



## POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

2013 - 2014 # 13

*Date: November 26, 2013*

*Time: 6:07 PM*

### In Attendance:

*Kareema Batal (Chair)*

*William Lau*

*Adam Woods*

*Kelsey Mills*

*Colin Champagne*

*Bashir Mohamed (Skype)*

### Excused Absence:

*Dylan Hanwell*

*Natalia Binczyk*

*Dustin Chelen*

### Others in Attendance:

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by *BATAL* at 6:07 PM.

#### 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

*MILLS* amended agenda to include "Policy around Student Groups" in Discussion section.

*HANWELL* moved that the *November 26* agenda be approved as *amended*.  
Seconded by *BATAL*.

Vote on Motion

6 / 0 / 0

**CARRIED**

#### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*WOODS* amended minutes to change "*Elections Canada will be at the polling station to check*" to "*Elections Canada and Elections Alberta will be at the polling station to check*" under c. VP External in Executive Committee Report.

*MILLS* moved that the *October 15* minutes be approved as *tabled*.  
The motion was seconded by *WOODS*.

Vote on Motion  
*6 / 0 / 0*

***CARRIED***

**4.** N/A  
**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**5. PRESENTATIONS** N/A

**6. EXECUTIVE**  
**COMMITTEE**  
**REPORT**

**a. VP Student Life**

LAU reports on the proposed increase of international students' tuition. The situation is dynamic and he is glad to have a group of students who are energetic and put in time and effort to advocate for the awareness of increase. They are doing well in raising the awareness of the increase. They started off like an opposition of the domestic students. But earlier this week, international students and domestic students were cooperating to create a strong and united voice. They are also pointing out larger problems on the institution and government funding. They are now focusing on bringing the message to the Board of Governors and external media, encouraging international students to send message back to friends and families at home to communicate the impact of tuition increase to recruitment strategy.

There was a conversation about recruitment strategy for graduate students in a board last night. The funding for grad students is unpredictable. Some of the programs are very well funded but some are not well funded. Given that, many board members agree it is a good time to increase graduate student tuition, especially for international students because they want to solve the funding model first. SU President will continue to lobby board members to put out a stronger message to show that tuition increase has a larger impact on the institution than to the students themselves.

*MILLS* asks if the board dinner had reflections on the concerns brought up by GFC. *WOODS* adds that many international students are quite upset and writing letters home. It is often that the board does not realize the respond it will get from its membership. All the administration goes decision through the board. SU is trying to argue that it is unfair that the university brought students here and then raised the tuition; they might need to go home because of the increase. The reason of budget cut is unjustified. SU President is lobbying individual board member to see the logic.

*BATAL* brings up the argument that people perceive higher price for higher quality and wants to know how the University sell this to recruit students internationally. *WOODS* explains that if the University increases the tuition, it should also show that there is an increase in the quality as well. If the

government deregulates tuition through these changes, the same thing will happen to domestic students; there will be no check on the University.

*MILLS* comments that previous increase of tuition was not grandfathered for both international and domestic students. If it is not grandfathered, students will need to pay on inflation and student will not catch up for the non-grandfathered year. *WOODS* states that it is how the University functions. Most students can predict CPI; but charging it per semester is a heavy burden to students. SU is in the position that if the university has significant change for what students are paying, it should be grandfathered to at least allow students to decide whether or not there is any value to attend this institution. If there are changes that go beyond inflation to the level that has not be seen for a long time, there is a responsibility to make things as predictable as possible. This will be SU's argument. There are many international students who can barely pay their tuitions, they came here to study under a predictable tuition for two to three years, and then there is an increase that they cannot afford. It is unfair to those students.

*BATAL* asks if there is a realistic solution. *WOODS* replies that students should act as a whole to make the increase grandfathered or allow them to have time in advance to think whether they would attend this institution. SU is in a position that if there is a significant increase of tuition, the University should let students know in advance.

*MOHAMED* asks if the University could promise to keep the tuition at CPI for students who are accepted here for the duration of their degree, so students could finish their degree at the tuition that they started. *WOODS* states that that is SU's aim.

*LAU* states that there are three things SU is asking for: grandfathering the increase, the increase should less than 5% because SU does not agree to the justification of 5%, and certain amount of increased tuition goes to bursary.

