THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of December 8, 2021

Attendance
Present: Cole Evans (President), Eshana Bhangu (VP Academic & University Affairs, left 11:55), Mary Gan (VP Finance), Saad Shoaib (VP External, by phone), Lorris Leung (Senior Student Services Manager), Mitchell Prost (Student Services Manager), Keith Hester (Managing Director), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Guest: Mimi Neufeld (Policy Advisor)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order
• The meeting was called to order at 11:14 am in Nest Room 3511.

Agenda
• The agenda was adopted (Saad, Mary).

Minutes
• The minutes of November 19 and December 1 were approved (Eshana, Mary).

I-17 and I-18
• Mimi:
  o Policies I-17 and I-18 (on sexual violence and respectful community) are being updated.
  o They are the responsibility of the Executive.
  o The review has begun.
    ▪ Cole’s assistant Dana sought feedback: some significant changes are needed.
    ▪ From late October through November there were meetings with stakeholders: HR, the Managing Director, SASC, SVPRO, the UBC Ombudsperson, UBC’s Equity and Inclusion Office.
    ▪ Will also meet with UBC’s Investigations Office.
  o Neither policy is very accessible, and they need to be made consistent with the Policy on Policies (I-1).
  o Want to expand on the values.
Currently the policies are extensive on principles, which is not appropriate in a policy.

- The plan is to develop a separate position statement.
  - There are procedural concerns: that the reports, investigations, and adjudication are not trauma-informed or survivor-centric.
  - They are very report/procedure heavy, with not a lot of support.
  - The policies are not clear on what to do about ongoing harm in the interim before a final determination.
  - Not a lot of training: want to identify who has training and capacity to do all these jobs.
  - The policies are lacking retaliation details:
    - They do have some, but they need to be more explicit.
  - Need to make sure there are clear appeal policies.
  - There’s a lack of clear guidelines for decisions and outcomes.
  - Need to make sure there’s support (educational and emotional).
  - Looking at alternative resolution processes.
  - Need to make sure people know about the policies.

Next steps:
- Capacity review: resources needed, funding.
  - Gathering information to see what we have and what we need.
- Work process map: determining who can help us, flow chart.
- Requesting funding from the Finance Committee for community consultation, honorariums for focus groups, and work with consultant: Bakau Consulting.
- Updating definitions and position statements.

Timeline:
- December: Prepare and begin capacity review, prepare for consultations.
- January: Doing consultations.
- February: Finish consultation, work on policy pieces. Draft by late February or early March.

Eshana:
- What is the plan for consultation? With whom?

Mimi:
- Planning that now.
- Want to consult the AMS community:
  - UBC students
  - AMS staff.
- It’s mostly club members and staff who access these policies.
- We’ve identified definitions we want feedback on: want to know the terms people prefer (e.g., survivor or complainant).
- Seeking qualitative feedback.
- Focus groups: one for students, one for staff.
- Will walk through the policies with them.
  - Eshana:
    - Permanent or student staff?
  - Mimi:
    - Ideally both.
  - Eshana:
    - Feedback from the permanent staff would be useful: they’ve been here longer, have insight.
  - Mitchell:
    - Who is the consultant?
  - Mimi:
    - Will Shelling at Bakau.
    - He has experience with the AMS, which is important because of the unique nature of the AMS.
    - It’s a natural fit.
    - He has a lot of expertise with UBC.
    - Won’t have to spend a lot of time explaining.
  - Cole:
    - Bakau is the top of the top in the city.
  - Saad:
    - Cost?
  - Mimi:
    - Budget proposal to the Finance Committee of around $2600:
      - $1500 for consulting.
      - Honorariums and thank you gifts.

**Vaccination Survey**

- Eshana:
  - 95 out of 105 answered.
- Cole:
  - Key findings:
    - 93% declared they were fully vaccinated.
    - A small percentage were partially vaccinated.
    - A few did not want to say.
    - A couple did not plan on getting fully vaccinated.
    - Since a substantial number have been fully vaccinated, a policy would only affect a small number of employees.
- Eshana:
  - A majority were in favour of implementing a policy.
- Cole:
  - We would never say get vaccinated or you’re out of here.
o We would require rapid testing if they choose not to be vaccinated.
  o If the AMS pays, there would be no excuse not to get rapid testing.

• Keith:
  o Vancouver Coastal Health is recommending against rapid testing.
  o UBC is not enforcing mandatory testing.

• Eshana:
  o Enforcement mechanisms are coming.

• Saad:
  o Can we use UBC’s rapid testing facilities?

• Keith:
  o I’ve asked; they haven’t got back.

• Eshana:
  o I’ll follow up.

• Cole:
  o Health authorities are not pushing rapid testing because they want to encourage vaccination.

• Eshana:
  o But rapid testing is a good alternative.
  o UBC is adopting it. So are businesses.

