



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

AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of June 2, 2021

Attendance

Present: Cole Evans (President), Eshana Bhangu (VP Academic & University Affairs), Mary Gan (VP Finance), Lauren Benson (VP Administration), Saad Shoaib (VP External), Keith Hester (Managing Director), Lorris Leung (Senior Student Services Manager), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Guest: Eric Lowe (Marketing & Communications Manager)

Regrets: Mitchell Prost (Student Services Manager)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 1:03 pm and took place by videoconference.

Agenda

- The agenda was adopted (Saad, Lauren).

Minutes

- The minutes of May 27 were approved (Saad, Mary).

Branding Guidelines

- Eric:
 - In the 106 years of the AMS no one has ever done this.
 - We've had discussions about the visual identity of the AMS, but that's usually the last part of branding.
 - Need the essence first, the core purpose of the organization.
 - We started almost a year ago working with Partner & Hawes on brand strategy and communications strategy.
 - Now we're ready for the visual language system and the social media playbook.
 - Our core idea is Students First: when students thrive, everyone wins.
 - In our advocacy, services, events, etc., we want to be putting student needs first.
 - We want to be accountable, nimble, and flexible.
 - We collaborate with UBC and the government, but we protect our autonomy.
 - We encourage all students to get involved.

- We want to make a giant university seem smaller.
- We're bold, inclusive, accessible, transparent, savvy.
- We want to make student life safer, healthier, accessible, affordable, social, fun, and fulfilling.
- We're here to be of service to students; students are at the centre of what we do.
- Our message: If you're a student, you're one of us and we're here for you.
- We want to build more awareness and understanding of the AMS, and get students more engaged, especially in early years.
- We know that the distinction between UBC and the AMS can be unclear.
- There's also a lack of trust of the AMS, and a perception that the AMS is an exclusive club.
- There's also a perception among some students that they don't need the AMS, even though AMS work does impact their life.
- And there's a lack of emotional resonance.
- We want to demonstrate how we impact students and how our work improves student life.
- The message should be that what we do is important for students (and not just for the AMS).
- We want to get more of a student focus on our channels.
- Currently, we're a service brand; we want to become more a lifestyle brand embodying personality, fun, and guts.
- At times we sound like UBC. We should sound like students.
- We need to capitalize on social events to create greater engagement and tell stories.
- Have to recognize that students are not homogenous.
- Metrics: follows, website visits, inquiries, volunteers, voter turnout, awareness, positive sentiment.
- Social media channel strategy:
 - Instagram is our strongest, but we have too many accounts; need to rationalize.
 - We also use Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
 - Want to explore TikTok.
 - Maybe Spotify.
 - Facebook has seen a downturn in student usage.
 - We have to make sure not to hide what we do; let people know that AMS food outlets produce revenue that supports our services.
 - Consolidation of our Instagram accounts into four main channels:
 - An AMS account, including several now independent accounts (e.g., AMS Elections).
 - AMS Events (which we may broaden and rename AMS Social).
 - AMS Nest (including the Pit and the Gallery).
 - AMS Services.

- Two other accounts:
 - SASC.
 - Catering (which doesn't target students).
- Eshana:
 - Why merging Elections with the main AMS account?
 - I'm hesitant because current Execs run for election.
 - There's supposed to be neutrality.
- Eric:
 - Talked with Isabelle (the former Electoral Officer).
 - The Elections Instagram account had a limited reach; it would disappear for much of the year, and that meant it would disappear from people's feeds.
 - The role of Elections is to engage, but with their separate account they weren't reaching that many students.
 - A lot of their content and ours would be pretty neutral; we would never promote any single candidate; we'd be promoting the idea of elections.
 - Only in a referendum would we promote the referendum, and that would be something coming from the AMS.
- Eshana:
 - An example would be Georgia as VP doing things and then running for election.
 - It will cause inequities.
- Eric:
 - Maybe that is something: if you run for a second term.
- Cole:
 - There's always the advantage of being the incumbent.
 - But engagement is a more important thing: achieving a wider reach.
 - The issue is how to encourage engagement.
 - An independent channel just fragments the audience.
- Saad:
 - Can you provide more specifics on the posts?
- Eric:
 - Four major areas of the AMS.
 - The AMS account would be the broadest.
 - AMS Events would be for the social side.
 - Nest.
 - Services.
- Saad:
 - We could have campaign posts (e.g., on SkyTrain to UBC) on all four channels?
- Lauren:
 - On the elections issue:
 - When I ran, I declared my conflict of interest.
 - That's feasible.

- It's more equitable to use the main channel for elections because it reaches more students.
- Eric:
 - Visual look:
 - We want something with personality, edgy. (Not necessarily outrageous.)
 - Advocacy with attitude.
 - Our pictures don't always have to look super pretty; student life is not always pretty.
 - Our colour has been dark blue, but we are looking at a lighter blue.
 - We chose dark blue to match UBC, but that's not necessarily a good thing.
 - Looking at different fonts, a squatter font with more energy.
 - Was hoping to have a draft ready, but it's been delayed.
 - The idea is to have it done this month and then roll out.
 - The font could be installed on everyone's computer to allow everyone to design.
 - It's not too edgy; you'll be able to submit to government.
- Lauren:
 - Executives can boost engagement by commenting on Instagram posts.
 - If the comments are just official AMS comments, it's lacklustre.
- Eric:
 - Good thought: please do it.

