



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

**AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Minutes of May 4, 2022

**Attendance**

Present: Eshana Bhangu (President), Dana Turdy (VP Academic & University Affairs), Rita Jin (VP Finance), Ben Du (VP Administration), Erin Co (VP External), Mitchell Prost (Student Services Manager, left 1 pm), Keith Hester (Managing Director), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Regrets: Lorris Leung (Senior Student Services Manager)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

**Call to Order**

- The meeting was called to order at 11:37 am in Nest Room 3511.

**Agenda**

- The agenda was adopted by consensus.

**Welcome**

- Eshana:
  - Welcome to the new Execs.
- Ben:
  - It's like the first day of school.
- Eshana:
  - Speak to IT about your computer accounts.
- Sheldon:
  - You should all be set up on the cc:AAccount system so that your emails get copied to the Archives.

**Minutes**

- The minutes of April 7 and April 27 were approved (Eshana, Rita).

**Council and Committee Appointments**

- Eshana:
  - Council usually meets on Wednesdays.
  - Next week the meeting is on Tuesday because I will be away.
  - We will be doing committee appointments:

- Suspending the Committee Appointments Policy which would have us select the appointees online out of Council because the timing doesn't work.
- We will still give five days' notice, then choose the appointees in the meeting.
- We will choose by first past the post voting rather than having ranked ballots or runoffs.
- Students at Large will submit blurbs.
- Councillors will speak.

### Execs on Committees

- The Executive made the following selections:
  - Finance: Eshana.
  - Governance: Dana.

### Council Business

- Eshana:
  - Equity Action Plan.
    - Being reformatted by Coms.
  - Appointments.
  - Credit Card Policy.
  - Preliminary Budget:
    - We should suspend Code requiring this.
- Rita:
  - Yes, given the short time there would be between the already postponed Preliminary Budget and the Final Budget.
- Eshana:
  - The Preliminary Budget was postponed to June 1, but the Final Budget has to be approved June 22.
- Ben:
  - What's the difference between the Preliminary Budget and the Final Budget?
- Keith:
  - The outgoing Executive works on the Preliminary Budget.
  - The incoming works on the Final Budget.
- Eshana:
  - The process is exhaustive.
  - Goes to the Finance Committee.
  - It's important for financial discipline.
  - There should be little difference between the Preliminary and the Final Budget.

## Recent Council Motions

### *Executive Commitments and Management*

- Eshana:
  - Council passed Code amendments limiting Executives' outside commitments and requiring that they be approved by Council.
  - Also the President was given the responsibility of managing the other Executive members.
  - And all Executives will report monthly to Council in camera on their performance.
  - Regular reporting like this will be better than singling anyone out; it makes it routine.
  - We are introducing higher standards.

### *Statement*

- Eshana:
  - Council directed us to issue a statement to condemn apartheid as practised by the Israeli state.
  - This is not directed at the Israeli people or at Jewish students on campus.
  - Mimi is working on it and has been consulting both sides.
  - The statement will go up on the website.
  - We were also directed to advocate to the University.
  - As I predicted, the University Administration has said it will not divest from the nine named companies.
  - They jumped the gun, releasing their response before we even submitted our request.
  - We will still make an official request; they will probably tell us to see their already released response.
  - We are also writing a letter to the Board of Governors; Mimi is working on that.
  - This is not BDS; it is targeted divestment as directed by the Council motion.

## Office Hours, Bios, Permanent Staff

- Eshana:
  - We have to keep five office hours a week.
  - We have publicized our hours.
  - Best to have students make appointments to see you.
  - If no one books, you can use the time for a meeting.
  - One office hour is supposed to be in a public place.
  - We could do that one collectively.
- Mitchell:
  - Monday lunch.
- Eshana:
  - You also need to fill out the form to get your bio on the website.

- And be responsive to the permanent staff:
  - Submit your credit card receipts.

