



University of Alberta Students' Union
POLICY COMMITTEE

October 27th, 2022
4:00 P.M.
[Zoom](#)/SUB 6-06

The University of Alberta and the University of Alberta Students' Union occupy Indigenous land in amiskwacîswâskahikan (Beaver Hills House), on Treaty 6 territory. From time immemorial, the banks along the river valley have been known as the Pehonan, a meeting place for the nêhiyawak (Cree), the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Métis, Dênesųłíné (Dene), Ojibway/Saulteaux/Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and others. The University, the Students' Union and much of the city are located on the unlawfully stolen land of the forcibly removed Papaschase Cree.

We acknowledge that sharing this land gives each of us the responsibility to research the historic contexts of Treaty 6, to reflect on our personal relationships to the land, the Nations we've named, and to our roles in upholding justice on this territory. Since they began, the Students' Union and the University have benefited from historic and ongoing dispossession of land and resources from Indigenous Peoples. As a result, it is our responsibility to seek the restitution of this land and its resources. Finally, we seek to do better by working to make our learning, research, and governance align with the histories, languages, teachings, and cultures of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples in the land presently occupied by the Canadian state.

We encourage critical reflection by asking the following question. In relation to the territory on which you are situated, what role do you play in strengthening the resistance and resurgence of Indigenous students within your communities?

ATTENDANCE

NAME	PROXY	PRESENT
Haruun Ali		Y
Simran Dhillon		Y
Joannie Fogue		Y
Christian Fotang, Chair		Y
Gurleen Kaur		Y
Lionel Liu		Y
Ibukun Ojo	Eri Akinrinmade	Y
Vedant Vyas		N
Tana Vea		N/A
Temitope Oriola		N/A
Courtney Graham		N/A

Leo Huang		N/A
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MINUTES (PC-2022-09-M)

2022-09/1 INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

2022-09/1a **Call to Order**

FOTANG called the meeting to order at 4:02 P.M.

2022-09/1b **Approval of Agenda**

The committee considers the approval of the draft agenda prepared by the committee's chairperson; at this stage, committee members can propose that agenda items be added or removed, or that one or more items on the agenda be reordered.

FOGUE/ALI MOVE TO approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2022-09/1c **Approval of Minutes**

[PC-2022-08-M](#)

ALI/FOGUE MOVE TO approve the minutes.

CARRIED

2022-09/1d **Chair's Business**

Updates from the Chair relating to progress updates, announcements or other relevant or important information that pertain to the committee or that committee members should be aware of.

2022-09/2 **QUESTION/DISCUSSION PERIOD**

An Opportunity for Discussion or Questions in regards to activities of the Committee

ALI: Questions VEA about people who use drugs and sleep in the Edmonton transit system. Wonders if there is a specific protocol for how these situations are dealt with.

VEA: States that peace officers, unarmed officers, and mental health supports are dispatched for these situations.

ALI: Has noticed that UAPS officers do nightly rounds through the halls of Lister Residence, which has made residents of Lister noticeably uncomfortable. Questions ORIOLA if this practice should be enforced.

ORIOLA: Is concerned about this practice and notes that, while some occasions can call for the inclusion of rounds, rounds should not be the modus operandi.

DHILLON: States that Drug Poisoning Prevention teams were put in place by ETS last year but have since disbanded as of Fall 2022. Wonders if there is a report available for judgement on this program.

VEA: States that, even without Drug Poisoning Prevention teams, peace officers and social agencies respond very well to situations of drug use and homelessness on ETS. Would like to share the specific report, as requested by DHILLON, when it is made available.

FOGUE: Based on ORIOLA'S research, questions ORIOLA about safety measures that could be placed on campus to keep students safe.

ORIOLA: Suggests that installing proper lighting on campus would go a long way in making campus safer. Another major concern on campus is the consumption of alcohol, particularly in large groups. Specific crimes are more prevalent on college campuses and residence communities where alcohol use in large groups is particularly high. Suggests that the use of SafeWalk on campus is significant in keeping campus a safer place. Campus Safety is fundamentally gendered, with more women on campus reporting a lack of safety in comparison to men. Violence is also sexualized as most women fear sexual assault as a potential crime against them as opposed to men who fear other crimes happening to them (such as mugging or theft).

