

Policy Minutes February 14th:

In Attendance: KUSMU, CRONE (POWER), CSORBA, ISKANDER, FEHR, KHINDA, YAMAGISHI, WOODS, ZINYEMBA (guest), HANCOCK (guest), PERSAD (guest):

Called to order by KUSMU at 6:41 pm.

KHINDA/FEHR motion to approve the agenda 8/0/0

FEHR/KHINDA move to approve the minutes as *amended* 6/0/2

Written Reports:

Vice President Academic:

This big update is that we held CRAM. We had about 50 people for sessions for four or five sessions on the first day and got a lot of big publishers out. We've set out bi-weekly meeting with the bookstore administration, and we've recorded all the sessions. It was a pretty productive conference; we had ten different student associations here from all over Canada. The second day which was all Alberta went very well as well. We spoke to a representative from CAUS and it's all going to be a revision of the 2008 principles. We're formulating strategies of advocacy to the Provincial government. I've been working on transition, and I've created a very extensive report for however is the VPA of next year.

Vice President Student Life:

We met with residence services to talk about East Campus village and Lister. Break the Record was awesome. If you did class talks I owe you pizza, and I am sore from the dodge ball game. We went to the Augustana students association and had a very good discussion with them. Also, the Canadian Cancer Society is running a great ball hockey fundraiser, and a lot of corporations and other groups are joining in. You need to raise \$10,000 minimum for participation, but a lot of corporations are funding students. Lobby training was awesome. Ride the night bus or we're going to lose it. If anyone who wants to run on the YES side for the Spring Summer Upass let me know. I've had styrofoam meals two days in a row. We got a silver star for something or other.

Vice President External:

The expected money that you were supposed to bring into a student loan application has been moved to \$1, 500. All assumed money considerations have been eliminated by the Government of Alberta. The six month grace period for after having paid your student loan is no longer going to be charged interest. Next is a competition grant, which I will either need a policy or the advice of the committee on. Lobby training happened on Saturday, and a lot of people came to the External side. We had good numbers overall. I have some ideas on how to make it different next year, it was definitely more of a pilot project.

Question Period:

FEHR: YAMAGISHI, what's involved in helping with the YES side of your campaign?

YAMAGISHI: You can use the SU's resources and would have to go to the forums. Typically people don't do classroom talks for it, but you can.

KUSMU: CSORBA, how was the FA side of lobby training and ISKANDER how was attendance? How would you improve it.

CSORBA: It was good, we had five people on the Academic side. There was a lot of presentations by HENRY and WILLIAMS. We had case studies as to how we'd approach fairly complex cases in the group, it was kind of a roundtable. The turnout was disappointed, but it was good seeing a lot of faculty association representatives. Overall for year one it went very well.

ISKANDER: We had 15 on our side. Now that all the work is done, the new Vice President External or the person who would like to do lobby training needs to set a date, I'd say September, and advertise it early. It was in the same timeline as break the record, so a lot of focus was on that. We didn't have enough time to advertise it. I'd recommend the incoming VPX has a lobby day.

WOODS: I'm curious as to Exec reaction about the Nestle honorary degree?

ISKANDER: I was told the list of people on the committee is confidential, and everything said is mandated to be confidential. We talked about it in Exec today, and I think the answer to it is we won't really encourage taking back an honorary degree, but it's not good for the University's image to have a controversial person receiving an honorary degree.

ZINYEMBA: What are the implications of making a statement?

ISKANDER: It's us telling a separate body how to do their own job.

YAMAGISHI: Just to address it, the benefit we would see as students in the SU making that kind of statement is people officially knowing we're unhappy with this decision.

ZINYEMBA: Putting out a statement won't harm anything. It's not going to be detrimental to our image.

ISKANDER: There needs to be an end goal, whereas with this issue there wouldn't be and it's something we don't as the Students' Union need to comment on.

