



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

AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of June 9, 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), Mitchell Prost (Student Services Manager), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Guests: Rish Das (Events Manager), Michael Kingsmill (Design Office)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order

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

Agenda

- The agenda was adopted (Saad, Eshana).

Minutes

- The minutes of June 2 were approved (Eshana, Saad).

Events

- Rish:
 - New social media coordinator being hired; also a First Week coordinator.
 - Collaborating with Services for First Week program in September.
 - Used to charge hefty fee to sponsors for First Week events outside the Nest: banks, Shaw, Telus.
 - They would benefit from foot traffic and would try to sign students up.
 - This year we can't guarantee the same exposure, so are reducing the fee by 50%.
 - Extra if they want to add an item to the First Week kit.
 - Usually the kit would include a wrist band providing admission to Welcome Back Barbecue, but there's no barbecue this year.
 - So the plan this year would be that the kits will just include items from sponsors and we'll be giving them away free instead of charging for them.
 - We'll give away 500 kits, first come, first served.
 - The kits may or may not happen, depending on interest from sponsors.

- We plan to host 25 events in September: in person or virtual, the majority in person; there will be more people on campus.
- Special events for the Affiliated colleges: talking to them to try to get them more attached to the AMS.
 - Looking for events that would appeal more to them, to 25-year-olds, e.g., Comedy Nights.
- Fewer paid events: have to get people comfortable coming to events again, so will do free events or events charging no more than \$20.
- The Events Department will also be supporting upcoming Executive campaigns (e.g., Saad's).
- Working with Lauren and UBC Orientations for collegia.
- Also events for second year students.
- Last year a lot of focus on content creation for YouTube and TikTok.
- This year green light to focus on events again, but will continue the My UBC Experience series on YouTube.
- Working with Communications to merge the TikTok and YouTube accounts with AMS accounts.
- One idea to make up for the absence of Welcome Back Barbecue: Have noticed free outdoor events at Vancouver beaches and parks.
 - Maybe we can do an event like that at Spanish Banks.
 - Would need permit from the Parks Board or the RCMP.
 - Get local talent and host a free event.
 - Maybe Friday, September 10: something like Welcome Back Barbecue but without all the features.
- Cole:
 - Better to do this in the Nest Plaza still and maybe MacInnes Field.
 - If off campus, it's more inaccessible for first years, and the Public Health Office says that for big events the important thing is control.
 - Off campus less control.
 - I like the idea of a small stage and local talent, maybe a beer garden, seated, paid – but also free things, festival.
 - Could go to the beer garden and pay or stop by for free.
- Saad:
 - Does UBC charge for using the Plaza?
- Keith:
 - No.
- Saad:
 - If off campus, inaccessible for first years.
 - Maybe we could have a clubs booth.
- Rish:
 - Totally on board.
 - May be easier to book the Plaza than MacInnes. Cleaning fees.

- Cole:
 - MacInnes shouldn't be a problem.
 - The University wants to collaborate with us.
- Lauren:
 - On campus allows collaboration with clubs.
 - Also CiTR is interested in having their artists play at AMS events.
- Keith:
 - UBC will want us to cover MacInnes Field. Expensive.
- Cole:
 - Depends on what sort of event we want there.
- Rish:
 - UBC's Homecoming event is virtual this year, so if they let us use the field, it's a win-win.
- Saad:
 - There's no possibility of a real Welcome Back Barbecue?
- Cole:
 - Under Public Health guidelines there may be no restrictions by that time, but it's probably not advisable.
- Rish:
 - And it takes two or three months to sell tickets.
 - And people will need to feel comfortable.
- Cole:
 - I think the government will say a couple of thousand people will be fine in the open air as long as there is control.
 - What is the budget?
- Rish:
 - Thinking of a low amount: \$5,000.
 - If we get sponsors, maybe a little more.
- Cole:
 - Going to need more.
 - I'd be comfortable allocating \$15,000 or \$20,000.
- Rish:
 - Maybe \$20,000 expenses with \$7,500 in sponsorship revenue.
- Cole:
 - And some revenue from a beer garden.
- Rish:
 - Near the Nest, could use our food outlets.
 - If no liquor, it may be easier to get permission.
- Cole:
 - Maybe something seated, like the UBC Harvest Festival.
 - More like an outdoor restaurant.

- Content creation:
 - Good that there still will be some.
 - I liked last year's.
 - Important to keep that going.
 - Fun.