FOGUE: Notes that VEA mentioned that gendered and racialized people felt less safe on campus. Questions if this anxiety comes from systemic issues and, if so, inquires for solutions on how this could be addressed.

VEA: A Women's Conference was held in Edmonton under Mayor Don Iverson. This helped to promote more women focused safety measures within ETS. Harassment was defined more broadly to help protect women against any potential form of abuse.

KAUR: Has heard concerns from students, while using transit, who feel unsafe on the transit system due to drug usage and lawlessness. However, other students have also expressed that they feel more unsafe when there is a greater presence of officers on the transit system.

VEA: Acknowledges that some people feel particularly safe with more police presence but others feel more safe with a dispersed police presence. Recommends that police presence is spread far and wide to prevent police congregation whilst maintaining availability to the public.

ORIOLA: Anxiety levels increase with heavier police presences. Law enforcement works better when it is almost invisible. There is a growing recognition that the heavy presence of police officers is actually detrimental to them conducting their business.

LIU: Notes that a harm reduction approach is taken in regards to transit safety. Wonders if increasing the presence of peace officers would help with transit safety.

VEA: During COVID, a primary concern for ETS was drug use and overdosing on the transit system. ETS worked with social services to help these individuals and provide naloxone treatment when possible. A lot was learned from this experience, with the knowledge from these experiences being taken forward by ETS in their future endeavours.

LIU: International students would like a more “hard on crime” approach to violence on the transit system. Questions how this hard on crime sentiment would be reflected by ETS.

VEA: Most times, the destitute are not violent people. However, isolated incidents cause this perception to change. To keep the transit system safe, law enforcement social agencies must be equally involved.

AKINRINMADE: One of the Campus Safety and Security Policy’s resolutions is to "reassess... the existing campus security and safety infrastructure and protocols with a view to protecting the human dignity, equality and safety of Black people on campus. More specifically the UASU will advocate for restorative justice and harm reduction practices to be accounted for in this work." Asks ORIOLA to reassess existing campus security protocols regarding this and determine benchmarks of success.

ORIOLA: Individuals’ experiences UAPS and EPS influence opinions on this. There is a distillation of why various identities such as age, gender, racialized status and world experience influence interactions with law enforcement. In terms of the black experience on campus, it is often a reflection of the social systems and the understanding of Canadian society as a whole. Both quantifiable and qualitative data is needed to help determine benchmarks of success.

AKINRINMADE: Questions if ORIOLA could speak to wellness checks, their conduct and their follow up.

ORIOLA: Welfare checks need to have a humane approach led by professionals. EPS continues to recruit on the basis of a Grade 12 education and a 6 month recruitment period. Until recently, they handled welfare checks on their own, then they introduced social services officers. Police officers either need to have mental health qualifications or social services

officers need to be placed at the forefront when conducting welfare checks.

DHILLON: The perception of safety on campus has changed over the last few years. Private settings, such as parties, residence or dorm rooms are where students now feel the least safe.

ORIOLA: Even when people are in a safe environment, they may not entirely feel safe. Safety is subjective. Emergency lines should be made available strategically, particularly in areas that are known to be problematic. COVID has made everyone more psychologically fragile, which increases feelings of being unsafe around campus. Perceptions are subjective and, at this time, the only thing that can be done is to create objective spaces for everyone to interact in. Individual circumstances currently rule who is feeling safe and who isn't.

ALI: Edmonton Public Schools and Edmonton Catholic Schools conducted a recent safety survey. Questions if it would be beneficial to do a comparative assessment of what these schools did.

ORIOLA: Thinks it would be useful. However, warns that some of these reviews are performatively selected to force certain outcomes.

Item G of the UAPS training document discusses excited delirium. Some say it is a phoney or non-medically recognized diagnosis. Excited Delirium suggests that individuals who ingest drug cocktails take on supernatural strength. This is then used as a justification to escalate the use of firearms by police officers. This is an extremely dangerous criteria.

In terms of a policy recommendation, suggests to the committee that they ask questions which direct to the heart of why something is being introduced.

FOGUE: Asks for elaboration on previous sexual violence comments made during this meeting. Would like more elaboration on sexual assault within the transit system.

