



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

AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of September 22, 2021

Attendance

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

Regrets: Lauren Benson (VP Administration), Mitchell Prost (Student Services Manager)

Guest: Kavie Toor (UBC Athletics & Recreation)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 11:13 am and took place by videoconference.

Agenda

- The agenda was adopted (Saad, Mary).

Minutes

- The minutes of September 15 were approved (Saad, Mary).

Vaccination

- Cole:
 - Council wanted some movement on this.
 - The Executive has talked about it, and we think it would be good to work towards requiring AMS employees to be vaccinated.
- Keith:
 - An article in today's Ubyssy says the University is not going to do a vaccine mandate beyond the residences or beyond their current policy on evidence for their staff.
- Cole:
 - Their policy is not for visitors.
 - I think they're still working on it.
- Saad:
 - For AMS employees, we will have to follow the self-declaration process first.
 - The tough part: how do we do audits of proof? We can't store the information.

- Cole:
 - We can commit to it, work on it.
 - Difficulty now because of the big changeover in HR (with our HR Manager leaving).
 - I do think students and Council will be looking for a commitment.
- Keith:
 - Before we issue a statement, we need to figure out how we're going to do it.
- Cole:
 - We can announce we're going to work towards it.
 - Council is waiting for an answer from us.
- Eshana:
 - We should at least have some sort of broad plan.
- Mary:
 - How will this affect the clubs?
 - There are complaints that they are not getting enough information.
- Cole:
 - It's one thing for employees; another thing to apply something to our 400 subsidiary organizations.
 - First, our employees.
 - For clubs we will do whatever the Provincial Health Office is saying to do.
- Lorris:
 - Will this cover casual staff as well?
 - Will it include everyone? What sort of employees?
- Saad:
 - Casual staff are already covered under UBC's vaccination policy.
 - Same with student government staff.
 - Assuming they're all students: how many are not?
 - We need a plan. We can't just say we're doing it.
- Eshana:
 - Why would this not apply to AMS student staff?
 - They should be covered by the AMS policy.
- Saad:
 - They're already covered by the UBC policy.
- Eshana:
 - UBC's policy is just a self-declaration.
 - If we're going to require vaccination of our permanent staff, that should be the policy for all staff instead of saying that for student staff we'll just follow what UBC does.
- Lorris:
 - UBC is just asking for a declaration and not proof?

- Eshana:
 - UBC will require proof, but not for a month.
 - We should have one plan for all employees.
- Saad:
 - UBC is waiting for legal reasons.
- Eshana:
 - More for logistical reasons.
- Saad:
 - For us it's a legal issue.
 - We could check for proof of vaccination when people arrive at work.
- Cole:
 - Better left to the HR Department to figure out the best way to do this.
 - Make sure we're implementing in a gradual way.
 - It's okay to say we're going to work towards a plan; there are reasons we can't do it in a week.
- Eshana:
 - We need a timeline.
- Cole:
 - We can have a goal: end of October, probably.
- Saad:
 - By then we'll have more clarification on how this can happen.
 - Our lawyers are saying it's a grey area.
- Keith:
 - Our insurance doesn't cover us for this.
 - If we get sued, it will add to our deficit.
 - No other student society has done it.
 - We're not federally regulated, so we're not covered by the federal government's announced requirement for federal employees.
- Cole:
 - We can tell Council the risks, and if Council says let's do it, then we will.
 - There's going to be time to get a legal opinion to bring to Council.
- Eshana:
 - This needs to be a top priority for us.
 - It's important to emphasize that we're doing this to prevent an outbreak, for the safety of students.
- Saad:
 - Student safety should be our top priority, I agree, but we haven't done our due diligence on the legal issues.
- Eshana:
 - We've already got a legal opinion: we could get sued.
 - Council has made it clear that that's fine.

