

University of Alberta Students' Union
A G E N D A

2013-2014/POLICY/12

Policy Committee

Date: October 15, 2013

Time: 6:00PM

Location: SUB 6-08

1. Approval of the Agenda

2. Approval of the Minutes

(Please review the attached minutes from October 1, 2013)

3. Chair's Announcements

4. Presentations

5. Executive Committee Reports

Written/Oral Reports

- a. VP Student Life
- b. VP Academics
- c. VP External

(See attached for submitted reports)

6. Question Period

7. Old Business

- a) Health & Wellness: Progress and Timeline
- b) Internationalization: Progress & Timeline
- c) Scholarships and Bursaries: Progress and Timeline

8. New Business

9. Discussion

- a) PC Progress: reflection
- b) Timeline for the remainder of the semester/year
- c) Task force confirmation

10. Confirmation of Next Meeting Date

Next meeting is scheduled for **October 29th, 2013 at 6:00 pm**

(Please be prepared to confirm your schedule and/or provide justification for amending this time/date)



POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

2013 - 2014 # 11

Date: October 1, 2013

Time: 6:08 pm

In Attendance:

Kareema Batal (Chair)

William Lau

Dustin Chelen

Adam Woods

Colin Champagne

Kelsey Mills

Dylan Hanwell

Natalia Binczyk

Excused Absence:

Others in Attendance:

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by *BATAL* at 6:08 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MILLS moved that the *October 1* agenda be approved as *tabled*.

Seconded by *BINCZYK*.

Vote on Motion 7 / 0 / 0

CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

LAU amended minutes to change "*Missioner Park*" to "*Michener Park*" under Executive Committee Report section a. VP Student Life.

CHELEN amended minutes to change "*b. VP Academics*" to "*c. VP External*" under Executive Committee Report.

MILLS amended minutes to change "*it comes out from the operating grant of the university*" to "*it does not come out from the operating grant of the*

university” in p.4.

BATAL moved that the *September 17* minutes be approved as *amended*.
The motion was seconded by *LAU*.

Vote on Motion 8 / 0 / 0
CARRIED.

- 4. ANNOUNCEMENTS** *BATAL* announces that the committee will be using SUB 608 for the whole semester.

5. PRESENTATIONS

6. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

a. VP Student Life

There are three urgent issues that LAU is working on: getting student group procedure changes feedback within the next two weeks, working with international students to build up a town hall on October 18, and getting feedback for the residence agreement by the end of October.

There are a lot of things going through in the process need to be approved by the end of October to mid-November, so that they can be implemented for September 14/15. Therefore there is a lot of pressure for the administration to get ideas going through governance, so there is a lot stress to CHELEN, LAU and the rest of the Exec to try to get feedback from students and councilors about the new features in a short period of time.

LAU points out that there is a struggle between SU and University because of the lack of consultation and sharing information, which LAU wants to prevent this struggle.

MILLS asks about the University’s policy regarding student group of the University. LAU answers that there will be a change and it will be presented to the Council on October 22. The presentation was not brought to the Council previously because the materials are still in the lawyer’s hand and will be changed in the few days anyway. And for the upcoming Council meeting on October 8, Norma Rodenburg from the Office of the Dean of Students is out of town so they missed the opportunities. The difficulty for this short timing is that the decision of the Campus Law Review Committee, either approves or denies the changes, will be made on the Thursday after the meeting. If they introduce the changes on Tuesday, the CLRC will only have two days to make the changes or the changes will not be passed for 14/15.

LAU will find a way to clearly communicate the changes with Norma Rodenburg, present them to as many people as he can, and seek as much feedback as he can before the Council meeting. So when they present it to the Council, they will only need a minor tweak of the policy instead of a rewrite.

MILLS points out that there are a lot of concerns amongst the students. She asks how is it possible to express that the students are not happy about it. LAU explains that after the changes are passed by CLRC, it will go to GFC for sure.

LAU lists the major administrative changes. For student group executives, currently there is a minimum of 75% of executives needs to be students, it will be changed to 100%. It is because they do not want people from external roles, either from external position or alumni, to be in an executive role in student groups. It gives more chance to students to be in the leadership position.

Another change is that it sharpens up the mechanism for event approval. Not that all the events have to be approved by the Office of Dean of Students, but they are streamlining registration procedure for events. For example, they hired a staff member to be responsible for student group management. It will be a hub to bring together all the resources, such as liquor licensing, insurance for alcoholic events, venue booking. This position will be the University contact for all interaction between student groups and various University departments.

There will be a mandatory training for President, VP Events, VP Social, and VP Finances for student groups. If the person is in his second year, the training will be recorded. The training will teach the executives about budgeting events. They will have a clear idea of what events need to be approved by management and what events do not need.