*MILLS* asks since the board dinner based the discussion on grad students, could it also be a jumping off point for undergrad students. *LAU* answers that SU does not receive an updated proposal. He adds that around 40-60% of grad students are international, and by rolling back the increase, it satisfies many students and the university does not lose much. But for undergrad students, the University expects to receive \$3 million from the 5% increase.

*MILLS* comments on the posters posted by international students for the International Differential Fee. Some of them are great, but some of them might not have the right reaction from its audience. *MILLS* suggests if the message can convey in a more appropriate and positive way to the community. *LAU* comments that international students are doing a great job in raising awareness and noticing the push back from domestic students. The

initial messages of the posters were rash and contained a lot of anger. But now they acknowledge the respond out there. *BATAL* feels that the international students are segregating themselves more through this campaign. She wishes there are more domestic students interactions in this. *LAU* thinks that this is what the international students are trying to do.

*HANWELL* comments that how could SU makes people care. If going from the University and Government of Alberta's perspective, they have no reason to care. A lot of students applied to the University, so it is not hard for the University to find replacement for the loss of students because of the tuition increase. *WOODS* adds that the government will review the domestic students' tuition policy in the next three months. If the government removes the regulation for domestic student, they might experience the same hike of international students. It is not just for international students. *LAU* adds that there is a lack of communication, so there is an effort for international students to communicate message back at home. While the University does not care much about emotion and fairness, it does care about reputation and recruitment. If students could attack their reputation and recruitment strategy, there will be a change in metrics.

*CHAMPAGNE* asks what pushes back the tuition hike for international students and what stops the government from open the act to put everyone on the same page. *WOODS* is lobbying to put tuition cap in the Act permanently. This is a huge opportunity. There are a many issues SU lobbying for years, and SU will throw them into legislation. But for international students, they are not in the legislation, and *WOODS* doubts that they will be in the regulation.

*HANWELL* asks if there is a chance that regulation will need to choice one or another between international and domestic students. *WOODS* says it is hard to answer because SU advocates for both sides.

### **c. VP External**

*WOODS* was in Ottawa last week and met with many federal officials. CASA collectively met with over 120 people, a majority of MPs, but also included senators and representatives of Canada Student Loans program and other lobby groups of students' issue. As a whole, it was a useful experience and a productive week.

*WOODS* also helps *LAU* for international students' issues.

*WOODS* states that the government funded an initiative of \$1 million. It was a program meant to provide the community to hire staff members, also companies to hire student to work in area relevant to them. The government thinks it is not useful when considering budget cut because it thinks there is no problem in youth unemployment in this province. The program exists for a

long time and not for profit. He is working on this issue and will be talking with government. It is a useful program for students as they can earn their tuition and fees from in the summer and will not need to worry about them during their study.

*MILLS* asks if there was a specific goal for *WOODS*' trip to Ottawa. *WOODS* answer that it was the advocacy of the university. *CASA* had voted on the priority of issues to be presented this year. Major issues are student loans and its assessment, international off-campus permit and multiple entry visas and Canada Student Grants program. These were tailored to the government.

**7. QUESTION  
PERIOD**

N/A

**8. OLD BUSINESS**

**a. Scholarships and Bursaries Policy: Update & Discussion**

*BATAL* asks committee members if they could provide online comments of the principles before Friday as it needs to be in the Council's agenda in the next meeting and much of the work is already finished.

*MILLS* asks why this policy needs to be split. *WOODS* answers that it is better that way because scholarship and bursary are two different issues. *MILLS* brings up that the government might neglect one or another if the policy is split. *CHAMPAGNE* suggests that the policy can explicitly states that they are two issues and the government needs to support both. *CHAMPAGNE* would like the policy together because of translation and political issue because it is stronger for them to be in one policy. *BATAL* points out that if they are in the same policy, it will make them ambiguous and the government will meet the needs some way or another. *MILLS* agrees the split because it will help SU to advocate. *BATAL* points out that the University does not direct equal proportion of fund to scholarship and bursary. *LAU* supplements that the University always wants more entry scholarships but not much incentive in bursaries. *BATAL* suggests a vote on the split.

*MILLS* moved that the Scholarship and Bursaries Policy be split into two policies: Scholarships Policy and Bursaries Policy.  
The motion was seconded by *WOODS*.

Vote on Motion

4 / 1 / 2

**CARRIED**

*BATAL* will send an email to committee members to come up with pros and cons of splitting the policy, so that the Policy Committee can present it in the Council meeting.

