



THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

AMS Executive Performance and Accountability Committee
Minutes of July 5th, 2023

Attendance

Present: Max Holmes (Committee Chair – Speaker of Council), Karisma Jutla (Committee Vice-Chair - Chair Student Life Committee), Koda Tootoosis (Councillor), Lawrence Liu (Chair HR Committee & Chair Finance Committee), Thomas Dunsmore (Councillor) [Left at 6:00PM]

Regrets: Ayesha Irfan (Chair Governance Committee), Erin Co (Councillor), Clayton Cullaton (Councillor)

Invited Guests: Esmé Decker [5:50-5:55PM], Eshana Bhangu [6:05-6:25PM]

Recording Secretary: Max Holmes

[Lost Quorum at 6:00PM]

Call to Order

The meeting is called to order at 5:06 PM

Approval of the Agenda

Be it resolved that the agenda be approved as presented.

Moved: Thomas Seconded: Lawrence

Approved unanimously.

Email Vote Results: EPA Minutes June 12, 2023

It was noted that the EPA June 12, 2023 Meeting Minutes were approved unanimously by the committee via email vote.

Email Vote Results: Code Suspensions

It was noted that following EPA Code Suspension motion was unanimously approved by the committee via email vote:

“Be it resolved that the committee recommends to Council that Code of Procedures Section V, Article 15, Paragraph 3 be suspended until the end of July.”

Update from Chair

Max: Had two meetings, a meeting with both HR Manager and Managing Director, and met with the Executive Committee for their feedback. Meetings were primarily to discuss the best way to collect feedback for executives and any thoughts they had on the EPA Committee as we start out. Also, a reminder that if there is feedback on the operations of the EPA committee councilors can email the speaker (councilspeaker@ams.ubc.ca) to give feedback and schedule a meeting if they'd like.

Discussion about the Role of Chair and Vice-Chair(s)

Max: We will discuss the role of Vice-Chair(s) and Chair since the Speaker chairs this committee and must remain impartial it will be important to discuss what responsibilities will rest with Vice-Chair(s) to help maintain the Speaker's impartiality. Additionally, we can have as many Vice-Chairs as we want.

Max: There are responsibilities specifically designated to the speaker either in their job description (JD) or in Code. Including: Relaying EPA Feedback to the Executives (it is important that people know this is the EPA's feedback and never the speaker's opinions), the collecting of feedback for the executives is handled by Speaker with assistance from HR, chairing the committee is the responsibility of the speaker too. We can of course discuss any of these though if the Committee wants changes, but it would require amending Code and the JD of the Speaker.

Max: Things that can likely easily remain my responsibility without affecting perceived impartiality include logistics of meetings including scheduling and minute taking for the committee. We can of course discuss these as a committee too.

Max: Things that the Vice-Chair(s) may want to set direction or take the lead could include: setting the agendas for the meetings, drafting committee reports to council, reporting to council and other committees about our work, consultation and execution of committee work. We can discuss these, and if there is anything additional, we want to add to this list, we can do that. The more direction from the Committee, the better since my role is entirely operational.

Thomas: More admin work could be given to the Vice-Chair. One added thing we could look at is the Vice-Chair of presidents council and who will work with them to get feedback. I agree that Chair should continue to relay feedback to Execs on behalf of the committee, but perhaps we could have the Vice-Chair in the room too.

Max: From an HR perspective, if the feedback is through a meeting, the best HR Practice would be to have a second person from EPA in the room. So, having a Vice-Chair in the room for feedback for Execs would make sense as the second person.

Karisma: I think that operational should stay with speaker, and the more council-facing aspects should be for the Vice-Chair, including reporting to Council. Collaboration on agenda setting would be good. Since Speaker Chair's Council, it makes sense that Vice-Chair would do all Council aspects. The speaker should stay impartial.

Max: I am paid to do logistical work, so I am happy to keep doing that. I don't want to have people take that on unless the Committee prefers that.

Max: I am happy to take directions from the Vice-Chair on work too. To help with logistics of their work with their and the committee's guidance while remaining impartial. So, is there any dissent on what has already been discussed for assigning duties?

