



**POLICY
COMMITTEE**

Monday, September 11, 2017

5:00 PM

SUB 0-55

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.

AGENDA (PC 2017-07)

2017-07/1 INTRODUCTION

2017-07/1a Call to Order

2017-07/1b Approval of Agenda

2017-07/1c Approval of Minutes

Last meeting of Policy Committee was cancelled, so the minutes to approve are from Monday, July 31, 2017 (i.e. PC-2017-05).

2017-07/1d Chair's Business

2017-07/2 QUESTION/DISCUSSION PERIOD

2017-07/2a Policy Renewal Process Check-Ins

2017-07/3 COMMITTEE BUSINESS

2017-07/3a Second Reading of the Student Financial Assistance Policy

See 2017-07.02.

2017-07/3b Second Reading of the Deferred Maintenance Policy Renewal

See 2017-07.03.

2017-07/3c First Principles of the Assessment and Grading Policy Renewal

See 2017-07.04.

2017-07/3d First principles of the Academic Materials Policy Renewal

See 2017-07.05.

2017-07/4 **INFORMATION ITEMS**

2017-07/5 **ADJOURNMENT**

2017-07/5a **Next Meeting:** Monday, October 12, 2017 at 5:00PM in SUB 6-06.



University of Alberta Students' Union

POLICY COMMITTEE

Tuesday July 31, 2017

6:30 pm

SUB 6-06

ATTENDANCE

NAME	PROXY	PRESENT	SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN FEEDBACK (IF ABSENT)
Sandy Brophy		Y	
Daren Choi		Y	
Delaine Howie (CHAIR)		Y	
Nathan Sunday		Y	
Haley Lefferson	Emily Howell	Y	
Alannah Piasecki		Y	
Reed Larsen		N	N
Ilya Ushakov		N	Y
Shane Scott		Y	

MINUTES (PC 2017-6)

2017-06/1 INTRODUCTION

2017-06/1a **Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 6.35 pm

2017-06/1b **Approval of Agenda**

BROPHY/CHOI MOVE to approve the agenda.

7/0/0, CARRIED

2017-06/1c Approval of Minutes

SCOTT/PIASECKI moved to approve the minutes with amendment
5/0/3, CARRIED

2017-06/1d Chair's Business

None

2017-06/2 QUESTION/DISCUSSION PERIOD

2017-06/2a Engagement Framework Policy Proposal from Councillor Howell

HOWELL

Asked if an improvement of engagement policy and the framework can brought about along the lines of the City of Edmonton engagement policy; Mentioned that the City has 4 by 5 process and has set examples of different things, which include how they engage and that, she thinks, is important and brought it up;

BROPHY

Said that how engagement is about how to be more comfortable to do the work

SCOTT

Mentioned that he is not sure about the City of Edmonton, but the current structure of political policy is about discover governance

HOWELL

Said that it is about how the university does engagement; but it is about having a binding policy and a guideline;

HOWIE

Said that anything binding is like a law that someone has to do; the way they structure their procedure is like having goals, which will help understand not only what but why something is done; and that's akin to having likes based on goals and SU values;

SCOTT

Said that for any GFC items that come forward it is binding, and it could determine the strategic plans of SU and about who it would impact if the consultation is done; and it is more like consultation for international students, and then they can ask if did impact and expect and a yes or no answer;

HOWIE

Said that they can probably track it and then make it an information item

BROPHY

Mentioned that the more binding something is, the clearer it is; and not every step has to be relevant in a multi-step process like that, and there might be a loosely binding requirement and then have in-depth guide to make it work;

HOWIE

Said that she sees if you are like bringing a motion forward, and it is like empowering every single councillor, and like most things for most people; she likes initiatives, and is in favor of having more tools for councillors to be engaged because that way more consultations can be done;

HOWELL

Said that she sees that kind of system put by DG, and she feels that if it is not mandated it will not be done because no one would consult if they don't have to;

HOWIE

Said that she wonders if it is for every issue or only for some, because ideally there is someone in her faculty who will be touched by her issues

SCOTT

Said that in case of bylaw change, they can take ownership for those particular ones, but there won't be responsibility for every single councillor;

HOWIE

Argued that every councillor is voting on that issue and every single person in that room is for a larger group of issues; and at the end of the day they don't make the decision but the council makes the decision; therefore she is for consultation of the masses;

SCOTT

Said that he for consultations for both, one path is outside the scope of the faculty, and the other path will be gathering of information on certain issues;

HOWIE

Acknowledged that lack of information has been the issue;
Said that she has posted it on Facebook page and already got response from 650 people; it is really tough as there is a limit as to what we can they do as individuals and she is only generalizing; and therefore she thinks it is councillor driven;