ORIOLA: The fear of sexual violence is particularly evident amongst women. Awareness is important for preventing this issue. As well, those who do step forward and make complaints of sexual assault need to be treated with dignity and respect.

VEA: All officers called to the scene of a sexual assault within ETS have training in sexual violence concerns.

LIU: Wonders if peace officers can intervene during conflict or if they need to call police officers.

VEA: Peace officers can deal with disorder such as drug use. Violence needs to be dealt with by police officers. EPS does require a minimum two year diploma minimum in order to serve as an officer.

ERI: Questions about the UAPS Liaison program. Wonders why the use of information and the cost of this program was kept from the public.

ORIOLA: Does not find this practice unusual.

VEA: In the EPS there is a set liaison program to share information. However, there is only one-way communication. Information cannot be shared until it becomes public at the courts.

ALI: Wonders if the campus Safewalk program more helpful than having police officers walk around the campus.

TEMITOPE: Believes that this is more helpful than having armed officers patrolling the campus.

2022-09/3

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Items for the committee to consider, including items requiring the committee's approval, will be listed here for consideration. Items may be submitted by committee members of the policy committee but should be submitted to the Chair or staff member in advance so committee members have time to consider them ahead of the meeting.

2022-09/3a

Presentation by Tana Vea

VEA: Is currently the Corporate Security Supervisor for the City of Edmonton, but has previously worked several years with the Edmonton Transit System (ETS). After seeing usage decrease during COVID, ETS ridership has increased back to 80% usage (as compared to pre-COVID). Would like to increase ETS usage back up to 100%. Disorder, such as drug use, is consistently noted as an activity that makes people feel unsafe while using the transit system. Notes that males and females, as well as racialized individuals, have different concepts of safety on the transit system. Safety is a particular concern on ETS because when individuals feel unsafe using the transit, the entire community around them is impacted.

States that, as a previous graduate of the University of Alberta who took transit late at night, they understand the importance of ensuring students feel safe while utilizing the transit system. Places a high value on the relationship between ETS and students of the University of Alberta.

2022-09/3b

Presentation by Temitope Oriola

ORIOLA: Is an alumnus of the University of Alberta, the current President-Elect of the Canadian Sociological Association, a Former Special

Advisor to the Government of Alberta Policy Association and current Sociology professor at the University of Alberta.

Has not studied campus safety and security specifically, but has studied policing, marginalization, crime and enforcement in wider society.

Overviews the Campus Safety and Security Policy as developed previously by the Policy Committee.

Suggests a need for the Students' Union to suggest making it mandatory for UAPS to require a university degree in order to join.

Notes that officers who are most often involved in excessive use of force are those who do not hold university level degrees. Research has concluded that officers with university degrees are much less likely to harm citizens. Further suggests that former U of A students, who are applying to UAPS, should be prioritized over other applicants. Officers who have worked or lived in the communities that they now serve are more likely to care about that community and less likely to direct violence to said community.

Further suggests creating a Sexual Violence Unit (SVU) for UAPS. States that less than 20% of sexual assault victims, who report their assault at police precincts, talk to people who have not experienced the same thing or who have not had extensive training in the subject matter.

In terms of welfare checks, many individuals feel that they receive a degree of judgement by those checking on them. This feeling of judgement and/or shame typically derives from the fact that officers are typically conservative and may not be understanding of their specific situations.

Worries about collaboration between UPS and EPS. Understands the salience of these kinds of collaboration but worries about data breaches and privacy concerns that could result from such collaborations.

Discusses the Officer Liaison Program, which was identified in the Campus Security and Safety Policy. Suggests that it is very problematic in the sense that the rationality of law and enforcement begins to permeate campus. While collaboration may be necessary, the notion of having EPS officers on campus is a great concern. States that a great amount of transparency is necessary for this to program to have a chance at working.

2022-09/4

INFORMATION ITEMS

2022-09/4a

Transit Safety and Security Plan 2022 (Find Attached Below)

2022-09/5

Next Meeting: November 3rd, 2022

FOTANG adjourned the meeting at 4:55 P.M.

Outstanding Action Items:

Date	Topic	Action	Completed (yes or no)