



THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

AMS Ad-Hoc Governance Review Committee

Minutes of August 11, 2022

Membership

Voting Members: Max Holmes (Chair – AMS Councillor), Eshana Bhangu (Vice-Chair – AMS President), Audrey Chow (AMS Councillor), Cynara Onyemordi (AMS Councillor), Mathew Ho (AMS Councillor), Christian Kyle (AMS Councillor), Rachel Kim (AMS Councillor)

Regularly Invited Guests: Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council), Kamil Kanji (Strategy and Governance Lead), Joshua Kim (Projects and Communications Lead)

Recording Secretary: Kamil Kanji (Strategy and Governance Lead)

Call to Order

The meeting is called to order at 6:09 PM.

Approval of the Agenda

BIRT the agenda be approved as presented.

Motion: Eshana Bhangu

Second: Rachel Kim

Approval of Minutes

BIRT the minutes be approved as presented.

Motion: Max Holmes

Second: Eshana Bhangu

Scope Approval (30 Minutes)

Max: Wants to thank Kamil for all the hard work on the scope, some of the main things that were the bigger edits, because of the conversation last time on the timeline we want this document kept to the scope because it will be a Council approved document but at the presentation that will be given at the next Council meeting Eshana and Kamil will present on a timeline, they have a graphic of that, the important thing is we are always going back to Council for feedback and I think that one of the things we heard last time was that if the timeline is in the scope and then we deviate for any reason which can often happen then it would be very difficult for us to deviate from something that was approved by Council, we would have to go

back each time and ask for permission to deviate, I think those are the biggest things for the changes, all of the things discussed last time about making sure that we were generally looking at functioning, oversight, transparency, accessibility, and accountability measures for both groups of Council and Executives and so we have applied that to everything equally, we have all the people that will be consulted on these relationships, though we don't include a timeline we have who will be consulted and who we have to have conversations with, is there any feedback on the scope document? Any changes that want to be made? If not, we can discuss approval.

CK: Under the AMS Council, we list all the staff members that liaise with Council under section 9 but then under another section with the internal stakeholders we don't list them, incredibly pedantic but do we figure that because we have already listed them out the first time we don't have to do so again?

Max: Yes that is the idea, I think that is okay, but CK would you feel more comfortable if we copied the list and put it there?

CK: No preference.

Max: We can just copy and paste.

Amendment - BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Governance Review Scope as amended be recommended to AMS Council for approval.

Motion: Max Holmes Second: Eshana Bhangu

Amendment carries unanimously.

Max: Any other feedback?

None.

Max: Great, let's move the motion for approval.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Governance Review Scope as amended be recommended to AMS Council for approval.

Motion: Rachel Kim Second: Audrey Chow

Carries unanimously.

Max: Thanks everyone, that was much quicker than I thought, we can move on to internal consultation survey and the timing, I am going to combine those agenda items so that we can hear from people some of the best ways of doing this.

Internal Consultation Survey (50 Minutes) and Internal Consultation Timing and Results

Max: For the survey, Kamil Eshana and I met today to discuss timing, I think we want 3 weeks for internal consultation, we will give time to fill out the survey with the understanding that there will be further consultation later on once we get to the solution phase, so what the plan is to give this Committee a little more time and not to rush the creation of the survey is that rather than approving the survey at the next meeting we will discuss draft questions then instead and then approve the survey on August 25th and launch the survey on the 26th, then everyone would be given 3 weeks to fill it out, so that would take us from August 26th to September 16th and during that time we would also do the interviews with Presidents and the MD, the other hope would be that we also have approval of those questions asked to these people by August 25th but it might take us to September 1st, looking at the fact that I will be gone for two weeks we might just change our meeting time to 1 hour, and once we get the survey approved we are going to want to wait and see the feedback we are getting from stakeholders and then in September we can really start discussing draft solutions, that will also give some time for research to be done outside the Committee that we can task to Eshana's staff, I hope that makes sense, would be happy to hear feedback on that timeline and then maybe we can discuss themes we want to ask about in the survey today and one thing I want to ask is how people want to draft the survey, do people want Kamil to draft a survey and then we will consider it at our next meeting or would people like a week to send us questions then Kamil draft using that, I would appreciate Committee members being given an opportunity to send in feedback but the only way I want to do that is if Committee members are comfortable agreeing that they will send feedback or at least that they will send in a couple of questions, yes so any thoughts?

CK: How do we feel about deciding what we want out of the questions, then Kamil can draft the survey, if we just submit questions wholesale to Kamil then it will be in different voices, we can maybe just discuss the broader what do we want out of these questions then Kamil can make the survey in his voice, I think it will be a lot more consistent that way.

