

**April 2nd, 2024  
6:00pm  
Council Chambers/Zoom**

The University of Alberta and the University of Alberta Students' Union occupy Indigenous land in amiskwaciwâskahikan (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 Niitsítapi (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?

**SPEAKER** called the meeting to order at 6:15 P.M.

**ORDER PAPERS (SC-2023-25)**

**2023-25/1      SPEAKERS BUSINESS**

**SPEAKER:** Wanted to give information regarding conduct and maintaining respectful dialogue, given the presence of guests at today's meeting. Reminds the room to be mindful that information is gathered through minute taking and Zoom recordings. Will allow the Late Additions.

**2023-25/1a      Join Zoom Meeting**  
<https://zoom.us/j/95902116340>

**2023-25/2      CONSENT AGENDA**

**2023-25/2a      Students' Council Votes and Proceedings (SC-2023-23-VP-20240305) - Tuesday, March 5th, 2024**

See SC-2023-25.05

**APPROVED**

**2023-25/2b      Students' Council Votes and Proceedings (SC-2023-24-VP-20240323) - Tuesday,**

March 23rd, 2024

See SC-2023-25.06

APPROVED

2023-25/2c **THIESSEN/ALMEIDA MOVE TO** appoint Yaatheshini Ashok Kumar and Sheroz Hamid to the Discipline, Interpretation, and Enforcement Board

See SC-2023-25.01

APPROVED

2023-25/3 PRESENTATIONS

2023-25/3a **FOTANG/FLAMAN MOVE TO** allow Juliana du Pree to present an update on the UASU website

See SC-2023-25.02

CARRIED 14/00/00

2023-25/4 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND BOG REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

Beasley - Vice President External - Report  
Fotang - President - Report

2023-25/5 BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORT

Flaman - Finance Committee Chair - Report

2023-25/6 OPEN FORUM

HARUUN ALI: Begins statement wanting to tell the Students' Council a story. In the Summer of 2022, they were elected as a counselor and halfway through the term, questions were raised about eligibility by several counselors as well as the CRO. Does not want to get into the details of the situation as they believe it is overall semantics and D.I.E Board also ruled in their favor, but wanted to focus on one vote that happened at Students' Council. It was a contentious vote where there was debate that sought to clarify if they were within their correct faculty. Believes around 10 to 11 counselors did abstain on the vote, as they did not want to be a part of a contentious vote. Wants to remind counselors that in their oath, it is about doing what is right and not what is easy. The right and moral thing to do is to recognize that this election was not fair and that there were obvious discrepancies with how the CRO responded to certain candidates, as Farah Elgaweesh has pointed out. Understands that the D.I.E Board has already made their decision but this body can ensure that the votes are properly presented. Proposes to have Farah Elgaweesh's

name versus Layla Alhussainy's name on the first round of voting, then to drop her name off in the second ballot and explain the reasons as to why she was disqualified. Believes this is the most transparent way to present the information while ensuring everyone can access it. Has more to say about unfairness but wanted to get this out first. Hopes that the body make the ethical decision in order to not throw away the incredible work of Farah.

PROMETHEUS: Asks a question to FLAMAN and the Students' Council broadly. States that they were named in a ruling made by the CRO which, in passing, accused them of vandalism. Has previously contacted the CRO, but the CRO did not respond to them, despite having their contact information. Asks what is lacking in the Bylaws and Regulations which allows this to happen.

FOTANG: Responds to Prometheus. Believes that this question is better suited for the CAC Chair if it is regarding concerns with response times or interactions with the CRO. With that being said, the Bylaw committee is reviewing election related processes and looking at issues that have occurred in this election where there could be room for improvement. Also states that there is an appeal process where any kind of complaint that comes through to the Elections Office can be contested and there is also the ability to go to the D.I.E Board with any concerns.

ASHA JAMA: Notes that the intention with their statement is not to attack a person or individual, but rather express feedback regarding evidence gaps that they have identified within the UASU Bylaws. Has read through the proposed changes of the UASU Bylaws and is disappointed as they do not encompass the major concerns faced during the general election. For example, there has been a dangerous precedent set by this year's VPA race, including retroactively charging former VPA Candidate, Farah Elgaweesh, with extreme fines after issues were recognized by the Elections Office. This was not done in a timely manner. There were also discrepancies in communication and treatment among candidates by the Elections Office. Wants to establish a consistent level of communication with all candidates through a clear definition of the basic level of communication that is to be required and upheld by the Elections Office.

