Advisory Board Report
February 2022

Introduction

The Advisory Board is an advisory body to the Board of Directors of the Alma Mater Society. The Advisory Board has met with the Executives six times during their term, discussing and providing guidance on key issues such as COVID-19, the Strategic Plan, and the Society’s budget. Some changes to note on the structure and functioning of the Advisory Board are Code changes passed by AMS Council in November 2021, a new contract for Advisory Board professionals, and the introduction of monthly meetings and one-on-one sessions between the professionals and the Executive. There are currently four professionals advising the Executive; Alessia Rodriguez, Jerry Jim, Louis Retief, and Ron Gorodetsky.

Executive Goals

In June 2021, the Executives and the Student Services Manager presented the Advisory Board with their drafted goals and objectives for the upcoming year. The members provided extensive feedback, mainly highlighting the necessity to prioritize and break down their goals into measurable results.

Budget Review

During the June meeting, the Advisory Board went through comments provided by the Advisors in review of the budget. Discussions were had about making the budget more realistic with regard to the goals and contributions of each portfolio. Concerns about underspending were addressed, and the importance of connecting goals to budget in driving the organization as a whole was widely noted.

Staff Hiring and Labour Shortage

In November 2021, the Managing Director alongside the Executive brought to the Advisory Board concerns around labour shortages in the Society’s hospitality services, specifically in the culinary area. Advisors presented many suggestions, and the group discussed their potential feasibility. The necessity of maintaining current staff was also highlighted.
COVID-19

In July, as PHO guidelines were easing and UBC requirements were changing, the Advisory Board discussed the future of the mask requirement in the nest. The members spoke to many potential outcomes of removal and enforcement of the requirement, and ultimately discussed the importance of the Society’s advocacy efforts around Covid-19 prevention as a whole.

In September 2021, the Advisory Board discussed the possibility of a vaccine mandate for all AMS employees. It was determined that further evaluation of feasibility would be required.

Strategic Plan

In July 2021, the President presented the Advisory Board with an overview and timeline for the development and completion of the Society’s Strategic Plan. The Advisory Board provided extensive feedback, mainly advising for a 3-5 year plan, wide community consultation, and to hire another person to lead the development. In November 2021, Nicolas Romualdi, the Society’s external consultant leading the process, presented an update and his vision for the plan.

Fermentation Lab

In the August meeting, the President presented the Advisory Board with a detailed history of the Fermentation Lab (Brewery) Project. The group extensively discussed the project in terms of feasibility and strength of investment in terms of time, energy and resources.

Audited Statements

The President presented the Advisory Board with draft audited statements and Advisors provided feedback which was addressed, along with questions, in the September meeting.

Board Structure Review

In the September meeting, the President presented the Advisory Board with a discussion on a regular governance review based on the 2016 MNP recommendations, which would include a review of the AMS Council structure and its respective committees. The
Advisory Board recommended that the Executives review recommendations from the MNP report that were not implemented and decide which ones to pursue with the support of Council.

Equity Plan

The President presented the Advisory Board with a draft of the Equity Plan, which was reviewed by the members and provided feedback on.