The biggest concern of the SU is that they are taking student groups out of the Code of Student Behaviour and moving them into the University of Alberta Policy and Procedures Online (UAPPOL). Currently, the Code of Student Behaviour is disciplinary. In the past, student groups are regarded as part of the definition of students, so students would be individual students, student groups or groups of students, which is hard to define. So they change the definition of students to only include individual students. They move all the procedure to UAPPOL.

The main concern is that with the Code of Student Behaviour, there is an appeal process tied to it, which means if one appeals a process tied to the Code of Student Behaviour, it goes to the University Appeal Board. LAU thinks that it is a much more fair process as the case will be presented before a panel, so they can make sure that the case will be fairly reviewed. But the process can take around two years. However student groups have a very tight timeline, so when they submit an appeal they will need to wait for a year, then it will be too late.

Second issue comes from the registration. The University argues that it never

makes sense for registration to go through the Code of Student Behaviour as one can only punish a student group by either fining it or having it on probation. It then ends up in the administrative, not discipline area. So the University thinks it does not fall under the Code of Student Behaviour, and wants to separate administrative from discipline by moving all student group material to procedures and policies which is more administrative.

The fear is that now student group fall under one office – the Office of Dean of Students. There will be problems. Such as the final decision of event approval will be made by the dean of students. No appeal can be made upon disapproval but student group can submit a notice of reconsideration, to know what go wrong with the event to amend it and resubmit it. Same problem with registration, final decision is made by the dean of students. If the registration involved SU or GFA, the relevant party will be drawn into the conversation to discuss the alternatives or how they deal with the said student group. But the role of the SU is advisory with no decision-making power. If the dean of students still wants to disband the said student group, there is a chance for one written appeal to Associate Vice President of Mismanagement. He has the final decision-making power and provides a written respond.

The reason behind is that: first, the appeal time takes too long and it does not fit in student groups' timeline; second, as LAU believes, the University has the final decision over the existence of student groups. The University has a strong stance in maintaining the final decision-making power over the existence of student groups.

WOODS mentions that University of Victoria is sued by one of the student groups as UVic does not allow the group's event to take place on campus so it evolved to a freedom of speech issue. He thinks it is good to think about what is going on on campus.

LAU points out that from services perspective, without the Office of Dean of Students supports, the University Student Service cannot run. So it would require a large operational change beyond funding but also the staff support.

b. VP Academics

CHELEN reports on the issue that student groups need multiple years to get through University appeals. He comments that student group registration is fundamental to what student can do on campus because there is a potential that groups of student can do things that frustrate University.

But he disagrees that the University has the ultimate authority to completely shut down student group because of its inconvenience to the University, particular when the University does not have burden of proof.

However he likes the appeal mechanism as it implements a level of fairness.

Therefore the appeal mechanism is the key, but the current appeal mechanism does not enforce any burden of proof.

There is a set of rights that student groups should entitle to but they are not included in any policy. So CHELEN does not want to see student groups being shut down but do not have a way to appeal it and find out the reason of being shut down.

He also concerns that if the changes are approved by governance, students will not have any say anymore. Students have the right to know about this and talk about this.

He points out that in most universities student groups are entirely managed by SU, he finds it rare to see universities interfering so much in what student groups can do and who can or cannot be in the student groups. He thinks SU is already restrictive enough.

MILLS asks what if SU takes more responsibility in student groups, is it possible for SU to take more responsibility on the appeal process by the putting it in the bylaw or mandate. CHELEN answers that it is mostly because of insurance cost. The University ultimately has the liability regardless of University without any administrative authority of the student group.

He additionally reports two more things. First, 5 to 10% of faculties will be cut over the next year due to the budget cut, thus there will be fewer courses and programme. They are voluntary layoffs but it cost more than the amount the University saves. He encourages the committee members to attend the next Council meeting on Tuesday, there will be a presentation about the budget if they are interested in the issue.

MILLS and HANWELL ask why it costs more than saving. CHELEN explains that it costs \$17 billion for the layoffs but saves \$14 billion every year as they are one-time expenses. However the Provost considers rehiring some of the positions.

LAU mentions a quick 3 slides that can quickly promote: the town hall and campus clubs, to engage as many as possible. He will send out template slides to all councilors.

c. VP External

WOODS had a chance to talk with Danielle Smith and Brian Mason before the debate. It was an excellent meeting as it got a lot attraction from both sides. It seems all agree on the instructional fees.

He also notices that the political leaders of all the parties used the talking

points came up by SU in the last month. This means that they agree of what the SU has said and think that they are sellable. It seems there is a progress.

He also talked with Rachel Notley. It was a good and long meeting, talking about scholarship versus bursary.