Air Conditioning Project

- Michael Kingsmill:
 - Update on the upgrade.
 - Started in June 2020.
 - Moved forward with plan to investigate air conditioning in the Nest.
 - Heat fatigue a problem and likely to get worse, given the higher temperatures expected from climate change.
 - Complaints from staff, clients, and students in past summers.
 - We have 12 air handling units, 4 with cooling coils.
 - We can add cooling coils to the other units on the second and third floors.
 - The main Atrium doesn't need this because of air flow from frequent door opening.
 - Want to maintain our LEED Platinum status.
 - Looking at adding solar panels (but that's a challenge).
 - Or other ways to handle heat exchange.
 - Engineers exploring this.
 - Budget:
 - We spent \$16,000 on feasibility studies.
 - Another \$42,000 for additional consulting.
 - We told Council a while back that the project itself will cost \$250,000; it may now cost \$300,000,
 - We're looking to have the University carry some of the costs.
 - Inflation adds 1.2% a month, so in another three years the cost could be \$107,000 more.
 - Timeline:
 - 2019: Called in the UBC Mechanical Department to look into heat complaints.
 - 2020: RFP for consultants.
 - June 2020: First consultant's report, but the recommendation (\$2.5 million) was above our budget.
 - Second 2020 report: \$1.5 million. Still too high.
 - May 2021: Revision to second report, including options from \$300,000/\$400,000 up to \$1 million.
 - The most appealing option was \$375,000, plus \$60,000 commissioning cost that we hope UBC will cover.

- Next step: More engineering consultation/costing.
- Cole:
 - What change of scope led to the saving of 80% on the cost?
- Michael:
 - The expensive scheme would have produced localized cooling; there would have been a huge cost of piping.
 - But we're no longer treating rooms independently.
 - Going to do zones instead, leading to significant savings.
- Cole:
 - So instead of having individual temperature settings in each room, now it will be the same temperature in multiple rooms.
 - What needs to go to Council, and when?
- Michael:
 - End of July will look for Council's support.
 - September will ask Council for additional funding.
 - Implementing and commissioning would then be from January to May 2022.

Exec Goals

- Cole:
 - Postponing the collective goals discussion.
- Eshana:
 - Transparency as a goal?
- Cole:
 - Think we're already pretty transparent; it's one of our values.
- *Cole's Individual Goals:*
 - Strategic Planning, Government Operations:
 - Return to campus.
 - Strategic Plan.
 - AMS Experience Survey
 - Auditorium capital project.
 - Audit of committees, governance systems:
 - Maybe give the HR Committee more to do.
 - Some committees are always doing things; others struggle to find things to do.
 - Let any committee (not just Governance) recommend Code changes to more evenly distribute the work.
 - Fee restructure referendum in March.
 - Equity, Diversity, Inclusion:
 - Expanding equity operations in the President's office.
 - First roadmaps to achieving EDI goals.

- Create EDI subcommittee.
 - Organize professional development.
- Indigenous Presence:
 - Transforming the Indigenous Committee into a Constituency.
 - Indigenous art installation.
 - Indigenous-focused campaign month.
- Community Engagement:
 - Electoral engagement.
 - AMS presence in Imagine Day, Orientations, Canvas courses, street teams.
 - More outreach.
 - Marketing and communications.
 - Cross-campus collaborative groups.
- Keith:
 - For street teams, could use the new Safewalk vehicles.
- *Eshana's goals:*
 - Remote invigilation (campaign promise):
 - Half done: Proctorio banned.
 - But UBC is looking for alternatives: want to make sure they're not inequitable.
 - Affordability:
 - Serving on UBC Affordability Task Force.
 - Working on UBC Campus Vision 2050 review.
 - Open Education Resources:
 - Working with a UBC working group to create policy to limit the cost of learning materials.
 - Introducing an Excellence award with the Provost's office.
 - Textbook Broke.
 - Indigenous Student Support:
 - UBC talking of attracting and retaining Indigenous students, but no metrics or targets.
 - Is self-identification being misused by non-Indigenous people?
 - Return to In-Person Learning:
 - Expand rapid testing.
 - Increase resources for lecture capture and encourage use of it by lecturers.
 - Equity for students who can't come back in the fall.
 - Mental Health:
 - I'd like feedback on this one.
 - Food Insecurity:
 - Love to help.
 - Stigma about the Food Bank (seen as charity):

- Run a campaign to say it's okay.
- Sexual Violence:
 - Want AMS to be part of the SC-17 review and the implementation committee.
- Saad:
 - Working with UBC's VP Academic to create a formalized process to partner with Indigenous students.
- Keith:
 - Lucia was working on mental health support with Services.
 - Lorris is also working on Food Insecurity.
 - The Food Bank was originally intended as emergency support, but now has become something more regular.
- Mitchell:
 - Food Bank stigma: Doing videos. Would be great to have you involved.
- Cole:
 - Make sure your goals state a tangible objective.
- *Saad's goals:*
 - Transparency and Accountability:
 - Quarterly updates (a campaign promise).
 - Advocacy Town Hall (at least one).
 - Housing Affordability:
 - Leading practices being pushed by the government for student housing providers.
 - Non-profit AMS co-op project.
 - Recommendations to government about funding for student housing.
 - Financial Aid:
 - Working with UCRU: removal of interest rates on federal student loans.
 - Provincial government: more in access grants; also needs-based grants for grad students.
 - Expand graduate scholarships to non-STEM disciplines.
 - International Student Support:
 - Meeting government about strengthening the tuition limit policy.
 - With UCRU working on fast-tracking permanent residency process.
 - COVID Recovery:
 - Working with stakeholders about employment.
 - Collecting data on affordability, accessibility, EDI – province-wide with other student unions.
 - Pushing the province to review the postsecondary operating grant.
 - Safety and Wellness:
 - Funding for postsecondary sexual violence prevention initiatives.