SUNDAY

Mentioned that he likes the bulletin board idea;

HOWIE

Said that it is very different from faculty to faculty; it revises, recreates and decides; and she doesn't know what questions to ask; and is for making it requirement for every councillor;

CHOI

Mentioned that it is impossible to make it mandatory because it varies so much from councillor to councillor and from faculty to faculty;

JACK

Mentioned that today students deal with a lot of information, and it is not easy to differentiate between important to unimportant information;

SCOTT

Said that she thinks it should be a multi-pronged approach; part of it should be cultural shift; their policies are broad and are principles based; and that they need a guide like City of Edmonton, templates and frameworks;
Questioned if they are actually not doing consultations then what are the accountabilities:

HOWELL

Said that she agrees that it is a gradual process; and if they sign for mandatory policies, there can be a lot of backlash; and so they can sign up people who they don't represent;

HOWIE

Said that they can make commitments to each other, and also to constituents; it is there and doable as a process and, as starting point, political policy seems to be a great starting place;

(Councillors Scott, Brophy and Choi agree to work on it)

HOWIE

Added that if they create a fact document, for which they can get help from SU, then all of can contribute and work on it;

SUNDAY

Mentioned that there is statement that doesn't says anything about Students' Council;

HOWIE

Sai that as councillors they can't break political policy; she will talk with DG, and if also anything, including any word, has to be changed, then it will be changed;

JACK

Asked if he wants certain courses, then does it have to be through policy committee;

HOWIE

Replied that it has to be a presentation to Students' Council.

HOWIE

Said that she talk to Rebecca and to Chair of Bylaw Committee; Bylaw is doing review this year and she is the person doing it; if it has to be changed, she will change it; it doesn't have to be bylaw but it should be general document that students can see and easily understand; and she will have more information in the next meeting;

2017-06/3

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

2017-06/3a

Student Financial Assistance Policy Renewal - First Principles

HOWIE

Said that changes in the policy were editorial as well as additions; they have to do it the right way; she has checked with VP Larsen; it will be an agenda item, and if they will all agree then they will be brought back; she made changes but hasn't made them easily detectable; and the language is now a bit stronger to reflect the actual resolutions;

Mentioned that in 2b and c, VP Larsen said that it is actually what they are doing;

SUNDAY

Asked if the first fact have to be changed; and said that if education is not for the public good; it can be, but not always;

HOWIE

Replied that education must be viewed as a public good;

PIASECKI

Questioned if it can about public service;

HOWIE

Said that it was VP Larsen's input; and she doesn't know how high-level advocacy works but VP Larsen does;

SUNDAY

Said that they can see through it as public good like in East Germany;

SCOTT

Expressed agreement with Councillor Sunday;

HOWIE

Said that she would agree as well but can't do anything now;

Motion:

SCOTT/SUNDAY move to table the Agenda Item 3a in the next meeting
7/0/0, CARRIED

2017-06/3b

Deferred Maintenance Policy Renewal

HOWIE

Said that they will talk about Student Financials in the next meeting;

SCOTT

Questioned if they as a committee look at it;

HOWIE

Said that she is just adding comments, and likely have it ready before Thursday, prior to the next meeting;

SCOTT

Mentioned that Robyn has been looking at student finance and been advocating for it; there are some language changes under Resolution 1.1; there is a change and they added one point for Deferred Financial Liability; and there is no long term plans for deferred maintenance;

Added that faculties of dentistry and pharmacy are building a bus loop, and province gave university some funding to fix buildings, on a project specific project funding; however, if things like water pumps are not working then they are deferred maintenance problems; all of the things cannot be fixed in a one-time funding but require long-term funding;

HOWIE

Said that it is something that they all are advocating to the province;

SCOTT

Said that they did not specifically talk about inflation, and that will be incorporated into the long term funding model;

HOWIE

Said that all their polices are CPI and API and so no there is no need to talk about inflation

Motion:

SCOTT/BROPHY move to present facts of Deferred Maintenance Policy
Renewal to council
7/0/0, CARRIED

HOWIE

Said that they can't have a meeting on Fall Reading Week and so it has to be the Thursday before that week; and they can do Straw Poll for either September 11th or 25th;
Meeting date was agreed upon as September 11th, time at 5 pm, and location of meetings is SUB 6-06 as always;

Motion:

HOWIE/CHOI move to have the next meeting on August 14th
7/0/0, CARRIED

2017-06/4

INFORMATION ITEMS

Fall Semester Meeting Schedule

- September 11, 2017 at 5:00PM in SUB 6-06.
- October 16, 2017 at 5:00PM in SUB 6-06.
- November 20 at 5:00PM in SUB 6-06.
- December 11, 2017 at 5:00PM in SUB 6-06