Requests Council to revisit the proposed Election Bylaw changes to reflect the feedback by themselves.

FARAH ELGAWEEESH: Encourages counselors to refer back to the Students' Council Oath of Office while listening to their statement. Wants to highlight the importance of the results having their name released publicly with the amount of votes tabulated in the first round. Notes that there is not a bylaw stating that these results are not to be shared or tabulated publicly. This should be done out of respect for the students who pay the salaries of the Students' Union Staff and who voted in this election out of hope of their interests being heard. Notes that this may cause tension and resistance in the future given the context of this election and a low voter turnout and that it is apparent that students are losing trust in the Students' Union. In order to gain credibility for the incoming Executive team, believes it is critical to communicate

with the students and release their name, along with the results, as the students who have voted for are not pleased to see results without their name. This will create more barriers for the incoming Executives to move forward due to the spectacle regarding how certain Executives came to office.

Notes that they are here in good faith, to ask the Students' Union to uphold communication and transparency, as this is an important step in ensuring in the long term that they are equipped to advocate and support students. Given the nature of their disqualification and that it was not publicized to students and also given that bylaws do not state that these results are not to be shared and that their name stayed on the ballot until the election period ended, it is only fair that the complete set of results are shared.

AIMAN SAIF: Asks that if there is nothing in the Bylaws that state that the results should be withheld, why are the numbers not being released? Also asks why the votes were stopped from being counted and why the numbers for the first ballot were not made public.

VERGHESE: Responds to Saif. Noted that the Elections Office made their ruling based on if candidates were over their budgets or not. Informed Farah that their name will be on the ballot until 7:00pm, in the case that any of the rulings were overturned by the D.I.E Board.

The Elections Office does not remove the results of disqualified candidates. Because the UASU voting system is a ranked based system of voting, votes were calculated using the order of preferences outlined by each voter.

DUMOUCHEL: Responds to Saif. Technically speaking, when someone is disqualified prior to the results, there is no account of the race due to the disqualification. There is a flag that is set in the software and the votes are not counted. There are not hidden results that are not presented. If the disqualification were to be overturned, the system would be re-run with the disqualification flag turned off.

ANDIE HANSEN: Begins by stating that this year's elections were much more intense than previous years, and to their knowledge, all the candidates have put in a lot of effort into their great campaigns. Notes that the Elections Office and the D.I.E Board had tough decisions to make and were exhausted by the end of elections. Is impressed by Farah's efforts of understanding the Bylaws and their diligence towards their campaign, especially as the youngest candidate running in the General Election this year. States that, if diverse student voices with outside point of views are to be included in student governance, effort needs to be made to increase communication and make the running process more accessible and fair. In their opinion, they believe Farah's disqualification was unfair. Wants to emphasize that Council should give Farah the benefit of the doubt and listen with compassion to the statements of Farah and others in this Students' Council meeting. Is concerned with the precedents that are set by the actions of the Elections Office during this campaign voting period.

Aparajita (*The Gateway*): Question directed to the CRO. Asks for clarification on how the results are tabulated.

VERGHESE: The Director of I.T Department would ask if any disqualifications have been made before running the voting system, Because there was a disqualified candidate this year, the votes were run without the disqualified present.

DUMOUCHEL: To further clarify, there are no vote counts made for disqualified candidates.

**FOTANG/RAITZ MOVE TO** extend question period by 15 minutes.  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

HARUUN ALI: Is confused regarding the controversy on releasing the results with Farah's name on them. Does not believe that it makes sense. If Farah won, believes it was not truly not fair to Farah. CAC should open up an investigation on the grounds of differential treatment. Expresses concern that they believe that racialized students may be turned off from running in student governance due to the process of this year's elections.

MIKAEL SCHMIDTKE: Seems that, based on everything said, the main issue is the way the software handles the voting procedure. Based on the outrage regarding the lack of inclusion of disqualified students, encourages Council to look into how votes are tabulated and to have it so that disqualified candidates have the votes properly tabulated with them included in the race. Believes that this should have been the case from years prior, and since disqualifications can be overruled, if they are not tabulated properly, then there would be no way to properly determine if they would have won had they not been disqualified.

ASHA JAMA: Question. Asks if it is democratic to redistribute student votes to Candidate X when Candidate Y is disqualified. Given that students have voted, as an example, for candidate Y as their first option. Therefore, if a student did not vote for Candidate X at all for their second option, their vote for Candidate Y was possibly erased. Suggests that it should be erased from the system in general rather than be redistributed. Reaffirms and raises concerns on the voting software and that it needs to be looked into.