Max: Yeah I like the idea of discussing themes of what we want out of the survey, I think because we have the scope that we just approved right in front of us we can just go through that document, for example we can break out the groups that will be consulted with their own survey questions and look at how we will ask questions about oversight, transparency, accessibility, and accountability, those are the themes we want to ask about, and so Kamil what do you think about drafting the survey, do you think it is realistic to have a draft survey at the next meeting if we come up with some themes today?

Kamil: Yep, I can do that.

Max: Great, so the Committee would discuss the draft survey at the next meeting and then Kamil will go back and draft more and then we will approve on the 25th, so I would like to go through groups and the themes we want to ask them, so let's start with AMS Councillors, we are consulting with them about AMS Council and their relationship with the Executives, our themes are general functioning, oversight, transparency, accessibility and accountability measures, so what are some of the key things we want to be getting feedback from this group?

CK: I think some kind of filters or demographic questions to start with before we even get to the main questions, something like do you regularly attend AMS Council, do you regularly speak at AMS Council, if someone does not attend Council at all and then gives feedback on the minutia of Council that is viewed in a different way.

Max: I agree that we need questions that probe at people's involvement, I think the other thing we would ask Councillors is what committees you served on, yes so any other demographic themed questions people want asked, so we have got what is your participation like at Council, what committees you have served on, is there anything else people want with the understanding that there will be certain demographic questions for everyone like we will always ask people their faculty, etc, so understanding that there will be general demographic questions of everyone what are the specific things we want to know about Councillors?

CK: I think if we are asking faculty of a lot of the Councillors then we are also asking for their identity because most people are the single Councillors from their faculty outside of like four faculties and so that gives the exact name and identity of every single person that answers the survey, I don't know if I have a solution for that but I would keep this in mind.

Eshana: We can just not ask for faculty, is it necessary?

Max: What I would say is, is this a cross tab that would give us useful information, probably not because the sample size is so small that even in the big faculties you might have only one Councillor decide to answer the survey, so yeah maybe let's not ask people's faculty.

CK: A question that might replace it is are you obligated to be here by your position or are you elected? I don't know how many people this would apply to but EUS, CUS and KUS all have people who ran for something else but serve on Council as a default.

Max: I understand, so asking if are you ex-officio or not is a great way to address that.

CK: Does the average student know what ex-officio means?

Max: No, we are not going to ask it exactly like that.

CK: Yes, so that's my point.

Max: I think we will ask if are you ex-officio, then give the definition.

CK: I would say another Councillor question is do you feel comfortable speaking at Council.

Max: Yes agreed, that speaks to accessibility, one of the things we are looking at is not only is the body accessible to outside people but is the body accessible to people serving on it, getting to oversight a little bit I think one of the things we should be asking Councillors is did you feel you had input into the executive goals, the other thing is is did you feel there were proper oversight mechanisms for you to be heard.

CK: For last year Councillors I would break that out even more and ask did you feel you were able to hold executives accountable at their various goal presentations, did those goals feel like they were actually achieved, do you feel like this was an accountability measure that succeeded at those juncture points.

Max: I think with consultation with Councillors we will only have one section and in the demographic questions we will have were you a Councillor this year or last year, and so when we have questions like did you feel you were able to hold the executives accountable we understand that this year's Councillors are answering from the standpoint that they have been involved since the beginning versus last years Councillors will come from being involved throughout the whole process, let's think about some other things we might want to ask, I guess getting to training and orientation the question that should be asked of everyone is did you feel like you were properly prepared when you became an AMS Councillor and went through orientation.

CK: We should ask before that, did you attend orientation, that would help us understand whether attending that orientation helps you become a better Councillor, another crucial cross tab would be asking if the person has been a Councillor before because that may aid their performance.

Max: Okay so we have that for general functioning, one thing we need to get to is did you feel you had the adequate time to dedicate to your role as a Councillor, there are things we want to ask within that but I just don't think we can ask all Councillors because like ex-officios have other roles, one way you can ask that question is did you feel you had the adequate time to fulfill the responsibilities that come with being elected to this position, so for example you being EUS President you were not just elected to be a Councillor but elected to do all these Constituency related things.

CK: Also asking if AMS Council feels like a conducive use of their time, or rather is it efficient when it comes to time, thinking about length of AMS Council, I know at least in my mind that was the biggest complaint I ever heard.

Max: Yes, like is AMS Council efficient in its operations including the amount of time that it spends at Council.