2017-06/5

ADJOURNMENT

2017-06/5a **Next Meeting:** Monday, August 14th at 6.30 pm

2017-06/5b Meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS

MOTION	VOTES
BROPHY/CHOI moved to approve the agenda	7/0/0, CARRIED
SCOTT/PIASECKI moved to approve the minutes with amendment	5/0/3, CARRIED
SCOTT/SUNDAY move to table the Agenda Item 3a in the next meeting	7/0/0, CARRIED

SCOTT/BROPHY move to present facts of Deferred Maintenance Policy Renewal to council	7/0/0, CARRIED
HOWIE/CHOI move to have the next meeting on August 14 th	7/0/0, CARRIED

1 Facts

1. Education is a public good due to the benefits it brings to the social structure and tax system.
2. The cost of attaining a post-secondary education includes tuition, fees, the cost of educational materials, and living expenses.
3. The cost of a university education as well as student debt continues to increase .
4. The high costs associated with university education pose a barrier to accessing, and a disincentive to completing a university education.
5. Students who do not receive financial assistance for their education may be required to take on large amounts of debt.
6. Some students require part or full time employment in order to finance their education.
7. There is an opportunity cost for individuals who choose to pursue an education rather than earnings from working.
8. Students partaking in part or full time employment do not have the same opportunity for academic achievements as those who do not require employment to finance their education.
9. The high cost associated with university education can be detrimental to academic and extracurricular student achievement.
10. Need-based aid, up-front grants, merit-based awards, and student loans are all integral parts of the student finance system.
11. The current need-based aid, tax credit system, and merit-based awards application process is inefficient and time consuming.
12. Need-based aid is an integral part of the student finance system, without which students in financial need could not afford a university education.
13. Merit-based awards target students who are less likely to have dire need of financial aid.
14. The University of Alberta should not only aim to attract talented students, but demonstrate a commitment to supporting undergraduate students with financial needs and assist them in realizing their full potential.

2 Resolutions

1. The Students' Union advocates for a provincial financial aid system that:
 - a. Includes increased relative and absolute amounts of non-repayable assistance, including but not limited to grants and bursaries;

- b. Recognizes the importance of need-based student financial aid that increases the relative and absolute amounts and number of need-based aid awards;
 - c. Is accessible to all Alberta students attending not-for-profit post-secondary institutions;
 - d. Recognizes the complete overhead costs of education to the learner including, but not limited to, rent and utility costs, textbook costs, transportation costs, food, personal care, internet, and computer costs;
 - e. Includes adjustments to all forms of financial assistance to reflect changes in market realities as they affect students;
 - f. Eases the growing burden of student debt to post-secondary graduates;
 - g. Increases the number of awards targeted to traditionally barriered populations, including but not limited to, Aboriginal students, rural students, students with disabilities, and low-income students.
2. The Students' Union advocates for Student Financial Assistance provided by the University of Alberta that:
- a. Increases the number and value of need-based awards to continuing undergraduate students such that they are consistent with the number and value of entrance awards;
 - b. Increase the monetary value of awards in conjunction with any increase to the cost of higher education;
 - c. Increase the number of available awards as enrollment of students increases;
 - d. Annually discloses the ratio of need to merit-based aid, and the distribution of awards between years of study;
 - e. Has an efficient application process that connects more students to funding.
3. The Students' Union advocates that donors support students from diverse backgrounds and with diverse skills via scholarships and bursaries.

Expires: April 30, 2018

1 Facts

1. Funding for routine building and systems preventive maintenance has been significantly cut back, resulting in a substantial backlog of deferred maintenance.
2. The accumulation of significant deferred maintenance liability represents a failure of the government to adequately fund the operations of the University.
3. Deferred maintenance reduces the quality of the undergraduate learning experience, the University's public image, and presents a potential health and safety hazard.
4. It is inappropriate for the University and the government to expect current and future undergraduates to fund the correction of historically deficient resource allocation.

2 Resolutions

1. The University of Alberta Students' Union advocates to the provincial government for a one-time capital funding package to be delivered over a period of years to remedy the historically accumulated deferred maintenance liability.
2. The University of Alberta Students' Union advocates to the provincial government for the institution of an ongoing operational funding envelope to the University, designed to provide for adequate ongoing preventive maintenance.
3. The University of Alberta Students' Union advocates to the University to adequately prioritize preventative maintenance in future budgets.
4. The University of Alberta Students' Union advocates to the University to follow construction practices that minimize future maintenance costs.