No dissent voiced. The committee agreed responsibilities were as follows:

Speaker's (Chair) Responsibilities:

- Logistics of Meetings (scheduling, etc.)
- Gathering Feedback about the Executive and Presenting this to the Committee (HR Department will assist)
- Minute Taking
- Chairing EPA Meetings
- Relaying EPA Feedback to Executives (Vice-Chair will be in attendance)

Vice-Chair Responsibilities:

- Setting the Agendas for Meetings (collaborative with Chair)
- Consultation and Execution of EPA Work (ex. Revising the terms of reference for EPA)
- Drafting EPA Reports to Council
- Reporting to Council and other Committees about EPA Work
- Attend Executive Feedback Sessions with the Speaker

It was noted that there will need to be a line of communication between presidents council and the EPA Committee. The Committee agreed that they will wait to hear from the Presidents Council about this at a later point.

Vice-Chair Election

Max: How many Vice-Chairs would the Committee want? This is more work than a Vice-Chair typically does, but that doesn't mean there needs to be more than one.

Lawrence: I wouldn't oppose having two to divvy up the workload more.

Karisma: It might simplify things if we have just one vice-chair.

Thomas: One to start, and then we can look at having another or having committee members assist the vice-chair.

Max: Okay, it looks like the majority prefers one to start. Additionally, the Vice-Chair (and the Committee) can always give me direction and assign work to me if they need assistance with anything that wouldn't cause me to be partial.

Nominations: Karisma

Be it resolved that Karisma is appointed Vice-Chair of the EPA Committee.

Moved: Thomas Seconded: Koda

Approved Unanimously.

Discussion about Previous Oversight Committee

Max: I requested info on the previous oversight committee since we have nothing to compare ourselves to as a committee. It included a previous investigation report that collected staff

feedback. There are clear and deliberate differences between our committee and oversight. Any questions about this?

Thomas: Should we be looking this at the things we should avoid doing since it was eliminated?

Max: It is up to the Committee; there are clear differences though, for a reason. Some lessons could be learned from the over 15 years of Oversight Committee existence. For example: The issue of what warrants an investigation plagued the Oversight Committee. It was unclear if every complaint, even if just performance related, should warrant an investigation or if only misconduct and more significant performance complaints should warrant investigation. Really this is for info for the committee.

Karisma: I agree the resources are good to have, but I agree this is probably about what we should not do as a committee. I know this was unanimously eliminated.

Max: Important differences between us: We don't do compensation and oversight did, oversight had a councilor as chair and this committee has the speaker, and more. One reason EPA was created though was the recognition that a committee could probably help with the "oversight" of the Executives since Council is a large body.

Feedback from Management and Executive

Max: This feedback from management was already emailed, but a quick summary:

- Timing of feedback and that there are no goals in June, and there might be merit in collecting three times a year instead of four
- Unclear the purpose of feedback and so that will need to be clear to those involved in giving feedback, those evaluating the feedback, and those receiving the feedback what the purpose of this process is
- Unclear why there are large differences in how many people give feedback for certain executives, with some only having three student staff and then others having 10+ student staff and permanent staff
- Unclear if the Committee will receive complaints and feedback outside of the four times a year
- Who communicates expectations to the Executives is unclear, and perhaps this committee could have more of a role in that

Thomas: Should we include the Goals in the feedback process so that they know more about what to give feedback on and ask the same questions year to year?

Max: Streamlined feedback was highlighted, but that feedback should focus on what Council has approved, such as the goals of the exec. Also, the issue of how feedback is collected from different groups was highlighted (permanent staff, student staff, presidents council).

Max: It will need to be clear to permanent staff how this is being used and the level of privacy of the feedback given to ensure they are comfortable giving it. Now, we can talk about Executive feedback and invite Esmé to join our meeting.

[5:50PM Esmé joined the meeting]

Esmé: The Executives are happy to follow what is in code and to make any changes later in the year based on experience. The Exec was interested in how feedback will be collected: meetings, survey, or written. We are here to see how the Governance Review recommendations get implemented.

Max: Format has not been decided yet by the committee but likely survey or written and that meetings would be something that could be requested by EPA but would not be the default. I know frequency was raised at ExecCom too could you expand on that.

Esmé: We are happy to go to less frequency such as once a term (three times) but we are also happy with the current version of four times a year.

[5:55PM Esmé left the meeting]

Discussion about Collecting Feedback

Max: So, the committee can decide how it wants to collect feedback, I know we previously discussed using a survey format. It sounds as if Goals will be important in feedback, so one area the committee will need to give guidance on is how will the June collecting of feedback differ if goals for execs haven't been approved yet.