CK: Yeah and then asking a follow up right after that, if you answered below a certain threshold then asking why or what about it was inefficient.

Max: Kamil draft mostly for now with these themes, we will be able to do a lot of that follow up when we see the draft questions, one thing I would like is that we need to probe relationships, so do you think Council had a productive relationship with the Executive, I want some of that, but who do we want to be asking that of with Council because it also has a relationship with the MD, constituencies, what do we want to hear from Councillors?

CK: We could do a thing where we ask do you feel Council achieve holding the executives... then it could be kept them functioning, provided oversight, kept them transparent, provided accessibility, and kept them accountable and then break that down as a rating of 1-5 on each of those.

Max: I think that is a good model to take for the relationship question, how effective do you think the relationship between Council and X was with multiple options and then break them down to evaluating between 1-5 and add a general comment box at the bottom if people want to elaborate, any other Council themes?, we have general functioning, oversight, and transparency, we can move on to Committee Chairs, I think one of the first things is do you feel you were adequately supported as a Chair by staff and executive, do you feel you had good orientation, training, etc, anything else?

CK: We should separate Chairs out because that is another identifying question, it makes it less anonymous, so if we can indicate that a staff member will actually take this section and it will be identified separately from everything else.

Max: Yes we will be clear to people that the survey is anonymous, also the thing to remember is that the full results of the survey will not go to Council, we will create a summary document for Council to give, we will be clear with people that the survey results are private and just for this Committee to look at, one other thing is I think we have to ask what former Committees they chaired and then on top of that we have to ask about the relationship of support staff and executives to their Committee, did you feel that staff supported you throughout the process and had appropriate input in the agenda, another thing I would like to ask is how much time on average in a week did you spend in your role?

CK: Do we want to separate out time sitting at the meeting or just outside work?

Max: I think we should ask total time which includes time at the meeting because we will ask Councillors about their time commitment in which we will include Council meetings so for the sake of consistency.

CK: Also, do we want to ask how much they felt they were running and doing everything in the meeting versus how collaborative the meetings are.

Max: There is a great way to ask that in what percentage of business that came to your committee came from executives that sit on the Committee, from the committee chair, from committee members, from paid staff (this includes execs and staff together), the only thing we need to think about though is that there are Committees that are very operational and the things they are working on doesn't necessarily come from any of those rather it is more operational work that is being created, Finance Committee and Operations Committee are an example of that, we want to hear what percentage of the Committee business for the year came from the executives and staff, the Committee, the Committee Chair, and then the fourth part is the fact that there are general operational aspects like clubs at the Operations Committee, one way we can fix that question is exclude regular operational things, we can also ask Chairs how much of your time was spent on regular operational work done every year and how much time was spent on considering new things, any other things we want included?

Kamil: What is the cap of the number of questions per group?

Max: Because there are people overlapping we should not be asking more than 15-20 questions maximum of each group.

CK: For Chairs I think we should ask them about their reporting to Council, how effective they thought it was for the ones that did it last year.

Max: We will ask about Committee accountability to Chairs and Councillors, to Councillors how much did you feel Chairs were actually held accountable, anything else for Chairs? If anyone has any thoughts before Monday, please send to Kamil, let's move on to executives, what do we want to ask them? I think we will ask them to identify which executive they were, we have to allow them to identify multiple, particular questions to them is do you think the relationship between the Executives and Council was effective, how much of an impact do you think Council had on your work as an executive, one thing I want to probe was how willing were you to bring an issue to Council, one thing we recognized last year when it came to management and oversight was that there are things executives are unwilling to bring to Council and that is not a very healthy relationship between executives and a board, we need to ask some trust questions between the two groups.

CK: We should ask how effective executive committee and strategy were, and then asking about how in charge and managerial the VPs want the President to be, does Council charge the President with holding VPs accountable or does Council want to hold each VP accountable, I think deciding what structure we like is important.

Max: When it comes to that we do need a question probing at the relationship between the President and VPs, maybe we want to word it a little bit differently which is how supportive and effective was the relationship between the VPs and President, we can add a comment section there, I agree that we should ask about the functioning of the Executive Committee, we will ask about orientation and training, so how effectively were you onboarded, did you feel prepared coming into the role after training.

Audrey: This has to do with Councillors, is it worth it to ask when we are asking about relationships with executives, if a Councillor has a personal relationship with the Executives then it affects how supported they feel.

Max: I don't know how we will parse that out in a survey because one thing I will point out is that everyone has relationships in a student organization to some degree, maybe we can ask how well you were acquainted with people beforehand.