1 Facts

1. Grades are extremely important to students for tracking progress of learning and personal growth.
2. Assessment and grading of undergraduate students' academic performance and learning outcomes are central to the university's core academic mission and the most critical determinant of further academic and future career opportunities pursued by undergraduate students upon graduation.
3. The U of Alberta Policies and Procedures On-line (UAPPOL) Grading Procedure states that course expectations regarding assignments, grading and other course related matters must be communicated clearly in the course syllabus.
4. Section 23.4.(2).f of Evaluation Procedures and Grading System of the University of Alberta University Calendar states "Each assessment is linked to the stated course objectives and/or learning outcomes. Students should be provided with the criteria for these assessments early in and, if necessary, throughout the course".
5. There is work remaining to ensure practices around the University of Alberta are structured to increase student success.
6. The importance of complex performance based learning in undergraduate education continues to grow and many courses across faculties and programs incorporate at least some form of such learning to enhance student success.
7. Holistic rating scales or rubrics are applied (explicitly or implicitly) during evaluation of complex performance based learning which use learning objectives that encompass more than one aspect of performance and cannot be easily broken out into component parts.
8. Use of rubrics ensure the measurement process (i.e. the assessment of performance) is free of error, reliable and consistent in producing "same results" (can refer to same ranking – relative reliability – or the same exact score – absolute reliability), thus improving the overall quality of assessment.
9. There is evidence to suggest that rubrics can be used to evaluate a wide variety of student assignments, and strong research evidence substantiates the claim that rubrics help positively improve teaching and learning.
10. There are many academic support services available to students across campus.

2 Resolutions

1. Students should be able to understand why they received any grade.

2. Students should be able to understand how the assessments they receive are related to the overall course objectives.
3. Assignments should be structured to increase student success.
4. Students should explicitly know what is expected of them in any given course in terms of assignments, tests and participation.
5. Students should be regularly made aware of their progress and academic performance in any given course.
6. Students should be made aware of their academic performance before the withdrawal deadline in any given course.
7. Rubrics should be commonly used for the purpose of assessing performance- based learning assignments and be made available to students.
8. The Students' Union should strive to create awareness around the academic support services available to help students improve.

1 Facts

1. The true cost of being a student is composed of many factors, such as tuition, fees, cost of living, foregone wages, and academic materials.
2. Academic materials represent a significant cost to students, given that the average student spends \$1000 - \$1700 per year on academic materials, depending on year of study, discipline, and course content.
3. The rate of textbook price increases have exceeded the rate of inflation over the last decade; at the University of Alberta, the average textbook price increased 280% between 1995 and 2007 while the Consumer Price Index only rose 22%.
4. Publishers often introduce newer and more expensive editions of textbooks in rapid succession without necessarily undertaking substantial content revision, which adversely affects the used textbook market, leading students to incur higher costs in affording academic materials.
5. Students can recover part of the cost of their textbooks by selling them as used books, and students can usually acquire a textbook for a lower price by buying used.
6. Online textbooks and other academic materials that are accessed online undercut the used book market and cannot be resold to recover part of the cost.
7. Course instructors are the primary decision-makers in terms of setting academic materials for their courses.
8. Use of additional and online academic tools and platforms (such as learning management systems, online assignments, material aimed at enhancing self-evaluation by students), offered by publishers to instructors aimed at improving students' overall learning experiences, has become more widespread.
9. The tools and platforms used to offer additional and online academic material to students often vary by publishers and are not standardized across courses and faculties, leading to additional expenses for students.
10. The use of mandatory access codes in courses impose a further financial burden on students already paying for instructional costs of post-secondary education in the form of tuition and mandatory fees.
11. The Government of Canada already has mechanisms in place for Goods and Services Tax (GST) exemptions.
12. There are no provincial sales taxes levied on books for Canadian provinces that use a Harmonized Sales Tax (HST).

13. The Book Importation Regulations approved by the Governor General in Council in July 1999 allowed book importers to charge a premium of 10% on books imported from the United States and 15% on books from any other country.^[1]
14. Students may access copyrighted material for scholarship as has been codified.
15. There are many opportunities to acquire academic materials at a discounted price or for free.

2 Resolutions

1. The the Students' Union will advocate for academic materials to be as affordable and accessible as possible.
2. The Students' Union will advocate that courses with online learning platforms and interactive academic materials should not impose costs already covered by tuition.
3. The Students' Union will advocate that the increase in cost of academic materials from year to year be predictable.
4. The Students' Union will advocate against students bearing the burden of extra costs that occur through importation, delivery or other tariffs, taxes, and fines.
5. The Students' Union will publicize and promote the various ways that students can save money on academic materials.
6. The Students' Union will raise awareness among educators and instructors of less expensive alternatives available to them in regards to academic materials.

3 References

1. ↑ Government of Canada. Accessed Jan 2, 2013. "Book Importation Regulations. SOR/99-324. Copyright Act". Justice Laws Website.
<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-99-324/FullText.html>