



THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of February 1, 2023

Attendance

Present: Eshana Bhangu (President), Anisha Sandhu (VP Academic & University Affairs), Ben Du (VP Administration), Erin Co (VP External), Celia Chung (Acting Managing Director), Kathleen Simpson (Senior Manager of Student Services), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Guests: Viola Chao (Equity & Inclusion)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 9:38 am in Nest Room 3529 and over Zoom.

Agenda

- The agenda was approved by consensus.

SASC and Hillel

- Eshana:
 - Hillel reached out to express dissatisfaction with SASC because of political stances SASC was taking.
- Kathleen:
 - A conversation took place involving Adam Dobrer from Hillel, along with representatives of SASC and the Ombudsperson.
 - Hillel wanted us to recognize the trauma of Jewish students.
 - They wanted to feel heard.
 - The conversation went well.
- Eshana:
 - The context of this was SASC involvement with BDS and some negative interactions over email.
 - SASC is now taking an apologetic and positive approach.
- Kathleen:
 - Hillel was asking for a healing circle.
 - Hopefully we can do something.

Equity & Inclusion Specialist

- Job description for new permanent staff position.

- Kathleen:
 - This is great.
 - They can take over lots of what is being done by part-time staff.
 - Will centralize.
- Ben:
 - Will this mean eliminating EDI positions on the student side?
- Lawrence:
 - Are other student unions doing this?
- Viola:
 - Some have it within their Executive team.
- Eshana:
 - That's how we do it now, but the Equity Action Plan called on us to create a permanent position for equity.
 - I originally thought this would mean eliminating all equity positions in the President's Office, but it might be helpful to retain a student position as well, at reduced hours, and I want to preserve the Indigenous Engagement Facilitator position.
 - The new permanent position should work closely with the Executive, the way the Policy Advisor does.
- Kathleen:
 - Do we want to require experience with equity in a higher education setting?
 - That might mean getting further away from being a student.
- Celia:
 - It may be hard to find that experience.
 - This is a new sort of position.
- Eshana:
 - We have room to set direction.
- Viola:
 - It could be an asset, not a requirement.
- Eshana:
 - I think there's too much about coordination in the current description.
 - Do we want to add to the duties and responsibilities?
- Viola:
 - A lot of the coordinating could go to the student role.
- Eshana:
 - Want them to be working with Executives.
 - What could be their role there?
- Ben:
 - Goal-setting.
 - Clubs: is this role supposed to be pro-active?
 - Developing a code of conduct for clubs?

- Or would there be overlap with the Ombudsperson?
- Eshana:
 - Ombudsperson might be best, but there could also be something pro-active for this position to do.
- Ben:
 - The Operations Committee Policy Manual could do with better EDI policies.
 - Should they be liaising with communities as it says here?
- Eshana:
 - Will take the part out about them making statements.
- Ben:
 - They may bring balance when a statement is being drafted.
 - Could restrict what they make statements about: student life.
- Eshana:
 - It's the President who makes statements.
 - They can give input.

Updates

- *Lawrence's update:*
 - Working with MNP on the backlog: not as extensive as thought.
 - Reforecast.
- Eshana:
 - Getting updated forms for the website?
- Lawrence:
 - They're ready.
- *Erin's update:*
 - Finishing lobbying week packages.
 - Equity-based grants policy paper.
 - Funding submission.
 - UCRU: strategizing for the future.
 - Letter about climate goals.
- *Ben's update:*
 - 26 new club applications, on top of 10 before. Extending deadline to February 3.
 - Beta testing new canvas course.
 - Room booking backlog: working on clearing.
 - Lending Library nearing completion.
 - Finished consultation on pocket lounges and microwaves.
- *Anisha's update:*
 - OER reception went well.

- Working on the Academic Experience Survey (AES):
 - Reached out to a company (Kai Analytics).
 - Offering pretty much the same as before, but one new thing: an infographic.
 - Biggest concern: already exceeded budget.
- Eshana:
 - Wouldn't worry about budget: it includes the payout for last year's survey.
 - What about Leger?
- Anisha:
 - Some correspondence with them.
- Eshana:
 - Let them know we're doing an RFP.
 - Have to go to Finance Committee to switch firms.
- Lawrence:
 - Dana was about to do that, but then she left.
- Eshana:
 - Have you started drafting and revising questions?
- Anisha:
 - Wondering about flexibility.
 - The policy says we have to ask certain questions.
- Eshana:
 - Yes, but there is flexibility.
 - In the past we tended to collect the same data UBC does, but we need to collect data that will help our advocacy, e.g. on mental health and on academic experience.
 - The Academic Experience Survey tends not to ask about academic experience, but it should; we want to ask students about their course work, exams, etc.
- Anisha:
 - Can reuse questions from the mental health survey?
- Eshana:
 - Yes.
- *Eshana's update:*
 - Planning going well for Awards Reception.
 - Constituency of the Year.
 - Planning for a Health & Dental increase.
 - Going to be a high dollar figure.
 - Will put a note with question saying mental health coverage will be reduced if the referendum fails.
 - Gender affirming care:
 - Working with Studentcare to try to expand this.

- Don't believe it's feasible this year.
 - We're already in deficit of \$53.16 per student.
 - It is very important to expand access to gender affirming care, but the Health & Dental Plan is a basic plan.
 - We would need an increase of \$83.63 just to match last year and catch up.
- Looking to get Sauder profs to help with our budget reforecast.
- On UBC President's search committee.
- Senate policy to cap cost of digital assessment tools that students have to pay for: going well.
- *Ben's update Part 2:*
 - Jump Start:
 - They were going to scale it back, but there was pushback.
 - Will essentially remain the same.
 - Reducing some time in seminars, but reducing the number students have to attend, so that will get more students to attend.
 - That's their plan for 2023.
 - They also want to reshape the program to serve upper year students and not just first years.
 - Ideally keep Jump Start and let upper years benefit.
- *Eshana's update Part 2:*
 - Governance review going well.
 - Bylaw changes.
 - Indigenous Constituency.
 - Reducing size of Council from 42 to 28.
 - Managing Director posting up.
- *Celia's update:*
 - Ticket sales good for Block Party.
- *Kathleen's update:*
 - All Services on board the data system.
 - Tutoring platform going well.
 - Peer Support busy:
 - Had to invoke emergency procedures for suicide, sexual assault.
 - Advocacy:
 - Amazing feedback.
 - Want to talk about the Faculty Academic Misconduct Policy; want it improved; it imposes more serious consequences than the President's Office.

- New Food Bank coordinator.
 - January the busiest month yet, despite reducing staff visits.
- Safewalk marketing campaign.
- Eshana:
 - Expanding Safewalk to allow the intoxicated to ride, the students who need it the most.
 - Word has gone out that Safewalk will turn you away if you've had even a drink or two.
- Kathleen:
 - We never said no to the intoxicated in our policy.
 - If you can speak and walk, you can come with us.

Pit

- Lawrence:
 - Opening on Fridays.
 - Replacing Wednesdays?
- Eshana:
 - No, in addition.
 - Very exciting.
 - More revenue, more fun.
- Celia:
 - Theme parties.
 - Working with Events.

Minutes

- The remaining outstanding minutes will be gathered and approved to go to Council.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:43 am.