group reps present at the meeting. Sneak peek of the document (our progress on the submission); credit to Saad for putting most of this together.

3. **AUA: UBC Budget Consultation**

4. **AUA: Credit/D/Fail extension + Winter Break Extension**

Georgia: Both of these are under the Senate’s jurisdiction, not the AMS’s jurisdiction. UBCO and other unis have put an extension on winter break to Jan. 11th. UBCV has yet to extend the winter break. Academic Policy Committee on Monday will be discussing this issue and the Senate will vote on this in December. (Presentation of Reddit Thread on this issue by the predecessor) ([https://www.reddit.com/r/UBC/comments/k1lm2p/ama_senate_winter_break_extension_proscons/](https://www.reddit.com/r/UBC/comments/k1lm2p/ama_senate_winter_break_extension_proscons/)) Julie addressed this in the reddit thread. Due to the number of accreditation days at UBC, it is difficult to change the length of breaks. Additional labour that may go into moving
around some other days; there may be some other sacrifices that may have to be made (i.e. having exams on Sundays, exam clashes, etc.) Should the AMS take a stance? Engg students may be more hesitant for an extension compared to other students who want an extension on the winter break (Mathew can you double-check this part? I may have heard her wrong regarding engg students) Should we instead redirect the feedbacks to student senators? How do we make ethical decisions based on limited consultations?

Mahmoud: They had a motion already about the Credit/D/Fail in the senate and it has been shot down already...

Georgia: One of the big concerns that we will try to separate. Due to senate bureaucracy, where a lack of preparatory materials for this discussion topic may have influenced the Senate’s decision to shoot the motion down. Mental health issues, due to the pandemic, has affected students’ academic performance and we have continuously witnessed requests for academic concessions get shot down. (I missed what she’s said after this)

Mahmoud: Follow-up question: Will this affect the spring reading break?

Georgia: These are two separate issues.

Jackson: How exactly does the accreditation thing work and why is this a problem? and it is weird that we can’t get exams done in a finite amount of time... in the US, we have finished final exams within 2 weeks.

Motion to exhaust the speaker’s list with final additions

Moved: Georgia  Seconded: Joshua

Passed unanimously

Motion to extend the meeting by 30 minutes

Moved: Kalith  Seconded: Joshua

Passed unanimously

Georgia: With accreditation, various accreditation boards will assign a specific amount of education time for a degree. Professional degree issue (Mathew cover me for this)
Jackson and Georgia discussion on the accreditation time difference between UBC and OSU (Jackson’s alma mater for his Bachelor’s degree)

Georgia: I don’t know why UBC can’t adapt.

Laura: Did UBC do pass/credit/fail for spring? What is the difference now then, there are more COVID cases?

Georgia: They say that people know what they’re getting into so there is no need for an extension. For UBC, for example, they’ve said we’ve made all these different adaptations so it’s going to be different from the emergency triad(?) situation. One of the biggest points we’re hoping to drive home is “Is gate-keeping credit/d/fail just ableist and further exacerbating the health care problems that some students might be going through?” (Mathew, please review this part)

Laura: they’re confusing the part that students are capable of withstanding the pandemic with no problems.

Mahmoud: Speaking of COVID, are we ever going to have a testing centre on the UBC campus? The closest one is in downtown.

Georgia: This is one of the adhoc things that we are working on. We have talked to Santa about this a couple of times. UBC hospital has an urgent care centre and having a testing facility in the hospital might increase the risk of deaths for the urgent care centre.

Saad: We are currently in touch with the Coastal Health. It’s being worked on, the response from them so far was a bit vague.

5. AUA: Tuition Consultation

Georgia: Current proposals are for 2% increase for undergrad domestic students, 3% for returning int’l students and 4% for new int’l students. Traditionally, tuition consultation occurs in the months of Oct/Nov. However, UBC has not brought the tuition consultation topic to the table till now. Tuition ask will be more solidified due to the delay, but UBC does not have a track record of showing what not having a tuition increase will look like. To best leverage the lack of funding from the province, we are able to redirect the funding that comes from tuition increase (18mil dollars) to immediate student needs. We can gain some information from you folks on
this issue and looking for a more cohort tuition model. It is possible the BoG shoots down the tuition increase proposal down. (Last Sept Tuition Consultation doc provided) What are the aspects that you want the tuition revenue to be redirected to? Cohort tuition “freeze” (fixed cohort tuition model) (Missed after this part)

6. AUA + External: Transparency Campaign

Saad: This was a joint initiative by the VPAUA team and the VPX team. Mahmoud brought this up. What we’ve come up with shown in the presentation. Stuff we’ve accomplished and stuff that we will be advocating for. For the VPX side of things: what we do and why students should care, what the contact info might be and what issues they might wanna discuss with us. Provincial election, skytrain to UBC, etc. Made it super concise and easy to read.

Kalith: shoutout to Erin. Wants to know if the slide contents look accessible for UBC students. What should be highlighted?

