



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

AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of January 18, 2024

Attendance

Present: Ben Du (President), Abhi Mishra (VP Finance), Ian Caguiat (VP Administration), Joshua Kim (VP External), Justin Lieu (Managing Director), Kathleen Simpson (Senior Manager of Student Services), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Regrets: Kamil Kanji (VP Academic & University Affairs)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm in Nest Room 3511 and on Zoom.

Agenda

- The agenda was approved (Josh, Abhi).

Minutes

- The minutes of January 12 were approved as corrected (Ben, Abhi).

Assistant Manager, Services

- Kathleen:
 - Would like to hire another position to better support my role and the rest of the Services team.
 - Used to have more managers (Senior Manager, the Student Services Manager, and an Assistant Manager).
 - High volume of work; it's very busy.
 - No time to innovate; lots of things not prioritized that should be, including support for student leaders.
 - Lack of time to devote to relationships with others.
 - Limit to the support we can offer.
 - Adding another person would address this.
 - Would also help with staff retention in what are difficult jobs.
- Justin:
 - The Services have a large impact on students.
 - We've made improvements in our systems.
 - Expanding the Services is the next step.
 - Piloting this.

- We recognize the financial constraints.
 - We're proposing a contract position that would start now and run till April 2025.
 - We would re-evaluate then and assess whether it should continue long term.
- Ben:
 - Do you have someone in mind?
- Kathleen:
 - No.
 - It will be a full-time staff position, non-student.
- Ben:
 - We will hire before April but still go to April 2025?
- Justin:
 - April is the end of fiscal year and the school year.
- Kathleen:
 - Service Coordinators terms will run till April, and we wouldn't want them to be without a supervisor come next March.
- Kathleen:
 - The plan is to have some of the Services report to the Assistant Manager and the others to me.
 - I would oversee Peer Support, Food Bank, Advocacy, and SASC.
 - The Assistant Manager would oversee the other two Services (Safewalk and Tutoring) and also the Marketing Coordinator for Services.
- Abhi:
 - What other innovations or changes do you have in mind for Services with the extra resource?
- Kathleen:
 - Some include policy and process, and health and safety.
 - Another about relationships with stakeholders.
 - Need a permanent staff person to work on that.
 - There's lots of work to do in Peer Support and Food Bank.
 - Things are contingent on each other.
- Ian:
 - Why are there no longer two positions overseeing the Services?
- Kathleen:
 - It was from before I started in this role, but from what I understand, one was a student position, but it's a difficult position for students, especially with yearly turnover.
 - Also budgetary reasons.
- Ben:
 - We want to do long-term thinking.
 - Is it sustainable to continue how Services are now?
 - I'm hearing: Not really.

- Something has to give.
- It sounds like there would be value in having this role.
- This should be very much an exploratory pilot.
- We need strict criteria for success.
- In 2025 we will look back to this moment now.
- There's also the question: Does this make financial sense?
- Kathleen:
 - The value of having this role is making Services sustainable.
- Justin:
 - We will have to find ways to account.
- Abhi:
 - Can they start in May instead?
- Kathleen:
 - That would make the next two months harder:
 - So much turnover, interviews.
 - This role will help with all that.
- Justin:
 - They can hit the ground running next year if they see the tail end of this year.
- Ian:
 - Have you explored 20 hours a week?
- Kathleen:
 - The concern is that that's not enough time to supervise three coordinators, and it would be difficult to recruit for a part-time professional role.
- The Executive's general consensus was that this would be valuable.

Employment Handbooks

- Justin:
 - There are three separate handbooks, one for salaried staff, one for hourly staff, and one for the student government and services staff.
 - We need revisions because the handbooks are so out of date.
 - One of them hasn't been updated since 2011.
 - There are a number of minor changes, such as adding in a requirement that salaried staff work in only one department at a time.
 - This is already a requirement for other staff.
- Ben:
 - What about someone working in the President's Office and the Food Bank?
 - We need to make sure the employee has space on their plate.
 - There's also conflict of interest issues.
 - Are there exceptions or just a blanket rule?
- Justin:
 - On the hourly side there's a bit more flexibility, and we describe the parameters.

- Justin:
 - Bigger changes:
 - Hybrid work rules, allowing employees to work remotely two days a week.
 - This is the current practice. Formalizing it.
- Ian:
 - Some can't work remotely.
- Justin:
 - Solution for them is a wellness benefit:
 - Employees who can't work remotely can accrue wellness hours.
- Ben:
 - I've always been a supporter of working in person.
 - There's a lot of value in hallway chats.
 - That being said, some may benefit from working from home.
- Justin:
 - We had a number of conversations on this.
 - It's a big staff retention piece.
- Ian:
 - This applies to student staff?
- Justin:
 - Yes, it will be in the other handbook.
 - They will save on commute time and food cost.
- Justin:
 - Other bigger changes:
 - Car share policy.
 - Meals up to \$75 a day as travel expense.
 - Cellphone reimbursement of \$60 a month.
 - Clarification on what can be claimed for employee events, external business events; nothing in handbook before.
 - Clarification on where staff can provide feedback, via manager, townhalls, etc.
 - Severe weather policies.
 - Links to AMS policies.
 - Student staff:
 - Removing the health and safety plan; it will be available separately.
 - Hourly staff:
 - Meal voucher restriction removed.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 pm.