DUMOUCHEL: Responds to Asha Jama. Clarifies that if a candidate is disqualified, those that voted for the disqualified candidate and no one else would not have their vote redistributed. However, if a voter also voted for another person as their second option, then that vote would be redistributed. The idea is to respect the will of the voters. Clarifies that as long as the UASU has the original ballot, which they do, the results can be rerun with the disqualification flag removed.

ABDUL ABBASI: Engagement in SU elections have decreased over the years. Recalls their year on Students' Council and how discussions around elections often focused around increasing engagement and accessibility. Is looking forward to the Bylaw

amendments that are coming forward regarding the elections. Believes they should be striving to make the Students' Union more accessible for everyone, regardless if they have no experience or if they come from a marginalized community. This will increase the trust from students to the Students' Union.

FARAH ELGAWEESH: Asks for further clarification on rank based voting procedures.

VERGHESE: Responds to Farah. Explains the rules and regulations of rank based voting.

DUMOUCHEL: When someone is disqualified, there is not a candidate that is the second choice because they then are now the voter's first choice. The alternative to rank based voting is a simple plurality vote.

PROMETHEUS: Question for CRO. Asks if the ballots have been destroyed yet.

VERGHESE. Responds. No, the ballots have not been destroyed and that the calculations can be done, if need be.

**BEASLEY/RAITZ MOVE TO** extend question period by 15 minutes.  
CARRIED

HARUUN ALLI: Believes this is a legislative matter and a decision for this council to make. Does council want to see the complete results? Believes the results are relevant and that it is not appropriate to penalize candidates for social media stories. Notes that there are flaws in the bylaws that need to be fixed and that the D.I.E Board are only ones capable of ruling on these flawed bylaws.

PROMETHEUS: Question for LAM or for anyone that can answer. Asks if a motion could be made to recount the ballots as though Farah was not disqualified in order for the complete results to be released to students.

LAM: Believes that is a motion that could be possibly made. Looks to the SPEAKER for confirmation of this fact.

SPEAKER: Does not see any reason why it could not; It would be up to Students' Council to make that decision.

FARAH ELGAWEESH: Notes that the common sentiment among students is that their disqualification was deemed unfair, but is not at Students' Council to debate this. The common sentiment amongst students is concern on the way results are to be presented and believes it is going to be presented in a misleading manner, as many students do not know how rank based ballots work. Believes it is important for the Students' Union to explain how the results are tabulated in the way that was discussed during Open Forum. Is concerned about next year's elections and the lack of communication between the Students' Union and the student body. Is also concerned this will affect the incoming Executives and how their terms will go.

QUESTION PERIOD

ALMEIDA: Will refrain on discussing anything related to the VPA race. Recognizes the many concerns brought to Council today about processes and communication at the Students' Union. Reassures that there are conversations to come later in the meeting regarding ratification and a separate conversation about future possible Bylaw amendments. Encourages this year's as well as the incoming Students' Council members to take an in depth look into the election bylaws and process and address what has been relayed. Notes that the proposed changes are not all encompassing, but are a first step.

ATWOOD: Wants to let the guests of council know that the council heard their concerns and personally shares them to an extent. Personally believes that the bylaws are not necessarily clear regarding whether the CRO has the authority to disqualify people on the basis of campaign expenses being exceeded. Is intending on putting a motion forward to either table the ratification of results until D.I.E Board can make their interpretation of that Bylaw, or to separate the ratification into separate parts in order to withhold the ratification of the VPA until consultation can be made.

PICH: Appreciates the students coming in today and expressing their concerns. Notes some hypocrisy about retroactively going back on bylaws that have been already voted on. Notes that the Bylaws have been in place and have been ruled on by the D.I.E Board in some cases. Believes it was a sound decision.

ATWOOD: Asks PICH if the D.I.E Board ruled on the issue of Farrah's disqualification or an assessment of fines.

PICH: As far as they are aware, it was specifically on the fines.

Believes that retroactively changing the bylaws regarding this is something that could have been addressed through D.I.E Board appeals but with consideration that they are passed the appeal period, they do not believe it is precedent to bring a new case to D.I.E Board past the appeal period.

DUMOUCHEL: Notes that this is for Council to decide. Encourages Council to think about the message it will send to the DIE Board if they should send their decision back to them for review.

MOHAMED: Asks about the timeline of the Strategic Plan of the UASU.