- Just because there's a risk doesn't mean every employee will sue.
- Saad:
 - This should go to Council.
 - I don't want to be the one putting the AMS in legal jeopardy.
- Eshana:
 - Happy to go to Council.
 - The Executive should support it at Council.
- Saad:
 - We're a private organization. It's hard for us.
 - I'm 100% in support of a vaccination mandate, but it's iffy on the liability side.
- Eshana:
 - Many organizations have done this.
 - We're too scared; we have competent people who can set this up.
- Cole:
 - I think the consensus is that we will announce that we plan to evaluate and work on a vaccination mandate for employees over the next few weeks.
 - We will tell Council next week.
 - We should get a proposal prepared and send that to our lawyers.
 - There is a level of urgency, but we're not going to get it done in three days.
 - We need balance: neither panic nor the backburner.
- Saad:
 - What's the expected timeline for hiring a new HR Manager?
- Keith:
 - Can't say. The position's posted. We're getting applications. Could take a month, or two months.
- Cole:
 - We may phase the new plan in.
 - First step may be a self-declaration.
- Saad:
 - If someone self-declares that they're not vaccinated, do they have access to rapid testing?
- Eshana:
 - Rapid testing for that purpose has not been launched yet.
 - There is rapid testing at IKB, but that's not for those who self-declare they're not vaccinated.
 - They could still go to IKB, but it's only open three days a week.
- Cole:
 - All good on the vaccination plan?

There was a consensus in support.

Athletics & Recreation Budget Update

- Kavie:
 - This presentation will be similar to the one we made to you in February.
 - We established our values 18 months ago (excellence, health and sport, building our community).
 - We have five strategic priorities:
 - Student experience
 - Equity, Diversity, Inclusion
 - Brand and Profile:
 - The brand is “Take Flight,” and the idea is to represent all students, not just Varsity teams.
 - We also want to remove barriers to Varsity participation.
 - Financial stability
 - Facilities
 - We’re seeing demand exceed supply for Intramurals, Day of the Longboat, the Fitness Centre, Aquatic programs.
 - We’re discussing how to meet demand.
 - We’re doing a one-year pilot project of giving out free tickets for Varsity games (through sponsors).
 - We’ve added programs and are restricting them to students: we are bursting at the seams with student demand, and can’t accommodate the general public.
 - Looking to crank up recreation opportunities in light of students coming back.
 - IBPOC programming, e.g., a program for Asian females. Want to do more for marginalized students.
 - Expanding Intramurals.
 - Maybe removing entry fees for Storm the Wall.
 - Partnering with the Parks Board and others to serve students off campus (e.g., medical students).
 - MacInnes Field is being used. Could explore an equipment signout system there.
 - Facilities upgrades.
 - Student Rec Centre upgrades.
 - Projected deficit of \$2.415 million.
 - Expenses highest for Facilities, then for Varsity athletics. Lower for Recreation.
 - Team funding by gender:
 - There is now more for women’s than men’s, except for football, which is male only.
 - Used to be skewed, but we’ve switched our approach.
- Saad:
 - Marketing?
- Kavie:
 - For Term 1 our programs are already popular.

- Demand is through the roof: e.g., 90 teams in volleyball.
 - Happy to do more advertising.
- Eshana:
 - Re gender equity: Appreciate the greater portion going to women's sports.
 - Are there other components that would help produce a more gender-inclusive environment?
- Kavie:
 - Coach development opportunities.
 - Female coaches can get mentorship, internships.
 - There's still a gap in coaching: work to do.
 - Also, education sessions with our staff and making sure our images and communications are open and inclusive to all.
 - This is not just to do with gender, but in general want students to see people who look like them.
 - Partnering with Indigenous students, the Musqueam: a priority for us.
- Eshana:
 - There's also the issue of the balance between Recreation and Varsity Athletics.
- Kavie:
 - We've heard before about the disparity issues.
 - Varsity does require more: travel expenses, etc.
 - Facilities does include Recreation.
 - We could have added in the \$2 million for the Aquatic Centre, which serves tons of students. That could be part of the Recreation budget, just we didn't show it on the chart.
 - We are hoping to get extra funding for Recreation.
- Lorris:
 - Is there funding for professional development for Athletics & Recreation staff on sexual violence.
- Kavie:
 - One of the key pillars in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion is educating our staff, both full-time and part-time.
 - We've been making increasing efforts on this, working team by team.
 - Partnering with SVPRO (UBC's Sexual Violence Prevention & Response Office).
- Saad:
 - Support for female athletes?
- Kavie:
 - Might be a good start to include funding per athlete in our charts.
 - A lot of external funding comes from male donors for male teams.
 - That's why we want more opportunities for female athletes.