KHINDA: I don't think it really matters what the end goal is, it's about standing out for values. If we're having a food policy about Fair Trade and there's an individual who doesn't partake in fair trade.

YAMAGISHI: We do have actual goals in policies, whereas this doesn't necessarily have an end goal. We want a restriction on the end. It's good that students ask us to give an opinion, but I don't know if giving out a statement shows a tangible goal.

CSORBA: I don't think we should be unhappy the U of A gives degrees to controversial people.

KUSMU: I want to ask about the International Students Association?

CSORBA: We're working to have an executive in place by May 1st. We'll be meeting on Friday to have an active brainstorming session.

Old Business:

Health and Wellness Policy:

ISKANDER: I don't believe the first point should be there at all. We can't measure it. If we ask the University if it's a priority, they will say yes.

FEHR: Is it really necessary to have "included but not limited to" included?

YAMAGISHI: Is there a better way to advocate for stress management?

KHINDA: Could we say for mental health and stress management.

CSORBA: I think mental health resources is a good fix.

FEHR: I think if you look through the policies, there wouldn't be a single one having "included but not limited to".

CRONE: If counselling is something that specifically needs to be done, maybe we should have a specific clause specifying that.

YAMAGISHI: I'd like having a specific focus on Counselling services.

CSORBA: We agree on the merit, just not the wording.

FEHR: It should say an increase in physical wellness space.

CSORBA: Would it be sufficient to say an increase in outreach?

YAMAGISHI: Would it be an increase in outreach or increase to outreach?

CSORBA: How do we establish quality of interfaith prayers?

ISKANDER: Is space a problem?

YAMAGISHI: Yes, there are no dedicated space for Muslim students.

CRONE: Not everyone's going to agree for spiritual health.

ISKANDER: I just don't know what we could do about it.

CRONE: It's hard to support spirituality when it's all different.

FEHR: I don't think we need to define spirituality, it doesn't matter to us what that is.

ISKANDER: Are our alcohol awareness groups overwhelmed? Whose trying to get the education that is not getting it.

YAMAGISHI: Students on campus. The big push is on moderation rather than curbing drinking in general. The University doesn't have moderation efforts, only preventative measures.

WOODS: We may put mixed messages towards the University towards what we want for alcohol policy, considering we've been fighting other policies for a while now.

YAMAGISHI: We want to push them more towards moderation however.

KUSMU: Are we good with striking this (second last clause)

All: *Strange Hand Signal*

CRONE: It should be that the University is aware of the counselling of emerging problems.

ISKANDER: We do not have the resources to tell them to do a better job.

CRONE: If you're saying that we understand the new emerging problems we already have something. It's redundant to say we need more Counselling because it's already in the policy.

CSORBA/KHINDA motion to recommend the Health and Wellness Policy in first reading to Students' Council. 8/0/0

Smoking Policy:

ZINYEMBA: This policy would not create these principles immediately, but it would allow us to tell the University this is how the students feel.

HANCOCK: 47 percent voted in favour of the campus wide ban. 34.2 percent voted to designated areas only and designated smoking policies are not something we want to pursue.

ISKANDER: The majority of students are the 53, not the 47. So we can't use that number for the majority. Either status quo or doesn't make very much sense.

HANCOCK: You could say that the majority of people are not in favour of designated smoking areas.

ISKANDER: The other thing I want to talk about is 9 or 10 pm and need to walk away from campus to a far, dark area. We're not babysitting smokers to tell them how to live their life.

DOUG: We do need to realize that our campus is enormous, and when we're looking at putting a ban on smoking we're looking at everyone. If you can't smoke on campus, what are the exact coordinates for you to step off campus? And finally, for me I'm an International student living on campus. I don't know much of Edmonton because I don't know the city. I'd like to make the suggestion if anyone's been to International areas, that of smoking booths. You pick up smoking because you're stressed, not because its cool.

WOODS: I feel it's discriminating against a group of people.

