



# STUDENTS' COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT TASK FORCE MINUTES

2013 – 2014

*Date: November 28<sup>th</sup> 2013*

*Time: 6.06 pm*

**In Attendance:**

*NATALIA BINCZYK (Chair)*

*KELSEY MILLS (Arrival : 6.09 pm)*

*SEAMUS WU*

*LOK TO*

*DAWSON ZENG*

*JESSICA NGUYEN*

*FABIAN EISMAN (Arrival : 6.12 pm)*

*WILLIAM LAU (Proxy for MARINA BANISTER)*

**Excused Absence:**

*PETROS KUSMU*

**Others in Attendance:**

*SACHITHA KUSALADHARMA*

**1. CALL TO  
ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by BINCZYK at 6.06 pm.

**2. APPROVAL OF  
AGENDA**

BINCZYK moved to approve the agenda for *November 28, 2013* as tabled.

The motion was seconded by ZENG.

*Vote 5/0/1*

*CARRIED*

**3. APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES**

BINCZYK moved to approve the minutes for *November 14, 2013* as tabled.

The motion was seconded by ZENG.

*Vote 5/0/1*

*CARRIED*

**4.**  
**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

BINCZYK: There will be no meetings in December.

**5. PRESENTATIONS**

Addressing the gap in Students' Council's presence between the orientation and elections

BINCZYK: What I want from this is to solidify a few recommendations. One idea was to have non-voting seats on the Students' Council (SC) for Faculty Association (FA) representatives. The committee was not in favour of the idea. The committee is leaning more towards people from council being appointed to FA boards.

Now that we have councilors on the boards of FAs, what should the reporting mechanism be? Should we allocate time?

MILLS: Can we go under board and committee reports?

BINCZYK: We can either specify how much we want, or we can leave it up to their discretion.

MILLS: We can treat those representatives the way we treat committee chairs. Right now, the committee chairs report to the Council Administration Committee (CAC) every trimester.

BINCZYK: If we allow 2 minutes of reporting time to the FA representatives, how should we change our standing orders?

NGUYEN: We can change it to be like how the committee chairs report to CAC.

MILLS: A written report to the order paper will be better than an oral report.

BINCZYK: I contacted Vice-president Chelen, and he discouraged changing anything regarding CoFA (Council of Faculty Associations). Are we okay with leaving CoFA? We can recommend Vice-president Chelen to report more on it.

MILLS: Yes.

BINCZYK: We all agreed to promote SC volunteers at campus events. How should we go about the change?

MILLS: I think CAC could be involved with promoting it, as a facilitator.

BINCZYK: Regarding class talks, we have class talks going on right now. I was wondering if you would see value in continuing this.

NGUYEN: The initiative is good. For me personally, it's not on the top of my priority. However, there is no disadvantage in doing it.

MILLS: Nobody would say that it's not a good initiative. But, it takes a lot of time and energy for preparation. I don't think the end result may be worth all the effort.

BINCZYK: We can send the presentation for class talks to the FAs via or representative. Is it worth a recommendation?

LAU: Not every FA does class talks.

MILLS: Yes. If they aren't going to use it, is it worth the time of the CAC

chair?

BINCZYK: We only want to decide whether we want to recommend continuing class talks, and who to recommend it to. Any objections to recommending this?

MILLS: I object to this. I think it's not worth the time, and there are more creative ways to get the message across.

EISMAN: If students zone out during a class talk, it's their problem. For the people you do reach, it's a good use of time. It's also a force multiplier. I would support continuing it.

NGUYEN: We don't have anything on council which supports random initiatives like this. How do you structure something to continue small initiatives like this?

BINCZYK: Regarding having not enough time, there aren't too many random initiatives like this coming up.

TO: Is there any opportunity to set up a system to have more volunteers doing this as opposed to councilors?

LAU: There should be interaction between the councilors and their constituents.

MILLS: When random things come up, those get delegated to CAC. So, class talks would go under CAC's purview too.

BINCZYK: We also talked about discouraging laptops at council. I'm of the opinion that we should leave it out. I don't think it's feasible.

MILLS: Some students may bring laptops to view order papers, relevant bylaws, etc. People could still not pay attention if they use phones.

LAU: We are in a position to lay the ground rules for next year. If it's communicated clearly, it would become the culture.

EISMAN: I don't think that there is a way to enforce a laptop ban. Even if laptops are banned, people will still be using other technologies. Laptops are also useful for council work.

MILLS: We can recommend the speaker to make an announcement about using technology to better represent the constituents, and not to waste time. This could be said at the start of every meeting.

LAU: I really like that.

BINCZYK: We can also make it clear to the speaker or other presenters that they have the right to ask anybody to close their laptops.

MILLS: We can also add another reminder about how technology is used during in-camera discussions.

BINCZYK: We also discussed about how councillors could connect better with executives. We have to discuss about how many protégés there will be, how the collaboration would start, rotations, and whether this is optional. Is this something you guys want to move forward with?

ZENG: On paper, it seems a good idea. However, there are lots of different elements in there.

MILLS: My concern is whether executives are able to handle the protégés

during different periods due to their busy schedule. If the executives had a job shadow day once a while, it would be better. Vice-president Chelen already does it.

LAU: It does require a lot of notice. The idea is beneficial. Also, if councilors are really keen, they would just ask the executive.

MILLS: Maybe the speaker can remind the councilors about that.

BINCZYK: We would leave it up to the executives to decide how many job shadow days to have.

BINCZYK: Regarding council goals, we wanted to increase the sense of project ownership. One of the ideas we had was to create a council goals document.