Thomas: Perhaps June should be very different and we focus on the working practices of the Executives. Focusing on the Executives and not their staff too.

[6:00PM Thomas left the Meeting]

The Chair noted that Quorum was no longer present for the Committee.

Karisma: I think goals are great metrics to look at for the executives, but we could also look at the executive's duties too.

Max: If we collect in June, do we want it to be shorter and exclude questions about goals but then later in the year, ask the same questions and about goals to keep continuity of questions, or do we want an entirely different survey in June?

Koda: Continuity would be good, so same questions.

Lawrence: Agreed.

Max: Karisma and I will meet to start drafting a survey.

[6:05 PM Eshana arrived]

The discussion was tabled due to the arrival of a guest.

Discussion of Governance Review

Max: Gave a summary of the Committee's current discussions to date. The committee would love to hear about the Governance Review and their intentions. Some issues we'd like to hear more about were:

- June is before goals are approved; what was envisioned for feedback then
- Importance of Permanent Staff feedback but two VPs (AUA and External) have no permanent staff giving feedback
- What format was envisioned for feedback from the Presidents Council was it meant to be separate mechanism, or they use the same mechanism and was it meant to be individual feedback or collective

Eshana: One distinction between oversight and this committee was to have more holistic feedback and not just look at Goals. The hope was that this committee could help with performance improvement and to have less of a blunt approach of random councillors raising issues with no notice. The EUS model of exec oversight influenced some of the ideas.

Eshana: Some VPs having no permanent staff giving feedback is the reality of the role and that they don't work closely with permanent staff in their roles. VP AUA works with University and VP External with Government.

Max: One issue the Committee highlighted was also that the sample size for those two VPs will be small since they also have smallest number of student staff too, could you talk about that more? Do VP AUA and VP External really not work with anyone in permanent staff on a regular basis?

Eshana: I don't think the two advocacy VPs regularly work with permanent staff in the same way as the VP Finance might with the finance permanent staff. Hopefully, Committee can address small sample size by keeping feedback delivered to Executives general and not in a way that would reveal the identities of staff who gave feedback. Adding any permanent staff would just be for the sake of adding them.

Eshana: For Presidents Council the idea was that the Vice-Chair of Presidents Council would deliver feedback on behalf of the entire council about the entirety of the Executive.

Max: Just double checking: The idea isn't that Presidents Council would be giving feedback through a survey or the same format as staff?

Eshana: Yes, Presidents Council would give general feedback through the vice-chair and not through the same survey format as staff. The idea was not to have each president give their own feedback like staff will but rather having presidents council give collective feedback.

Koda: With concerns about anonymity and purpose of feedback how can we motivate them to fill out the forms?

Eshana: Hopefully the staff will see that this feedback will help to improve the performance of Executives who are struggling and preventing things from getting too bad.

Max: I know there was also concerns about the relevance of the feedback and how it will be used but the committee is currently addressing those issues.

[6:25PM Eshana left the meeting]

Discussion about Collecting Feedback

Max: Are we agreed with Eshana that Presidents Council will give their own feedback in their own form?

Koda: How can we make sure there is continuity?

Karisma: I think we can leave it to Presidents Council for the to determine since the structure of the Council is changing a lot. Also, I think I could just collect the feedback with Thomas since I serve on Presidents Council.

Max: Yeah, there should be no issues with who collects feedback from Presidents Council since all the feedback will come back to the Committee. For now, it says the Speaker collects all the feedback for the committee.

Max: I think we have enough to work on a draft survey unless there is anything further.

Discussion about Terms of Reference Changes

Max: This is an opportunity to discuss any potential changes to the structure of our committee. One change I have noted to Governance Committee is that the Speaker is impartial and non-voting, so it should note that I am non-voting for the two committees I serve on (EPA, and Agenda).

Koda: Do you want to collect permanent staff feedback for the VPAUA and VP External?

The Committee was okay with not having permanent staff feedback for those VPs.

Discussion about Next Steps

It was agreed that Max and Karisma would work together on a draft survey to collect feedback about the Executives, and the committee would discuss the survey at our next meeting. Additionally, the primary purpose of the next committee meeting will be to have our first feedback session with the Executives.

Other Business

There was no other business, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:40PM