

Tuesday, November 12, 2019

5:00 PM

SUB 6-06

We would like to respectfully acknowledge that our University and our Students' Union are located on Treaty 6 Territory. We are grateful to be on Cree, Dene, 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 and work towards the decolonization of Indigenous knowledges and traditions.

ATTENDANCE

NAME	PROXY	PRESENT	SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN FEEDBACK (IF ABSENT)
Juan Vargas Alba (chair)		Y	
Abigail Isaac		N	
Amber Sayed		Y	
Phoebe Marinakis		Y	
Samantha Tse		Y	
Katie Kidd	Simran Dhillon	Y	
Joel Agarwal		Y	
Adam Brown		Y	
Jared Larsen	Akanksha Bhatnagar	Y	

MINUTES (PC 2019-12)

2019-12/1 **INTRODUCTION**

2019-12/1a **Call to Order**
VARGAS ALBA: Called the meeting to order at 5:04pm.

2019-12/1b **Approval of Agenda**
BROWN/TSE MOVED to approve the agenda.
CARRIED

2019-12/1c **Approval of Minutes**

2019-12/1d **Chair's Business**

2019-12/2 **QUESTION/DISCUSSION PERIOD**

2019-12/2a Free Expression Political Policy

AGARWAL: Suggested that the Campus Freedom Index unfairly graded the Students' Union an 'F' using questionable metrics and outdated facts.

TSE: Inquired into the difference between the Students' Union and University freedom of expression policies, respectively.

AGARWAL: Responded that the University policy focuses on implementing the Chicago Principles whereas the Students' Union policy will link freedom of expression and equity, diversity, and inclusivity.

VARGAS ALBA: Suggested that the Policy better differentiate between freedom of expression and academic freedom.

AGARWAL: Responded that the University policy concerning academic freedom exists within separate policies as part of staff's collective agreements.

VARGAS ALBA: Proposed that the Policy recognize that there is no freedom of expression emergency on Campus. Noted that the Chicago Principles come from the culture clashes of the United States.

BROWN: Proposed that the Policy, in a manner, recognize that the University does not need a freedom of speech policy given that, besides an anti-abortion event dispute which was settled in court, there have not been incidents which called for the creation of such a policy.

TSE: Noted that McMaster University has encountered freedom of expression difficulties.

VARGAS ALBA: Noted that there have also been difficulties at the Universities of Toronto and Ryerson. Expressed concern that free speech policies and their advocates wrongly assume good faith on the part of controversial speakers.

AGARWAL: Noted that universities are places for dialogue and discourse within the bounds of the law and university policy. Noted that, under this Policy, the Students' Union will not deny students free expression on the basis of their political alignment, race, religious affiliation, gender, sexual orientation, or, the popularity of their views. Clarified that the Policy does not bind the Students' Union to accept without question all Student Code of Conduct policy.

DHILLON: Expressed concern that Fact 5 reading 'Students can expect to come to the University of Alberta and have their views challenged while learning to debate'

is incorrect as students, unless part of a club, do not learn how to debate.

TSE: Proposed correcting a grammatical error by rephrasing Fact 1 to read 'Undergraduate students at the University of Alberta have a right to pursue knowledge within a stimulating academic learning environment.'

VARGAS ALBA: Noted that Fact 6 reads that 'The Students' Union shall not deny any constituent the rights of free expression based on political alignment, race, religious affiliation, gender, sexual orientation, or, those with unpopular and/or disagreeable opinions, except in accordance with the law'. Proposed separating the 'those with unpopular opinions' from the other grounds as, should no change be made, the provision could create a loophole in which persons could make transphobic comments by justifying them as unpopular.

2019-12/2b

Public Transit Policy

BROWN: Suggested that the Policy will could have the Students' Union advocate for free transit, less severe individual fare evasion penalties, and lower fees in summer.

VARGAS ALBA: Proposed adding facts stating:

'The City of Edmonton City Council has in the past engaged with the idea of free public transit in Edmonton

For students of the University of Alberta who do not use public transit, the uPass is a cost they have no option to opt out of

Punitive tickets for students who forget their uPass when they take public transit are an unexpected and disproportionately punitive cost, which can have very negative impacts on a student's wellbeing'

TSE: Noted that she was been caught without her uPass but was not fined as the transit officer looked her up within the University directory.

VARGAS ALBA: Noted that not all students are lucky and the ability to levy fines is at the officer's discretion.