CK: You could ask how close did you feel with the Executives and then the second question how well was your working relationship with the Executives, that would help us see if there is a correlation between being personal and professional with the executives.

Max: We are already asking professional relationship questions when we ask about oversight, accountability and other things.

Eshana: Even from the Executive perspective I know some Executives are more comfortable seeking personal advice from some Councillors on AMS things because there are different degrees of understanding.

Max: How would we word that and what do we think the result of that question will help us understand?

Eshana: Kamil will word it.

Max: Kamil will attempt to word a question like that and then we can decide if it is useful, any other questions to ask about Executives?

CK: We should ask Executives if they felt Council was holding them accountable, transparent, accessible, maintaining oversight and helped with their functioning, and then have the 1-5 system.

Max: We need to ask questions of the Executives about managing the MD, like do you feel you were effectively able manage and oversee the MD.

CK: What is the relationship of other Executives with the MD.

Max: The Executive Committee should be managing the MD.

Eshana: Yes, but the President as Chair of Executive Committee just inherently has more of a managerial relationship with the MD.

Max: One of the things we are also going to have to recognize is that we are consulting 5 years worth of Executives and so managing strategies and relationships have really varied, we want questions about effective management, do you feel there were appropriate advice and structures in place to help you manage the MD, anything else?, we will ask Executives about Committees, some of those relationship questions, actually I have a question, we have not defined the term AMS Executive, does that include services or not? We are asking many questions about executives, people have different definitions of that whether you are on Council, staff, etc.

CK: I think they are worth separating because there is a fundamentally different relationship between Council and the Executive and Council and the SSM.

Max: I think the relationship of the SSM is within our scope but services might not be, we should ask the Executive a question about their relationship with the SSM, so we are not including services as executive student staff, correct?

Agreement.

Max: So current and former student staff, what questions do we want to ask them? Of course, we will ask them what office they worked in, I think an important question will be did you directly report to your VP or another staff member? We can talk about orientation, and onboarding, but what else? We should not discuss relationship with Council but should keep it limited to within the portfolio, their section will be the shortest, one thing we can get to is what input did you have into the operations, did you feel heard by your executive, did you feel like you could play a meaningful role in the portfolio, I also want to ask them what were the hours you were paid and what were the hours you worked.

CK: For this section, I think it should be more open-ended than other sections because student staff work is so different, having this more text-oriented is better, permanent staff do such different things than student staff.

Max: We are only talking about student staff right now, permanent staff will be asked different questions than student staff.

CK: Student staff are the 4–5-person team under each executive? What else are they besides that?

Max: Student staff is just that, it is the people Executives hire and work under you, services will not be included under executive student staff, services have their own separate review.

CK: We should ask about professionalism, so if the environment was what they wanted and if not why.

Matthew: We should ask what incentivizes them to come in.

Max: Like how passionate did you feel about the work coming in versus when you were in the role.

CK: I think this is implicit but were you supported by your Executive.

Max: Yes, also how effectively do you feel you were managed as a staff member, actually maybe instead of that do you feel you had clear expectations as a staff member from your direct report or Executive.

CK: I think the generally the theme of were you resourced well enough to address the challenges of the role.

Max: Did orientation and training prepare you for the responsibilities of your role,

CK: Are we going to ask just portfolio or role as well?

Max: I think we will ask just portfolio what you worked under, I don't think we will be diving deep into each Executive portfolio like I don't think we will be changing the operation of the art gallery but what we will look at is does hiring work, are these people properly trained, is managing working but we will not be making many changes that go down to their level, any last bits?

CK: Is what the student staff do controlled by Council?

Max: Their JDs are approved by HR and Council but they are managed by their respective Executives.

CK: Maybe some kind of question on do you feel you had the resources to deal with your student staff if they weren't doing their job.

Max: Yes agreed, we are having interviews with Presidents who almost all of whom were Executives prior, so we have covered staff, what about Presidents Council, what questions do we want to ask them and how far back are we going? Are we asking this years or previous years?

Rachel: I think previous year Presidents are harder to reach out to so gathering this years is good enough, in terms of questions it will likely revolve around relationship to AMS, some Presidents are involved with Council and some others are not so how do you feel about your general relationship with the AMS, some might feel supported and then some might not.

Max: Yes and I think we will need to be clear with Presidents that if you serve on Council we are asking you these questions solely in your role as President, not as a Councillor, we need to stay high level and should be focused on how supported you felt, how accessible was the AMS, did they quickly respond to your concerns, did you feel you knew who to contact if you had an issue, so all these general questions of support for constituencies.