HANCOCK: The intention behind this from our perspective was not to stigmatize health. We are the youngest demographic that tobacco companies target, and tobacco companies target the youngest generations. Surveys have been done across the country solely towards smokers, and it says most smokers do want to quit and many have tried. Why is there a disconnect between the people who want to quit? It's an addiction and a habit.

CRONE: I have a general statement. Generally with a response to the survey, the numbers tend to be misleading. It's obviously a minority of people who smoke, and if you talk to 100 non smokers they won't care. The smaller minority that is opposed to it are very effected to it, so I think it's a mistake to say that just because a small number of people were in favour of a ban means it supports it. It's a tyranny of the majority issue. With that said, there is a contingency of people opposed to smoking on campus. I feel the best compromise is designated smoking areas.

DOUG: I'm sure people built a consciousness by the time we're 18, and putting a strict ban on people won't solve the problem. What will solve the problem is Counselling services. There are messages everywhere telling us how bad smoking is. I push for designated smoking areas and make a rational decision.

PERSAD: We need to add a clause which ensures ventilation is properly conducted.

KHINDA: We should put in restrict rather than limit.

FEHR: Have we really done our due diligence to consult smokers? I don't feel like we've had anyone in here, and I don't think the result has changed.

KHINDA: We've presented ourselves with two options. Is this the only viable option that we have?

HANCOCK: I think it would be more beneficial to have a policy which states the University changes our own smoking policy. It could be about meters from doors, etc.

KUSMU: Wouldn't this allow it to make it worse?

HANCOCK: We're already protected by the Alberta protection act, and the University doesn't have much of its smoking policy.

CRONE: I don't think its our prerogative to judge how the University reacts to our policies.

ZINYEMBA: My thinking on due diligence is that I've spoken to people who smoke, mainly people on Council. This policy gives some sort of direction, that this is how we feel the University should act.

FEHR: I'm sure the survey is fairly representative of people on campus.

ZINYEMBA: Designated smoking sites can easily just be 20 metres from this tree, and our duty is to say to the University that his is

HANCOCK: I don't fully understand the process the SU goes to, but it seems that since you've already invested so much in this process. There was a study done earlier this year showing 7 percent of students smoke, compared to 93 percent that don't.

PERSAD: I don't like a general policy; I think there's been enough opposition in this to show it.

KUSMU: We've done quite a bit for consultation. We've sent Chaka out to delegate with students and in terms of consultation as a committee I think there's only so much we can do.

ISKANDER: How would people feel about BIRT the Students' Union opposes a campus wide ban.

ZINYEMBA: A campus wide ban is probably not going to happen, but I think having that in the policy would negate the point.

ISKANDER: I am genuinely considered about Saskatchewan Drive and sexual assault, and I see value in the SU promoting that.

HANCOCK: I feel like the sexual assault issue is huge, but that could happen on campus as well.

ZINYEMBA: Further thoughts. If we're saying we oppose a campus wide ban, what if the University has a way to address the problem we're talking about.

CRONE: If that's the issue we should move this on to another meeting and discuss it further.

FEHR: Assuming we pass this now, there's already two policies coming forward in first reading. Are we realistically going to prepare three policies for second reading? I think we should delay this bill.

CRONE: If there's contention after its passed, we can't fix it.

ISKANDER: We'd have to make an entirely new motion. It's a matter of whether or not more arguments are going to be illuminated.

PERSAD: While I'm not so familiar with the policy process, is it really a new principle to specify that there is no support for banning smoking?

ISKANDER: The answer is yes. In the unlikely chance of us asking the question do you support a complete ban on campus it will be up to the Executive to decide, whereas if we've decided in policy it's been decided.

YAMAGISHI: On the fundamental basis of the policy we need to have that extra point.

CRONE: One other point is judging by policy decisions in the past, and Council discusses it they will very likely send it back.

KHINDA: We could just put it as a whereas clause.

KHINDA/ZINYEMBA move to recommend the smoking policy in first reading to Students' Council.