MILLS: I prefer having individual goals. We can have a due-date midway through summer to have their goals documents finalized. They can then send it to the speaker in order to post it on the website. If there are very similar goals in a particular year, a council wide goals document can be made. However, that may not be the case most of the time.

LAU: What's the follow up after this?

BINCZYK: If they are published, councilors will be held accountable to their constituents with regards to their promises. Also, we should not set very strict guidelines.

LAU: How about an interim and a final report?

MILLS: We can say that it should be done. The only penalty for not doing so would be looking bad in front of your own voters.

BINCZYK: We can make the recommendation to CAC.

MILLS: CAC can remind to councilors to send their reports to Nicole or the speaker.

BINCZYK: We also had another idea to group people with similar goals together. However, I think it could be a little bit chaotic. If they have the passion within them, it will happen organically.

MILLS: The councilors could compare each other's goals documents when they are up. They could also use CAC's council engagement fund.

### Enhancing collaboration between International Students and the Students' Council

BINCZYK: The committee decided to make the International Students' Association (ISA) have a clause such that it asks the council to send a representative. It would work the same way with the recommendation for FAs. Also, our recommendation would be to have the representative present about council during ISA meetings. We wouldn't necessarily have a report mechanism. But, if controversial issues come up, that representative is expected to bring those issues to the notice of the SC.

MILLS: Is it similar to FA representatives?

BINCZYK: Yes. Let's keep it consistent. We'll have the reporting done on

the same way for FAs and the ISA.

BINCZYK moved that the committee move into a 5 minute recess.

The motion was seconded by NGUYEN.

Vote 7/0/0

*CARRIED*

The committee went into a recess at 6.56 pm.

The committee resumed activities at 7.03 pm.

## 6. DISCUSSION

### Students' Council and social media/web

BINCZYK: There was the idea of having a Students' Council facebook page. It was brought to the Council Administration Committee (CAC) as well. However, it didn't get started due to many unanswered questions. One of the main questions was access control. We need to find an answer to that. Would it be all members of council? Also, do we create new profiles for councilors? What do we put on the facebook page?

MILLS: Creating separate profiles unnecessary. If there are unnecessary items in your profile, it's your problem.

EISMAN: Someone running the overall page and posting for everyone is good.

MILLS: Councilors should not have access as administrators. This should be left to the Speaker and Nicole.

BINCZYK: If it was along the lines of posting the agenda and minutes, it would fall under Nicole. However, it's not under the responsibility of the speaker.

MILLS: CAC could have Nicole post those, and individual councilors could post other stuff from their own profiles.

BINCZYK: If there was no central authority, there may be unanswered questions.

MILLS: There may be some councilors who are very keen. They can do it. Also, they can tag other councilors who may answer those questions. If the page gets spammed, who would delete those posts? My opinion is that the CAC chair should do those deletions.

EISMAN: If the page became popular, a lot of people may spam on a single day. In such a scenario, it will be difficult to remove those posts.

BINCZYK: We can change the settings such that only one admin (Nicole) can post. Other people can just comment.

TO: How would we make it engaging to students? Minutes and Agendas aren't very engaging.

MILLS: You can create a list of approved people who can post. Councilors are posting as themselves. They should be able to voice their personal

opinions as they see fit. They would not be posting as an official administrator of the Students' Council.

BINCZYK: The speaker told me that we should be mindful of the amount we post. Also, we could advertise the new Students' Council page through the Students' Union page.

So, we have two options: 1) Nicole can post agendas and minutes, and all others can comment on that, and 2) Nicole can post agendas and minutes while councilors can also post as themselves.

MILLS: I would like the second option. It would be more engaging.

BINCZYK: So are we in favor of Nicole posting agendas and minutes while councilors can also post as themselves?

*The committee agreed.*

TO: Can we put links to the agendas and minutes rather than posting them on the facebook page itself?

BINCZYK: In that case, we will need a main person to administer this. We can't ask Nicole to do extra work regarding that. The only possible candidates for that are the CAC chair, and the Vice-president Student Life. But, that would be adding too much burden to them. I would like to have something rather than nothing. I have had people asking me about a council facebook page. Even if Nicole posts the agendas and minutes, councilors can still post regularly about them, and get the effect we are looking for.

The main person responsible for deleting inappropriate posts will be the CAC chair.

What will be the main purpose of the facebook page? There was the idea of making a short video that would be presented during a class talk. We can post those online through the facebook page.

MILLS: As long as it's individual councilors posting, that's okay.

BINCZYK: How do we ensure that the facebook page is maintained? Should we include it in the transition documents for the CAC chair?

MILLS: It should be tried first. We need to give it our best, and if it's successful, we should continue it. If it fails, we can discontinue it. Also, if it's barely acceptable, we can continue it and give another try next year.

BINCZYK: We can ask this to be taken up next semester, or we can recommend for this initiative to be started from next year. If we ask it to be started next semester, it may die out as CAC will change in a few months after that. My opinion is to recommend it to be taken up once the new CAC is in place.

Regarding Council on Student Affairs (CoSA), it already exists.

MILLS: My idea would be to have something like CoSA directly within the Students' Union.

LAU: It really depends on the function of the group. Communication between the different groups is best when it's just the sharing of information. When it comes to collaboration, it's really helpful to have the Dean of Students there.

**7. REPORTS**            *None*

**8. CLOSED SESSION** *NIL*

**9. NEXT MEETING**    *January 9, 2014 at 6.00 pm*

**9. ADJOURNMENT**    MILLS moved to adjourn the meeting.  
The motion was seconded by EISMAN.  
Vote 6/0/0  
*CARRIED*

The meeting was adjourned at 7.32 pm.