**b. Health & Wellness Policy: Update & Discussion about Online**

### **Consultations**

The progress slowed down because the committee wants to do more in-depth consultations with people who can contribute to the policy. But provided with the time frame, it is difficult to do that. There are a lot of students in Health and Science area help contribute to Health and Student Assembly earlier in the Fall, and they have great ideas in terms of health and wellness. So the committee created a survey for them to fill out; it will give the committee some information on how to define health and wellness, what should be changed in the policy, and health and wellness students' opinions of what is going on on campus. *BATAL* asks for the committee's feedback on the survey and idea in general.

*MILLS* asks about the goal of this policy. *BATAL* notices that the committee does not have the background information to know what it is doing, but there are so many myths and ideologies that are hard to understand. It is used for understanding the things that the committee is advocated for.

*CAMPAGNE* asks what the incentives for students to participate are. *BATAL* answers the reason the committee focus on the health and science population particular is that there are student representatives who are involved and committed to Health and Wellness. One of the incentives for them is to contribute something campus-wide.

*BATAL* further explains that the committee can get professional opinion but from a student perspective, because average students do not think about Health and Wellness until a certain need comes up.

### **c. Internationalization: Update**

*LAU* is now working on principles, rewording it. *BATAL* reminds the committee that the policy does not need to be shown in the First Reading, so that it provides more time to the committee. *LAU* suggests that the timeline for the policy is probably two weeks.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. Tuition Policy: Review and Action Planning**

Currently it is on *BATAL* and *WOODS'* portfolio, but *WOODS* recommends putting *KUSMU* on the list. *KUSMU* wants to bring a greater discussion to the Council, as currently SU is mandated to always run against tuition, which means SU representatives cannot vote in favor of a tuition increase. But university administration discredits SU's opinion because of this.

*MILLS* also heard about Law and Engineering students that they want to advocate for increase but cannot do it because they have to play by SU policy.

*BATAL* will set up a task force meeting to bring *KUSMU* into discussion sometime in January.

## **b. Policy around Student Groups**

*MILLS* thinks that the Dean of Students is exerting more control on top of it already had. She suggests that SU should advocate for some policy in place or for future Exec to advocate in the same fashion.

*LAU* thinks that there is not much to advocate for the University. SU is currently drafting up internally with researchers new bylaws to propose to Bylaw Committee. Because what binding SU's hand is SU's bylaw, which states that student groups need to be registered with the University before registered with SU. SU will create registration system that is similar to the University's, so that it will not create more steps. But the decision making process of SU is different.

*MILLS* asks about planning events and liquor license. *LAU* says SU will have the ultimate authority. But *BATAL* suggests that if there is a controversial group lobby to SU, then SU will be in trouble.

*LAU* states that students often sides with the University, until there is an issue that impact what students believe in. *WOODS* adds that it is only in last year that SU first saw disagreement between itself and the University in disciplinary area.

*LAU* comments that SU stand strong against the University because the University makes decision too rashly and he will bring evidence to the Council, and he also believes that Residence Association has a strong tie with SU. SU cannot let the University to do whatever it wants without consultation.

### **10. DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION ITEMS**

N/A

### **11. REPORTS**

N/A

### **12. CLOSED SESSION**

N/A

### **13. NEXT MEETING**

*TBD*

### **14. ADJOURNMENT**

*CHAMPAGNE* moved that the meeting be adjourned.  
The motion was seconded by *WOODS*.

Vote on Motion

7 / 0 / 0

**CARRIED**

Meeting adjourned at 7:29 PM.



## POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY REPORT TO COUNCIL

*Date: November 26, 2013*

*Time: 6:07 PM*

2013 – 2014 MEETING #13

### **Motions**

1.	<i>HANWELL/BATAL moved that November 26 agenda be approved as amended.</i>	<i>CARRIED 6/0/0</i>
2.	<i>MILLS/WOODS moved that October 15 minutes be approved as amended.</i>	<i>CARRIED 6/0/0</i>
3.	<i>MILLS/WOODS moved that the Scholarship and Bursaries Policy be split into two policies: Scholarships Policy and Bursaries Policy.</i>	<i>CARRIED 4/1/2</i>
4.	<i>CHAMPAGNE/WOODS moved that the meeting be adjourned.</i>	<i>CARRIED 7/0/0</i>