He talked with David Dorward, MLA of Edmonton-Gold Bar and Conservative MLA. It seems that the Conservatives are especially supportive towards the instructional fees and tuition.

He came back from the town hall and making progress in lobbying. He also wants to work on bringing political engagement on campus. He sees that students and SU are unwilling to engage in politics on campus, but they should show that they care about politics.

He reports that SU is hosting an event upon an invitation by a leader of the opposition party who wants to visit the campus and talk to students. He thinks that it is important to make the event available to all students and allow students of different political background to speak.

BINCZYK asks how many people will show up for this event. WOODS answers that it is uncertain; he estimates that there will be more than a hundred people. He tried his best to invite all the students to go to this event: he had asked professors to tell their students and invited all political groups on campus. He hopes there will be a good turnout of around 300 to 400 people.

7. QUESTION PERIOD

HANWELL asks CHELEN is there a way to know the voluntary layoffs or is it HR confidential. CHELEN does not know but he can look into it.

HANWELL asks about political advisor and financial advisor of FAs: is it good for a single FA to have the advisors, or just one advisor for all the FAs. CHELEN answers that FAs does not necessary need a political advisor and gives an example of Augustana Students' Association which only have a general manager to take care of day-to-day operations, managing finances and administrative function of small businesses. Besides, Augustana Students' Association has a large reserve of fund that can maintain its staff members. So that it is one of the professional and stable FA the SU currently have. CHELEN thinks that information support can come from the SU, but operation support should leave with the FAs. In the long run, he would like to see a system manager of student group services. The system manager should responsible for programme planning through policies and financial training and support for FAs.

BINCZYK asks about what happen to the students if the professors are leaving. CHELEN answers that the professor are leaving in June 2015.

8. OLD BUSINESS

BATAL asks that if the last council meeting was cancelled because of no item in the agenda, is it applicable to Policy Committee that if there is no item of business then there will be no committee meeting. She will ask TURNER about this issue.

MILLS thinks that the committee still has reports and discussion items. CHELEN suggests looking into the committee's standing order. WOODS points out that a committee, by nature, is operated under Robert's Rule, so the meeting is under the chair's discretion. The chair can use any Robert's rule s/he likes, therefore as the chair think there is no business to discuss, the chair can cancel the meeting.

BATAL talks about these three policies with the executives and the Task Force. And they will take a lot of work. She proposes a timeline for the Health and Wellness policy to the Task Force to see if it can be done by November 19. She asks the committee if they want to take the time to revise and reformat the policy.

MILLS comments that it is good to take time to look at the policy so that the main issue is resolved before the council. WOODS agrees with MILLS that it is good to take time than to rush.

BATAL feels that with the budget cut, these few things are on people's agendas, they are being discussed everywhere. It is better to take time to engage people who might know more about the issue, so that it helps making a better policy.

BATAL notifies the committee that REDMAN is not in the committee anymore. She will find a replacement in the next council meeting.

BATAL asks in the committee that who is interested in these policies and is willing to take a bigger role in the Task Force. CHAMPAGNE and MILLS are responsible for the Scholarship and Bursary policy.

BATAL asks LAU about handpicking international to build a focus group. LAU comments that it will be very hard to get the students out. BATAL suggests putting out an advertisement to find international students who are interested, but LAU points out that it is not a focus group but a like message to the international students to encourage them to come out to the town hall. CHELEN also points out that they only have a limited sample of 30 people with 15 of them not living in Edmonton, so it is difficult to form a focus group.

BATAL, LAU and WOODS are responsible for Internationalization policy.

BATAL thinks with the budget cut that has a great impact to international students, it needs some changes to the policy to advocate for the international students. LAU says with the creation of an international student association to represent students with various backgrounds, it overlaps the focus group. And LAU will discuss about the international student town hall on October 18, which is more structured.

BATAL announces that if any committee member has any idea about internationalization, s/he can email to BATAL so she can bring it to the Task Force. She will also talk with the members about the timeline and bring it to the next meeting. Information will be shared through emails.

Scholarship and Bursary will meet on Monday at 6 p.m. WOODS would like to split up Scholarship and Bursary as two separate policies as he thinks they are two separate issues.

The timeline for Scholarship and Bursary, and Internationalization will be set after the Task Force meeting. BATAL hopes that they will be finished about mid to late November.

9. NEW BUSINESS

**10. DISCUSSION
AND INFORMATION
ITEMS**

11. REPORTS

**12. CLOSED
SESSION**

13. NEXT MEETING *October 15, 6 p.m. at SUB608*

14. ADJOURNMENT *MILLS* moved that the meeting be adjourned.
The motion was seconded by *CHAMPAGNE*.

Vote on Motion 8 / 0 / 0
CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 7:12 pm.