BC Restart Plan

- Cole:
 - BC issued it last week.
 - Very exciting.
 - Still not set in stone, but 70% vaccinated now, which is great, and there is optimism.
 - The Executive attended a Town Hall with Dr. Bonnie Henry, who said anyone will be able to get their second dose by the end of August.
 - Masks won't be needed in September for most purposes.
 - Large events not happening in September (big concerts etc.);
 - Don't think we'll be planning a regular Welcome Back Barbecue.
 - There may not be any restrictions preventing it, but still not advisable.
 - Looking at controlled events, including alternative ways to participate.
 - Messaging: Making sure to build understanding, make people feel comfortable, there may be anxiety, get people acclimatized.
 - We're hearing from UBC that they're going to follow Public Health orders; they won't be more restrictive than the PHO.
 - Hope to deliver a presentation to Council on June 23 on our plans for restart.
- Keith:

- Rish (the Events Manager) and I will come to Exec next week to present.
- Conferences & Catering, Food & Beverage: working on restart plans.

Exec Goals

- Cole:
 - We've briefly chatted earlier this week.
 - The goals are due soon.
 - Need to get them to Communications by June 11 and then approve them at Exec before going to Council.
 - Also need collective goals for the Executive: usually there's not too many.
- Saad:
 - General communications would be a big one. Engagement.
- Lauren:
 - Communications management: I'd really like to see the Executive team be available through social media.
 - Sometimes the Executive seems distant.
 - We need to be reflecting our values: putting students first.
- Cole:
 - Another one would be pandemic recovery and the restart.
- Saad:
 - Affordability.
 - Electoral engagement: candidate and voter turnout.
- Lauren:
 - Equity and Inclusion: be more active with external groups.
- Eshana:
 - Relations with the Musqueam, Indigenous engagement.
- Cole:
 - Policy I-5 (on communicating with the Musqueam) is up for review.
 - Also I-17 and I-18 (on sexual violence and respectful community):
 - Feedback being asked for so we can update by September.
 - Mostly the policies are fine, but there are some procedural things that don't make sense.
- Keith:
 - Make sure to involve Praneet (HR) and SASC.
- Cole:
 - They're on the list of who to consult.
- Mary:
 - Lowering the burden on students: affordability and financial support.

Senate Degree Review

- Eshana:
 - Tragic news out of Kamloops (discovery of Indigenous children's mass grave at the site of a former residential school).
 - The principal of that school has an honorary degree from UBC.
 - A review of that degree has begun.
 - We're also asking for an audit of all honorary degrees, to rescind any for people who were involved in residential schools and genocide.
 - Working with the student Senators.

Contracts

- Sheldon:
 - Just a reminder on our contract procedures.
 - They are supposed to go to Keith for business and legal issues and to me for privacy issues.
 - And after being signed they should go to the Archives.
- Cole:
 - Code is not effective on this.
 - Should we be looking into software?
- Lorris:
 - Maybe a one-pager on contracts would help.
- Sheldon:
 - If you are asking about what goes into a contract as well as the approval process, perhaps both could be handled in a one-pager.
 - I can do one and show it to Keith.

Managing Director's Update

- Keith:
 - Vishwa Mohan has started as Food & Beverage Manager.
 - Mary and I are working on revising the budget.
 - Year-End.
 - Working on reviews from my direct reports.
- Cole:
 - Air-conditioning presentation?
- Keith:
 - Michael Kingsmill and I gave Council an update about adding partial air conditioning in parts of the Nest in a sustainable way.
 - Council approved funding for an investigation into that.
 - Michael will present first to Exec and then to Council.

Updates

- *Eshana's update:*
 - Working with the student Senators on the honorary degree issue.
 - Submission to the Board of Governors about tuition revenue allocation:
 - We'd like input on making sure students are not falling through the cracks.
 - Registration is out. Courses indicate In Person: Yes or No.
 - Problem because students may be required to attend in person.
 - Need to work something out for students who cannot attend.

- *Lauren's update:*
 - Club-focused:
 - Orientations course.
 - Biweekly newsletter.
 - Audit: making sure the clubs are in accordance with Code and Bylaws.
 - Meeting UBC about clubs, involvement in Jump Start etc., in light of the new situation on COVID.
 - CampusBase is ready to go.
 - Meeting Campus Groups to discuss goals for the platform; shifting to a Canadian server.

- Cole:
 - Will there be an additional cost for that?

- Lauren:
 - No.

- *Mary's update:*
 - U-Pass subsidy, AMS fee subsidies: sending information to UBC.
 - Budget.
 - Treasurer authorizations.
 - RBC cards.
 - Canvas course working.

- *Saad's update:*
 - Scoping for SUDS:
 - Backgrounder on it to UCRU.
 - Consulting with other student unions.
 - Beginning to introduce goals to government.
 - Relationship building with Western, McMaster, SFU, ABCS.
 - Equity-based grants research.

- *Lorris's update:*
 - Mitchell away, but here are his updates:

- Finalizing Safewalk accessibility shuttles.
- Volunteer hiring.
- Goal setting for Services.
- My updates:
 - Policy Advisor candidate going to final stage.
 - Met two of the three Affiliate Colleges to arrange to be part of their orientation.
 - A lot don't know what they're eligible for.
- Sheldon:
 - We do have an Affiliates Committee dealing with that. Chaired by Lauren.
- Lorris:
 - Can meet with Lauren.
- Saad:
 - I've been doing quite a bit of work with the Affiliates about U-Pass, advocacy.
 - Would like to be part of that conversation.

Council Preview

- Cole:
 - Probably not a long meeting. Estimated time: 126 minutes.
 - Ubysey presentation.
 - Saad on the GSS MoU.
 - Executive Committee motions to reinstate the \$21 athletics fee and allow Constituencies to waive all or part of their fees, and a motion from the CUS to do that.
 - Discussion on the Restart Plan.
 - Perhaps as early as July have hybrid Council meetings, with full in person by the fall.
 - Will see what people think.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:59 pm.