



THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of August 4, 2023

Attendance

Present: Esmé Decker (President), Ian Caguiat (VP Administration), Abhi Mishra (VP Finance), Justin Lieu (Managing Director), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Regrets: Kamil Kanji (VP Academic & University Affairs), Tina Tong (VP External), Kathleen Simpson (Senior Manager of Student Services)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 10:11 am in Nest Room 3529 and over Zoom.

Agenda

- The agenda was approved (Esmé, Ian).

Minutes

- The minutes of July 28 were postponed.

Policy Advisor

- Esmé:
 - Waiting for comments on the job description.
 - One question: should they still report to the Senior Manager of Student Services? Or to the Managing Director?
- Justin:
 - This raises a larger question of who reports to who, the reporting structure as a whole.
- Esmé:
 - For now we can probably keep it as is; perhaps switch later after larger conversations.
 - The position title is changing to University and Government Relations Advisor (UGRA).
 - The External Policy Manual is gone, so any reference to that in the job description should go.
 - We can add that they can help with policy editing as needed, or just take that out.
 - The focus should be on government policies rather than internal policies.

- The work is usually done by designated staff and committees.
- There's a reference to position statements: they sound like external policies, but we don't usually do external policies anymore.
- Ian:
 - Will they train staff on lobbying and do work on environmental scans?
 - Mimi did, and it was helpful.
- Esmé:
 - Adding that in.
- Abhi:
 - Helping with campaigns?
- Esmé:
 - The UGRA would help the commissioners.
 - But let's leave this discussion for now until Tina, Kamil, and Kathleen are here.

All-Staff Meeting

- Esmé:
 - Looking for feedback on yesterday's meeting.
- Abhi:
 - Great way to keep everyone updated.
 - Maybe improve the format, do something less formal.
- Esmé:
 - The social we're planning will be good to have.
- Justin:
 - Didn't land as I hoped.
 - Perhaps because of the format.
 - Being hybrid didn't help; it limited us.
 - Maybe should be all in person.
- Sheldon:
 - It was perhaps too high level?
- Justin:
 - That was intentional.
 - Wanted to provide an introduction to what the organization is doing on a larger scale, beyond individual departments.
 - What was missing was engagement, discussion.
 - Could cover less and be more in-depth.
- Esmé:
 - I was interested in small group discussions.
 - Still want to do a survey.
 - Talk about where the Strategic Plan would apply.
- Justin:
 - That ties into frequency.

- If we get the monthly newsletter going, that would help.
 - If we want more engagement, once a term is not enough.
- Sheldon:
 - Could focus on specific departments each time.
 - Used to do that: have Communications present, or Events.
- Esmé:
 - I like that.
- Sheldon:
 - The mingling was good.
- Ian:
 - There's value in being hybrid, for accessibility.
 - But use a different room, not the Forum.
 - Maybe send out survey ahead of time.
- Esmé:
 - A question period would have been good.
- Justin:
 - There was meant to be one, but we ran out of time.
 - Could have started earlier despite the technical breakdown.
 - Sixteen participants online, but how many were engaged?
 - Half didn't go to the break-out rooms.
 - If truly trying to accomplish engagement, it's better in person.
- Esmé:
 - I like Zoom break-out rooms.
- Consensus on doing them bimonthly.

PC1 and PC2

- Esmé:
 - Planning to go through drafts.
 - Make them consistent, easier to read, so staff can provide feedback.
 - Survey looks great.
 - Translation request.
 - Meeting next week with interested staff.

Code of Conduct

- Esmé:
 - The idea is to create something stronger than the current AMS Statement of Office.
 - Something to make it more clear that we're a legal society, not just a high school student council.
 - Councillors have fiduciary duty to the AMS.
 - That could all be in the AMS Code of Procedure too: they should match.

- The idea is to have people take things more seriously and understand their role more.
- Have everyone declare their conflicts of interest up front.
- Still a question: which should take precedence? The AMS Code of Procedure or the Code of Conduct?
- That's a conversation for the Governance Committee and the Agenda Committee.
- Ian:
 - Many people run for office not knowing how serious these positions (on AMS Council) are.
 - Can we make it clear?
 - Can the AMS handle the Constituency elections that send reps to AMS Council?
- Esmé:
 - This is definitely a conversation to have with Max (the Elections Administrator).
- Sheldon:
 - Currently, the Bylaws say Constituency reps are elected in accordance with the Constituency constitutions, which means the elections are run by the Constituencies.
- Justin:
 - Maybe don't have the AMS running those elections, but the AMS could provide education sessions.
- Esmé:
 - I can talk to the Presidents Council too.
 - Need the message to get out to people that they're going to be on the board of directors of a multi-million dollar organization.
- Ian:
 - In some Constituencies, the Presidents are the AMS reps.
 - We need to provide information to the presidential candidates in Constituency elections.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:14 am.