- Improvements to government's Here2Talk programs (only 8-9% of students are using it).
- Climate Action:
 - Working on strategic plan.
 - Federal advocacy.
- Transit:
 - Meeting with TransLink.
 - U-Pass exemptions.
- Indigenous Students:
 - Working with Indigenous students to understand their concerns.
 - Including Indigenous students as part of lobby weeks.
- Equity-Based Grants:
 - Partnership with SEEDS.
 - Investigating barriers.
 - Policy on grants.
- Keith:
 - Will you want amendments to the AMS budget?
- Saad:
 - Yes, talking with Mary about an increase for campaigns and research, and another for lobbying.
- Keith:
 - Housing?
- Saad:
 - Just campaign-centred.
- Sheldon:
 - SUDS?
- Saad:
 - Still being scoped.
 - Looking into holding a safe SUDS.
 - Still very much up in the air.
- Cole:
 - October?
- Saad:
 - Yes, not August (the usual time).
- *Mary's goals:*
 - Mental Health subsidy:
 - Low barrier subsidy to allow students to get financial support for mental health services: going beyond the current \$1,000 benefit (even \$1,000 is not a lot to cover sessions).
 - Mental Health Provider Network:

- Looking into creating a network of providers who will offer a discount on services.
 - Canvas Learning Hub for Treasurers:
 - To orient them.
 - Adding videos.
 - A Canvas course for treasurers.
 - Improve Transparency of AMS Finances:
 - Create a summary of the AMS budget.
 - Use infographs and videos so students know where fees are going.
 - Fees:
 - Can any be reduced or eliminated?
 - Are they effective or not effective?
 - Have they already satisfied their purpose?
 - Increase awareness of funds, subsidies, opt-ins/opt-outs:
 - Students don't always know about these or how to access them.
 - Want to work with Communications.
 - Reach out to Constituencies.
 - Collaborate with Admin on clubs.
 - Maybe add one on the AMS budget and navigating out of COVID/deficit.
- Eshana:
 - Love the Mental Health subsidy.
- Mary:
 - Hopefully have the money for that.
- *Lauren's goals:*
 - Clubs:
 - All-encompassing benefit from the Clubs Benefit Fund to get clubs on their feet.
 - Video on holding Zoom events (clubs faced challenges this past year).
 - Disposable masks.
 - Videoconferencing grants.
 - Club involvement in AMS Operations:
 - Clubs in AMS projects: a more integrated approach.
 - Feedback in Clubs Newsletter.
 - CampusBase:
 - Increasing success.
 - Increasing engagement.
 - Increasing privacy.
 - Make sure to protect privacy.
 - Collaboration with Events:
 - Promotion.
 - Finding ways to create traction, overlap.

- Communications:
 - Creating an AMS COVID-19 dashboard:
 - Pandemic-related support.
 - Nest policies.
 - Redirecting to financial resources.
 - AMS accessibility initiatives:
 - Closed captions, sign language.
 - More open communication between the VP Admin and the students.
- Hatch Art Gallery:
 - Incorporating AMS art in the academic curriculum by communicating with faculty.
 - Increase traffic.
 - Exhibitions, coffee nights.
 - Creating online catalogue: getting contracts so people can view the art virtually.
- Nest:
 - Promote inclusivity.
 - Add amenities for commuters: make the Clubs Resource Centre a space for commuters (a temporary trial run).
 - More inclusive spaces:
 - Temporary prayer spaces.
 - Space for a quiet room for students who need a place to get grounded.
 - Make sure second years get the first year experience.
- Sustainability:
 - More consultation with stakeholders.
 - Interactive Sustainability Centre as space for connections.
 - Offsetters data, revolving gardens, dashboard, and waste scale by September.
 - Coordinating with tenants about sustainable practices.
- Saad:
 - In equity-based grants research, we've looked at accessibility for students with disabilities in UBC buildings: will send report.
- Keith:
 - Sylvester got a grant that it would be good to put to use.
- Lauren:
 - That will go towards the sensory room.
- *Mitchell's goals:*
 - Development of Housing Service:
 - Volunteer team recruitment.

- Opening peer support.
- Database by 2022.
- Increase engagement of all Services:
 - Increasing awareness of the Services; growing the Instagram account.
 - Marketing and outreach plan.
 - 15% increase in usage – except for Food Bank: return it to emergency use.
- Streamline training, onboarding, hiring, transitioning:
 - The Services are large, with lots of moving parts.
 - Implement a quarterly report system.
- Implement the 2019/20 Services Review:
 - Lots of data to look at.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:58 pm.