



**FINANCE
COMMITTEE**

Monday, April 3rd, 2017

5:00PM

SUB 6-06

We would like to acknowledge that our University and our Students' Union are located on Treaty 6 Territory. We are grateful to be on Dene, Cree, Saulteaux, Métis, Blackfoot, and Nakota Sioux territory; specifically the ancestral space of the Papaschase Cree. These Nations are our family, friends, faculty, staff, students, and peers. As members of the University of Alberta Students' Union we honour the nation-to-nation treaty relationship. We aspire for our learning, research, teaching, and governance to acknowledge continuing colonial violence and respect Indigenous knowledges and traditions.

ATTENDANCE

NAME	PROXY	PRESENT
Francesca El Ghossein		Y
Wajiha Islam	(via Phone)	Y
Victoria DeJong		Y
Kyle Monda	Via phone	Y
Robyn Paches (Chair)		Y
Nathan Sunday		Y

MINUTES (FC 2016-15)

2016-15/1

INTRODUCTION

Two Representatives (Asyah and Kristen) were present to make the Student Group Awards Allocation Proposal

One Representative (Serena) was present to discuss Access Fund Fee Structure

2016-15/1a Call to Order

Meeting called to order at **5:17 pm**

2016-15/1b Approval of Agenda

DEJONG/SUNDAY moved to approve the agenda
5/0/0
CARRIED

2016-15/1c Approval of Minutes

GHOSSEIN/PACHES moved to approve the minutes.
4/0/1
CARRIED
SUNDAY ABSTAINS.

2016-15/1d Chair's Business

2016-15/2 QUESTION/DISCUSSION PERIOD

2016-15/3 COMMITTEE BUSINESS

2016-15/3a Student Group Awards Allocation Proposal

Asyah: We need to ratify the new allocation. So the SGS awards that was available in the past was \$900. This year it has been increased to \$3000. So we need to ratify how much we from that money we dedicate to each award. So to start, we are planning to take away Academic Service Award. That award was specifically for group in Faculty Association and therefore technically not considered student groups. Besides that, we are increasing a few of the other awards as follows:

- The Student Group of the year Award is being increased to \$1000.
- The most Promising new student Group is being proposed to being increased to \$750 awards.
- The Best Event of the Year award and the Community Outreach Award is being increased to \$625 each.

Any questions?

Ghossein: Given this reallocation, does it preclude Faculty Association

groups from getting any awards in the future years?

Kristen: I don't think so. Faculty Associations do have student group recognition awards that they are eligible for as of now. But we are discussing this with Discover Governance as to how Faculty Associations should be defined i.e Student Group or Faculty group.

Ghossein: I see, I am asking because although Faculty Associations are more council oriented but if they are doing a good job with the student community, it would be good to seem them be recognised. So if you are talking to Discover Governance, is their talk on whether these bodies can be potentially recognised using Discover Governance budget or any other resources?

Kristen: That would be a part of a longer conversation as this is happening closer to the end of the year.

Asyah: Also this makes it easier to allocate the funding evenly given we are aiming for more of a tiered structure.

GHOSSEIN/PACHES move to approve the Student Group Awards Allocation Proposal

5/0/0

CARRIED

Please see SC 16-15.01

2016-15/3b

Access Fund Fee Structure

Serena: I hope you had the chance to read over the document I sent. Essentially we have been seeing that access funds use are going up dramatically. In 2014 we are just over \$500,000 and last year we were over a million, which resulted in us having to use the reserve. So for current year we renegotiated the agreement with the Registrar's office. Such that now we are looking to monitor to see if can meet projected demand with the money that remains and if we can't then we start reducing the bursary amounts. So what we saw with this is that if you're financial need rose in the later year, we could not provide as much funding compared to in the beginning of the year because the access fund was drained out quite substantially. In addition we saw a disproportionate amount of funding going to different Faculties given different deadlines and applications packages. Because the uptake is going up so rapidly Robyn and I need some assistance as to how to move forward. Last year we hit the reserve by about \$400,000 and it is not sustainable to

move forward like this. So for next year we have a couple of options. We can continue to collect the fees based on a three rolling average which changed in 2010. If we continue doing this, we will also be looking at is either decreasing the maximum bursary funds students are eligible for or we could also be looking into the fact that not all students who pay for the bursary funds will be eligible to use it. We could also run into a first-come first-serve basis, We could also look at dropping the early maximum. I am cautioning against it as research shows anything less than 1000 is likely to be not worth it for students.

The other option we have is to increase the current fee by 10% this year This will allows us to fund between 480 and 640 students at a lower maximum. I don't think the \$3000 is sustainable without increasing the fee. So the other option is to increase current fee by 10% this year and do the same for next year, or look at restructuring for next year.