## Communications

- Erin:
  - Useful to have a more set process.
  - If emergencies come up, can they be put first? Like when there was the snap provincial election.
  - Some things need to go out in a timely fashion.
- Dana:
  - There should be a form to submit to Coms.
- Keith:
  - Eric has one.
- Eshana:
  - It's too specific; couldn't add things to it.
- Mitchell:
  - The Services have a point person in Coms to reach out to.
  - There should be a specified person for the Exec too.
- Keith:
  - That would be Anne.
  - Go to her for urgent things.
- Eshana:
  - Eric does weekly check-ins.
  - We should invest more in Coms.
  - Need more staff, more Annes.
  - Student engagement/communications – that's the biggest thing for us.
- Erin:
  - Students say they get their information from personal Instagram accounts.
  - Should be more from the main AMS account.
- Eshana:
  - That account has grown a lot.
  - It now has 7,000 followers.
- Mitchell:
  - Coms is hiring Work Learn students to help out.
- Eshana:
  - For the summer.
  - They have more capacity in the summer; it's a good time to get things ready.
- Ben:
  - Santa Ono does videos.
  - We could do that.
- Eshana:

- But no dogs like in Santa's.
- UBC gets good results from the videos.
- We should get Execs out there.
- Like that Trojan Horse at the 1987 Welcome Back Barbecue:

## Masks

- Ben:
  - Are we extending our mask policy?
- Eshana:
  - Since UBC has extended theirs, it doesn't make sense to have the Nest be without masks.
  - If UBC ends theirs, we will stop.
  - UBC was getting conflicting advice and their decision was that there was no harm in keeping it.
  - It's hard to enforce.
- Erin:
  - Will they give us a heads-up if they change it?
- Eshana:
  - Sometimes they do, sometimes not. They forget.
- Ben:
  - Someone needs to go around to tell people about our policy.
- Eshana:
  - Masks remain mandatory until June 30, but we will review the policy with Council.
- Mitchell:
  - Do we still play those announcements?
- Keith:
  - We can run those again.

## Jewish Students Consultation

- Eshana:
  - Jewish groups are upset with the Council motion on Israel.
  - They gave us good feedback on process.
    - This would be a good time to make changes: we need a formal consultation process.
      - Can make that a team goal.
  - They also want a working definition of anti-Semitism.
    - We can issue a separate statement on that.
  - They'd like to speak at Council as Students at Large when the Advocacy Committee minutes about the Israel motion come to Council.
    - I said we'd notify them and they're more than welcome to attend.

- Dana:
  - Mimi was asking about a policy on geopolitical issues.
- Eshana:
  - I suggested an external policy saying we don't get involved in geopolitical issues, unless they connect to students on campus.
  - This would help define our mandate.
- Mitchell:
  - Would the statement on anti-Semitism go in the Equity Plan?
- Erin:
  - What about other clubs?
  - They might say they weren't consulted.
- Eshana:
  - Good point.
  - Do we want to be reactive?
- Mitchell:
  - That's why we need to be proactive and have a policy on consultations.
- Ben:
  - What about self-participation?
- Eshana:
  - That's what happened with the divestment motion.
  - The divestment group came to us.

[Mitchell leaves.]

### **U-Pass**

- Erin:
  - During the pandemic some students didn't want the U-Pass, but now we're getting hundreds of emails from students who want the U-Pass.
  - Can we get money to subsidize their monthly bus pass, those who are currently paying full fare?
- Rita:
  - There's a subsidy every year; they can apply.
- Erin:
  - Are they eligible?
  - The MoU is clear: only students taking courses in person get the U-Pass.
- Eshana:
  - Even if students are not taking a class, we want them to get the U-Pass.
  - How can we make them eligible?
  - Can you change the eligibility criteria?
- Erin:

- It's the MoU; we'd have to renegotiate that.
- And there might be a mixed response: some who are not taking courses don't want to have to pay for the U-Pass.
- Eshana:
  - We need robust mechanisms and criteria.
  - We also need innovative ideas.
  - This is something for next year.

**Equity Action Plan/Strategic Plan**

- Eshana:
  - The new version of the Equity Plan is ready for Council.
  - On the Strategic Plan there's still significant work to do.
    - My team will work on it with Keith.
    - Engagement with Council is needed.
    - I think at present it would fail despite all the work done by the student consultant because Councillors feel they didn't have a chance to engage.
    - The hope is for approval by the second meeting in June.

**Seat swap**

- Ben:
  - Switching chairs between the offices: Keith's, Eshana's, Erin's, mine.
  - Also the chairs in the lobby.
- Eshana:
  - What about the Gallery furniture?
- Keith:
  - Some is going and will be available.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 pm.