VARGAS ALBA: Recognized that free transit is not attainable but aspirational. Considered that students appreciate the Students' Union perusing low-risk imaginative advocacy.

BROWN: Suggested that the Policy focus on key terms such as affordability, accessibility, and subsidization.

DHILLON: Inquired into whether free transit currently exists.

BROWN: Responded that the City allows free transit on certain days and through targeted programs.

VARGAS ALBA: Proposed advocating for expanding the uPass to persons just

graduated.

BROWN: Proposed advocating for raising the threshold for the low income pass.

AGARWAL: Inquired into how a smart fare system will impact students.

BHATNAGAR: Responded that students will no longer be at risk of losing their uPass sticker.

BROWN: Considered that it would be wise to discuss the integration of smart fare technology into OneCards during uPass negotiations in one and a half years.

BHATNAGAR: Proposed advocating for better night time service to outlying municipalities..

VARGAS ALBA: Proposed advocating for free, expanded, and accessible are transit.

BHATNAGAR: Proposed using the term 'multi-modal, active transportation' within the Policy.

VARGAS ALBA: Proposed renaming the Policy as the 'Active Transportation Policy'. Proposed establishing scramble intersections between the Clinical Health Sciences Academy and Earls walking areas.

BHATNAGAR: Proposed that the Policy outline how public transit advances sustainability.

TSE: Proposed that the Policy note that more students are joining the university and that transit support should increase as a consequence.

VARGAS ALBA: Proposed that the Policy note that a better flow of people leads to economic good and, in a way, pays for initial transit investments.

2019-12/2c

Students with Dependents Policy

BHATNAGAR: Noted that Vice President Larsen did extensive consultation with students and university administration to create this Policy.

VARGAS ALBA: Expressed concern that the provisions within the Policy are predominantly about students who parent instead of students who have other dependants. Considered that making it about caretakers would make it overbroad.

BHATNAGAR: Advised that the Committee submit the Policy with both complete facts and resolutions. Expressed concern that submitting only facts within first principles may cause problems for councillors who agree with the facts of a policy but not the resolutions.

BROWN: Proposed rephrasing Fact 1 which states 'The University of Alberta has over 1,000 undergraduate students with dependent children' to read '1 in 30 University of Alberta students have children'.

BHATNAGAR: Proposed adding a resolution to advocate for adding changing tables in all bathrooms.

AGARWAL: Expressed concern that students may abuse accommodations designed for students with dependants.

BHATNAGAR: Proposed that Fact 4 read 'Family commitments prevent many students with dependents from accessing opportunities both inside and outside of the classroom'

VARGAS ALBA: Expressed concern that the university has poor policies for supporting nursing.

BROWN/AGARWAL MOVED to approve the Students with Dependents Policy First Principles.
CARRIED

2019-12/2d

Student Engagement on Upcoming Policies: Booking Rooms

VARGAS ALBA: Noted that Committee members intending to book rooms for consultation should notify him to make arrangements.

2019-12/2e

Policy Renewal and New Policies

DHILLON: Noted that Councillor Kidd needs more support for her creation of a policy concerning student homelessness and renewing of the Quality of Instruction Policy.

AGARWAL: Determined to support Kidd in renewing of the Quality of Instruction Policy. Noted that he needs help creating the Free Expression Policy.

VARGAS ALBA: Determined to assist Vice President Agarwal.

BHATNAGAR: Determined to assist in drafting the Open Education Resources Policy.

BROWN: Determined to meet with representatives of Augustana Campus next week to work on the development of their Policy.

2019-12/3

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

2019-12/4

INFORMATION ITEMS

2019-12/4a

Policy Committee Minutes (PC-2019-11-M) - Tuesday, October 29, 2019.

See PC-2019-12.01.

Agenda item(s) were not submitted; therefore, one was not released. Meeting still took place, and Administrative Clerk was notified.

2019-12/4b Policy Committee Minutes (PC-2019-10-M) - Tuesday, October 15, 2019.

See PC-2019-12.02.

2019-12/4c Free Expression Political Policy - Working Draft.

See PC-2019-12.03.

2019-12/5 **ADJOURNMENT**
VARGAS ALBA: Adjourned the meeting at 6:08pm

2019-12/5a **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, November 26, 2019 @ 5:00PM in SUB 6-06.

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS

MOTION	VOTES
BROWN/TSE MOVED to approve the agenda.	CARRIED
BROWN/AGARWAL MOVED to approve the Students with Dependents Policy First Principles.	CARRIED