When we are considering these options I encourage you to think about the philosophical question of whether it is okay for students who helped pay for the fund not to be eligible for it or do we need to to have more responsible structure. Also whether it is more important to have higher bursaries to students with higher calculated need or to have a more universal framework of low bursaries to more students. Based on your guided answer, Paches and I can begin to form a line of action. And just for some context, before we changed to the rolling average, the access fee was around \$17 which was higher than what we have now because we thought we were over collecting, but now we are greatly under collecting.

Ghossein: So to be clear at the end of this we are hoping to come out with a recommendation of one of these options?

Paches: Also to clarify, we will have a decision coming out according to what we plan to do, presented to this committee next year.

Dejong: Serena, Do you have a preference for an option that stands out better?

Serena: It depends really on how you answer s the two philosophical questions stated before. Once we get those answers, I can help provide a recommendation.

Sunday: I like the second option, I like the more universal approach.

Paches: What about the first philosophical question, that is, how important is it for students to see the access fund line on their fee structure?

Ghossein: Just to clarify, that access fund that students see will be lower if demand is higher?

Serena: Or it could almost be non-existent with the demand we are seeing right now.

Ghossein: I see, I am leaning towards universal with Nathan. My hesitation is with that the amount may not be worth it as it will be a small amount. That being said, I think it's perhaps worth for students to even get a little bit... but I can be convinced otherwise.

Dejong: I am leaning towards the universally option as well. I like option two.

Serena: The original intention for the access fund was meant to be a last resort bursary but it seems not to be working within the RO (Registrars Office) model as they made some changes in their end that we couldn't match.

Ghossein: Yeah, like \$500 may not be enough for a student but it depends on a case by case basis. As a reminder we can also recommend option 2 plus recommend next year Finance committee re examine the structure of the fee. I personally would be like to see that.

Paches: Yeah, it is also important to note that these access fund fees are opt-outable fees. We also saw a huge increase in opt-out which was another factor of reducing the bursary amounts. It is also important to note, we need to see how we can replenish the reserve fund that we took out of as the need is only increasing.

Sunday: It is interesting, looking at the SU funds website right now, it shows access fund is the first option. That doesn't seem like fund for the last resort.

Paches: Yes, we need to chalk this out and revamp this, because that is old wording. I appreciate you flagging that.

Islam: I am kind of leaning to option 2 with a Universal model instead of Targeted model, but I really like what Ghossein said about combining option 2 and 4, that is recommend next Finance committee to examine the fee structure.

Ghossein: So we seem to be in consensus for a more Universal model an adding option 4 to it.

Sunday/Dejong MOVE to recommend option 2 and 4 for consideration in constructing the Access Fund Fee Structure

**5/0/0
CARRIED**

Please see SC 16-15-02

2016-15/3C

PACHES moves that Finance Committee recommend the 2017/18 Students Union Budget to Students' Council for approval.

Paches: Because of the technical nature, I trust you have had a chance to review the budget. I will go over an overview of the documents.
-Budget explanations document breaks down the difference in 18/18 budget and the variance from last year's budget alongside explanations.
-Budget summary document is showing all revenues and expenditure and shows what the net result at the end of the year will be.
-Capital Projections document shows what we are planning to spend on capital this year.
-Budget Analysis with cost apportions document is related to appropriating cost along multiple budget lines on the type of work that threads through different departments.

Paches explains other aspects of the budget, as included in the excel, broadly for review.

We are budgeting for a net profit of \$66,000 for next year

We are forecasting our highest year of revenue. Keep in mind the SU is technically a non for profit which serves the student.

DeJong: Looking at the budget I was wondering, how will internalising the IT department affect our costs/revenue?

Paches: What happens is we currently outsource our IT needs to a company. We are now bringing this company in our umbrella so the employees become employees of the SU and their intellectual property will be part of the SU which includes job posting softwares/election process softwares/rental software. So now these will become a source of revenues instead of costs, as we can outsource these to other schools. Although we will have upfront costs this is a long-term investment which will be beneficial in future. Plus, students can directly go to the web developers for problems making this more responsive.

Ghossein: Also, Jobkin for instance has ads which can be an alternate source of revenue.

PACHES/DEJONG move that Finance committee recommend the 2017/18 Students Union Budget to Students' Council for approval.

5/0/0

CARRIED.

2016-15/4 **INFORMATION ITEMS**

2016-15/5 **ADJOURNMENT**

GHOSSEIN/PACHES moved to adjourn the meeting

5/0/0

CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at **6:04 pm**

2016-15/5a **Next Meeting: TBD**