• Keith:
  o We’ll need another survey.
  o We don’t know who is not vaccinated.

• Cole:
  o Not for January 1.
    ▪ Have to figure out the logistics.
    ▪ How are we collecting information?
    ▪ What will the union say?
    ▪ We don’t have an HR Manager.
    ▪ It’s going to take a little longer.
    ▪ Sometime next semester.
  o The good thing is that the survey made evident that a significant majority are already vaccinated.
  o A policy would only affect a couple of employees.
  o Another question: How does this affect the rest of the building?
    ▪ Currently to go to Blue Chip you don’t need to show proof of vaccination, but if we change that, if everyone has to be vaccinated …
    ▪ No decisions yet.
  o UBC has taken a while too.
  o It’s not unreasonable that it’s taken us a while, especially in the absence of an HR Manager.

• Keith:
o 30 or 40 people in the survey were against a vaccination policy.

• Cole:
  o 65-70% were in favour.
  o 30% or so were not, and some were indifferent.
  o This suggests that some who are fully vaccinated themselves don’t support a policy to require vaccination.

• Keith:
  o Introducing a policy would mean we’d be taking on liability because it’s not mandated by the government.
  o Better to wait.

• Eshana:
  o The government is allowing private businesses to introduce vaccine policies.

• Keith:
  o But it’s not mandatory.

• Cole:
  o That’s a question for down the road.
  o We still need to look at capacity for rapid testing.

• Eshana:
  o Council has asked us to implement this.
  o We do want to do it?

• Cole:
  o If feasible.

• Eshana:
  o It’s our job to make it feasible.

• Cole:
  o There are lots of boxes to be ticked.

• Eshana:
  o I’d like an update to Council.
  o Council asked us.
  o I worry that this looks like we’re not doing anything.

• Cole:
  o Yes, I plan to report on the survey on January 12.
  o We’ve done the survey.
  o We’re looking into rapid testing.

[Eshana left.]

**Referenda**

• Cole:
  o On fees, make sure to consult and over-consult with the affected groups.
    ▪ Make clear to the groups what’s being planned.
    ▪ Talk to all the members of groups like Campus Culture.
The changes being proposed won’t affect fees; it will be just a pause in collection.
Once people understand, they won’t be too concerned.

Bylaw changes:
- May need total rewrite of the bylaws.
- Changing Council and the Executive.

Ombudsperson:
- Could report to a committee of Council.
- Needs stronger HR support.
- Clarify the relationship between our Ombudsperson and UBC’s.
- Maybe merge Ombuds and the Advocacy service.
  - They support each other.
  - There’s lots of back and forth.

Mitchell:
- The scope of work for Ombuds and Advocacy is very different.

Cole:
- Maybe shift the form of the Advocacy office:
  - Two wings, one for UBC stuff, one for AMS stuff.
- Lots of students don’t know about these services.

Managing Director’s Update

Keith:
- Staff benefits increasing 9.3% this year: more expensive for us.
- Events did a Stress Less Week.
- Proposing a new wage structure for hospitality staff:
  - Two tiers:
    - Part-time availability
    - Full-time availability.

Saad:
- Do we get mostly part-time applicants?

Keith:
- Yes, it’s more difficult to attract full-time.

Executive Updates

Saad’s update:
- Finalizing briefs for provincial lobbying with the GSS.
  - Student financial aid:
    - BC Access Grant increase.
    - Removing parental loan contributions.
• Tying geography and standards of living.
  o Working with the City of Vancouver on introducing tolls on access routes to reduce cars:
    ▪ Part of a climate emergency plan.
    ▪ Also working with UBC.
  o UCRU federal briefs:
    ▪ Lobbying in January.
  o Preparing U-Pass for next term.
• Keith:
  o Tolls?
• Saad:
  o The plan is to begin tolling routes into and through Vancouver.
  o Won’t take effect till 2026.
• Keith:
  o Will make staff retention even more of a problem.
• Saad:
  o Something we’ll bring up.
  o But it’s good for sustainability.
• Keith:
  o Need to address the public transit issue.

• Mary’s update:
  o Figuring out Food Access Plan: fund not allocated well.
  o Credit card and accounts.
  o Health & Dental meeting today.
  o Transitioning treasurers.
  o Meeting the Social Justice Centre to discuss the Resource Groups Fund.
  o Subsidies.

Services Updates
• Mitchell’s update:
  o Safewalk:
    ▪ Named the shuttles:
      • Vroom Est.
      • Safety McSafeFace.
    ▪ Fixed batteries.
  o Food Bank:
    ▪ $2000 received for food purchases.
  o Tutoring:
    ▪ Exam Jam.
• **Lorris’s update:**
  - Talking to the Affiliates about January orientation.
  - Meeting with vendors about a data collection system for the Services.
  - Orientation, marketing.

**Adjournment**
The meeting was adjourned at 12:24 pm.