- Saad:
 - Have you done any work with the VP Alumni engaging female donors, encouraging them to donate to female teams?
- Kavier:
 - Very much so. Looking for scholarships. Would like to offer matching funding.
 - Also if there is shifting to one funding pool, as there is for rowing, that can be to all rowing (male and female), and then we can allocate equitably.
 - Other cases may take a while.
- Eshana:
 - Are you going to develop a strategic plan?
- Kavier:
 - We did present on this; I can send it over.
- Cole:
 - Send it with this presentation, and I can send them both to Council.
- Kavier:
 - Team by team funding is not public.
- Cole:
 - We'll send a modified version to Council.
- Eshana:
 - Gender inclusivity and IBPOC will be of interest to Council.
 - Intramurals too.
 - There's also the issue of sexual violence: a lot of students were not pleased with what they learned about Varsity teams.
- Kavier:
 - We were also upset by the 2018 incidents. It's fair for students to have been upset over them.
- Cole:
 - If you can prepare something on the \$21 AMS fee (for athletics and intramurals), Council will be interested in that.
- Kavier:
 - Will do.

AGM

- Cole:
 - Looking for advocacy-related topics: tuition, housing, fees.
 - Going to have to finalize the AGM agenda at next week's Council.
 - We could potentially change auditors.
- Keith:
 - I think we're looking to stick with D&H.
 - We're getting rotation from them all the time, and a new partner was assigned to our audit this year.

- No lack of independence for the auditors.
- Cole:
 - Maybe set up a fee referendum question at the AGM for March.
- Keith:
 - Maybe a housing question.
- Saad:
 - The timeline might not be right for housing: we haven't presented to Council yet.
- Cole:
 - Could vote to name something.
 - And some fun things.

Committee Appointments

- Cole:
 - Executive appointments to committees: any changes?
- *There were none.*
- Mary:
 - Is appointing the Student Services Manager to the Finance Committee a conflict of interest?
 - He would be able to vote on the Services budget.
- Cole:
 - This is going to be discussed at Council.
- Eshana:
 - I can be on Finance and vote on my budget.
- Saad:
 - As long as Mitchell follows the conflict of interest policy, I don't see an issue.
 - We will have to be stringent.
- Keith:
 - He's an employee.
 - That's different from an Executive being on the committee.
- Eshana:
 - The SSM is like the sixth Executive.
 - Services is a large portion of the budget.
 - Will this set a precedent?
- Cole:
 - Already have the precedent.
 - The SSM has served on other committees, and Code allows it.
 - Council will talk about it.
 - If a problem, will have to change Code.

Managing Director's Update

- Keith:
 - Hiring for HR Manager. Position posted. Some applications. Will start shortlisting. Could be a month or two.
 - Thanks to Saad, we'll be selling Compass Cards out of Blue Chip Express.
 - Eastside Furniture going ahead: long overdue, to be done soon.
 - Gallery changes: new furniture. Also in Lev Bukhman Lounge.
 - Successful First Week events.
 - Thanks to Lorris for boothing.
 - Disappointing to learn that people didn't know of some of the things we're doing.
 - Welcome Back Barbecue is now October 1 in conjunction with the First Game
- Saad:
 - We've been certified as a vendor for Compass Cards.
 - Can we add this to the Council agenda?
 - Where are we going to get the \$3,000?
- Keith:
 - For this first time we could potentially make it a cost to Blue Chip.
 - Going forward, if we're having a booth, there will be a more sizable expenditure.
 - It will have to come from somewhere.
 - I'd let Council know now as an update, but there's nothing for Council to do yet.

Executive and Services Updates

- *Saad's update:*
 - Wrapping up Get Out the Vote campaign: happy with the engagement.
 - Now working on post-election strategic plan with UCRU.
 - Successful provincial budget presentation with ABCS on Indigenous support, sexual violence, and mental health.
 - TransLink card.
 - Harm reduction campaign.
- *Eshana's update:*
 - Sexual misconduct policy review.
 - OER/Textbook Broke campaign: opened call for nominations for profs.
 - Implementation of UBC's soft vaccine mandate.
 - Tuition survey improvements.
 - UBC budget submission.
- Saad:
 - The VP External for the SUO (Student Union Okanagan) is also interested in OER.
- Eshana:
 - Send me their email.

- *Mary's update:*
 - Opt-outs just ended.
 - Subsidies.
 - Speaking to Enrolment Services about two EUS fees that are ending.
 - Reviewing funds and fees.
 - Interviewing for two positions.
 - Credit card.

- *Lorris's update:*
 - Three people leaving SASC. Recruiting for four positions.
 - All Services back in operation.
 - Food Bank looking for more volunteers.
 - Looking at improvements.
 - Mimi has begun as Policy Advisor: working with Eshana and Saad.

- Eshana and Saad:
 - Mimi is amazing.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:54 pm.