Rachel: Also, let's add asking how informed your VPs were about the AMS because not all issues go through the President.

Max: Sure.

Matthew: It might be useful to include Presidents from previous years, the involvement of Presidents at the AMS was much less active in previous years and so what hindered that in the past.

Max: I understand but I would add that we are staying pretty high level with what we are asking the Presidents and not asking so much so their engagement but rather how supported they felt in their constituency relationship with the AMS, constituencies do a lot of work that is independent and we want to know in doing that work was AMS Central able to effectively support them.

CK: I was going to agree that including past Presidents is a good idea but wasting our time getting into contact them with is not a good idea, we could just ask current Presidents to pass on the survey to former ones as the most effort we should put into that, we should ask do you think your relationship as a constituency was dependant on your positive relationship with the Executives, essentially figuring out if you were treated better because you were closer with Executives.

Max: What other questions for Presidents Council?

Matthew: We should ask them to rate their understanding of the AMS.

Max: That gets to the how well informed were you about who to contact if you needed support, this is about support and relationship with central AMS but less so about constituency engagement with the AMS work because that happens through other means, most of the time it does not happen through Presidents.

Rachel: Depending on when the survey goes out we can probably list some big resources the AMS provides constituencies and ask if you are aware of these resources and if you have utilized them, or just ask what AMS resources has your constituency used.

Max: There is this great question section in the AES that asks people are you aware of X, have you used it and how effective was it, I think that's what we're trying to get at, it's all one question and a ranking bar.

CK: What would we even include there besides priority bookings?

Max: I agree, even some of the things that do work with constituencies are one-offs like tutoring only works with certain constituencies, it is mostly a financial and bookings relationship, there isn't much outside that, so actually lets just cut that question, we can ask though how effective was the booking and financial systems.

CK: We should ask how useful is the President's Council, how effective, and how can it be improved.

Max: Great, we can end the President Council there, I will skip the MD because we are having an individual discussion with him, we have to schedule the meeting with the MD and Presidents and we have till mid-September for that, permanent staff that directly support Council and Committees will be the most tricky one and I would advise Eshana and Kamil to talk to HR about some of these things, we want to ask them how effective was the relationship, how good were Councillors and Executives in communicating with you about expectations, was your role clear in these settings with Council and Committees, I often hear that year-year relationships change and expectations are not clear.

CK: I think asking them what the ideal relationship between them and Council is and asking the same questions about if Council is worth their time and if it is a good use of their time.

Max: Yeah, we will need to ask them are you a member of Council or invited to Council and then from there asked how useful is that and the same thing with Committees, we want to ask were they a member or invited, then asking was it a good relationship, worth your time and did you go.

Matthew: We could ask them if their commitment with Committees and Council is more than what they initially signed up for in their job descriptions?

Max: Sure.

CK: Do these employees log their hours so that we can cross-reference them to what they say?

Max: No, I don't think we will look at their HR information.

CK: Okay cause we are asking if they spend a certain amount of time over their job description but what do we do with that once we get that information, would we go to HR and ask them to change their hours? What are the steps?

Max: No, I think the question we want to get at there is what was the expectation of your relationship with Council and what was your actual relationship, if an HR issue did arise then we would immediately refer that somewhere, I think we can keep their section short, it is important with this group to get feedback but it is also important that we are looking at the least amount of changes with this group because a lot of it has to do with their job descriptions, we are really looking at our relationship with them not really their roles, okay I think we have done as much as we will effectively do today.

Next Steps and Other Business (10 Minutes)

CK: When are we going to have the discussion with external stakeholders?

Max: With external stakeholders that consultation will be launched in mid-October, we need to discuss solutions before we get to what we want to talk to those people about, that will be a conversation in late September and the beginning of October, maybe we will task the President's Office with presenting to us their strategy for outreach.

CK: How will we analyse the results of the survey? Will we get a report from the Presidents office? Or see the raw data?

Max: This survey or both?

CK: Both.

Max: With this survey, the results will be reviewed by myself and the President's Office, we will bring the Qualtrics in and review it in the meeting, have people ask specific questions, the President's Office will draft a report with different themes which we will give feedback on, we will have access to the Qualtrics in the meeting and people can give specific requests, with an external consultation survey I think it is too early to discuss that, when it comes to external consultation we may ask for support from the Policy Advisor, I think that is everything we needed to discuss, if anyone has any themes or questions for the draft survey send by Monday to Kamil.

Adjournment

The meeting is adjourned at 7:35 PM.