Georgia: Using some of that symbolism of building the bridge btwn uni and students. Key things to go over, what we’ve accomplished (i.e. COVID-related issues, proctorio, etc.) Things we will advocating for moving forward, issues that we are currently working on (i.e. future campaigns based on AES and COVID-19 survey)

Mahmoud: when designing these transparency plans, we need to be very considerate of the students. Need for conciseness; I want you guys to keep this in mind. Visual-friendly, interactive-infographics. There needs to be more engagement between the AMS and the students.

Motion to extend the meeting by 15 minutes

Moved: Joshua          Seconded: Mahmoud

Passed unanimously

7. Chair/Guests: External Policies Backgrounder*

b. Previous Email highlighting relevant section comments

Justin: Here to talk about the external policy manual. Will be sending the 10 recommendations for the external policy manual. Very long list of expired external policies. More so a collection of past external positions more than manual for policies. Up to advocomm to decide whether to accept these recommendations.

Kalith: What recommendations should we make, and should we wait for a policy advisor or not, since the manual was previously authored by a policy advisor when the policies made sense.

Justin: That is a good point, since we don’t have a policy advisor since 2018. One other question I would put out is whether there is a need for the policy manual. Personally, I’m not a fan of it. Strategies change year over year, so having priorities like this one can be outdated very quickly. Therefore, it is not good practice from a governance standpoint. This is very tailored towards VPAUA and VP External. With advocacy priorities changing, it could be better addressed by executive’ goals. However, since this is the first time for me to get a chance of hearing from other people. At the end of the day it is a advocacy committee document.

Saad: One other thing to point out is the ever changing nature of federal and provincial politics, as new policies are enacted after provincial elections, and advocacy priorities change.

Mahmoud: Need more time to look at that. Would really recommend having a policy advisor to look through this, and would be safe. Especially on policy E9 is not doing much favour for us on campus, as it expires on oct 25th 2020.

Justin: Agree. A lot of policies that sound nice but doesn’t work. The policy itself hasn’t expired. Issue with document. In favour of writing a set of positions that can guide VPAUA and external. Personally, this isn’t something suitable for AMS right now. We would also need professionals such as Policy advisors.

(Kalith^ I do think a Policy Manual has its merits, especially considering that while advocacy is an ever-changing landscape, a LOT of what we work on are multi-year initiatives, and a document like this if done well and followed accordingly can be really valuable for continuity amongst executives - which is something the AMS needs to work on more.)

Laura: is there a more user friendly version? It is difficult reviewing the document
Justin: If you look at table of contents, p.1-43 are current policies and after p. 47 are expired. It’s very not user friendly, I’ve tried converting to word document, but everything is out of order. I couldn’t find a more accessible option, so what recommend is keeping this as a historical document and guide VPAUA and VP External execs overall, and write a new one to reflect today’s landscape and priorities. It is better to start with a fresh slate.

Larua: I think there are also new stuff that would be important to look at, like the skateboard policy. It would be important to students, with UBC having barriers to accessibility.

Justin: I think it is also important, so feel free to take a look at it, or if you want to just review it, it is also an option. I’m here to support the committee any way I can, Another thing I recommend is to be rewrite the manual to include more practical policy, and not just motions that went to council and rewritten hastily, so there would be a need to rewrite that.

Georgia: It is important to have as it is a historical document to go back to. It is important that we’re identifying the appropriate staff person, it would be good to have a working group to identify these are the different sections, if we can identify who can be the appropriate staff person to do this. It is essential we are able to embed the and be able to refer back to and refer back to advocacy and AMS Council which represents students across UBC Vancouver, students could give us more backing too.

Justin: Yes I would recommend that. Maybe we can have advocacy committee members team up in pairs, and come back later in the year with recommendations. Or you can make a working group made up of some committee members working on that.

**Motion to establish a working group on the External Policy Manual**

Moved: Georgia 
Seconded: Joshua

Passed unanimously

Mathew: Straw Poll for interested members in the committee: VPs, Laura, Jackson

Georgia: suggestion for support staff: Sheldon, Justin, AVPs

Justin: Terms of reference might be needed and maybe the committee should decide if someone would need to decide meetings and bring guests. This might consist of the committee, as assigned by council, and bring in guests who are outside of council as well.
Mahmoud: There would be a need to consult outside groups, especially on sexual assault policies, where we would reflect with SVPRO, and SASC, etc, since this is their expertise to revise policy. It especially matters that we do the consultation.

Kalith: A lot of time and effort will be needed in producing another document. In speaking about this, we may need another advisor in this capacity. The External portfolio is stretched as what we need to do is to talk about things such as Upass decisions, and our lobby week which is happening. Saad is passionate about his work, but would also be busy. If we would participate on this, we would need someone else from this team.

**Motion to Adjourn**

Moved: Mathew  
Seconded: Georgia  
Passed unanimously

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8. **Policy I – 11 Review** *


Moved to next meeting due to adjournment

**Portfolio Updates (10 minutes, 5 mins per item)**

1. **AMS VP External**

   Moved to next week due to adjournment

2. **AMS VP AUA**

   Moved to next week due to adjournment

**AOB**
Submissions:

From AUA: Board Submissions (Documents)


Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is 4th December, 2020 on Zoom

Adjourn

1. Moved ____________________, Seconded ____________________

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at _________ pm

Action Items:

1. External Policy Manual reviews