FOTANG: Provides an update on the Strategic Plan. Notes that there was a survey run earlier in the Winter semester that did not have the response rate that they hoped to have, however good pieces of information were highlighted. Met with a member of the Strategic Plan Committee with the intention of creating another package in hopes of prompting more questions, more surveys or focus groups that will help accomplish set goals. Will be recommending re-addressing the terms of reference of the Strategic Plan Committee to extend the timeline of their work.

Believes that the work will take longer than a year.

PICH: Asks FLAMAN about the current progress on the Dewey's washrooms, discussed earlier in the year.

FLAMAN: There are funds budgeted for this project for the incoming budget up for approval at the next meeting. Subject to this passing, work on the bathrooms will begin in the Spring/Summer semesters.



2023-25/8 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2023-25/9 BOARD AND COMMITTEE BUSINESS

2023-25/9c **FOTANG/BEASLEY MOVE TO** ratify the results of the 2024 General (Minus the VPA race), SU Council, and GFC election results

CARRIED Flaman, Thiessen, Griffiths, Lam, Pich ABSTAIN

See SC-2023-25.09

MOHAMED: Asks the CRO on voter turnout this year, as they recognize increasing voter engagement was a goal this year but yet has seen a historical low.

VERGHESE: Notes there are several factors as to why voter engagement saw a low, including candidate platforms being unavailable for voters until close to the voting period. In order to increase engagement, they used Perk points and Election Staff to engage with students. Recommends the use of voter polls in order to increase future engagement. Recommendations and concerns are to be listed in the CRO Report, submitted for the end of the year.

PICH: States that they trust that all proper measures have taken place for the election and have full confidence in the results.

ALMEIDA: Although information is available online, asks the CRO to explain in detail what occurred regarding the Presidential race.

VERGHESE: Complaints surrounded tabling that was done by a third party group where defamatory remarks were used against Candidate Griffiths. New information became available in which noted Candidate Glock was aware of the actions of the third party group. This is how the ruling of disqualification was made. Notes that through appeal, D.I.E Board ruled that disqualification was not warranted in this case.

**ATWOOD/ALMEIDA MOVE TO** separate the ratification of the Vice President Academic Race from the other ratifications.

CARRIED

ATWOOD: Their understanding is that ratification is a review of the lawfulness of the election and the ways in which it has proceeded. Notes a conflict in the bylaws in which they believe they do not provide the CRO with the power to disqualify. Wants to ensure that they are interpreting the laws accurately and in the way they are intended to be interpreted.

RAITZ: Shares concerns regarding bylaw clarity but notes that the CRO power to disqualify a candidate is stated in bylaw. Concerned that this motion will ultimately move council backwards.

FLAMAN: Notes that disqualifications are triggered automatically when candidates go over their election budgets.

ELGAWEESH: Wants to clarify that they were also concerned about communications from the Elections staff. States that they would be interested in exploring further interpretation from the D.I.E Board.

**FLAMAN/THIESSEN MOVE TO** extend the meeting until 10:00 P.M.  
CARRIED

**ATWOOD/ALMEIDA MOVE TO** table the ratification of the results of the Vice President Academic election until the next meeting of Students' Council and refer the following question to the DIE Board: does Bylaw 320 provide the CRO the authority to disqualify a candidate based on exceeding campaign expense limits which are exceeded on the basis of fines imposed by the CRO.

FAILED Almeida ABSTAINS

RAITZ: Reiterates that if a threshold is triggered, then disqualification is automatic. Notes that the wording of the bylaw is not perfect, however legislation is available. Encourages the council to move forward from elections.

PICH: Highlights that this discussion should have been brought to their attention earlier and is concerned that this would seem like a retroactive action.

ATWOOD: Wants to emphasize that this motion is not necessarily to reconsider the results of the elections but instead to gather more information in order to make more informed decisions at the next council meeting.

GRIFFITHS: Urges council to consider the perception and consequences of lengthening the process. Does not think that this is effective and emphasizes that these details can be elaborated on and accurately addressed through future bylaw changes.

**FOTANG/BEASLEY MOVE TO** ratify the results of the VPA Election with direction to staff to provide communications to the student body on how the VPA race results were tabulated no later than the April 16th meeting of Council.

CARRIED Griffiths, Thiessen, Lam, Almeida, Pich, Flaman, Elahi ABSTAIN

**FOTANG/BEASLEY MOVE TO** amend the motion to direct staff to provide communications to the student body on how the VPA race results were tabulated no later than the April 16th meeting of Council.

CARRIED Almeida ABSTAINS

RAITZ: Seeks to touch on a part of this discussion which relates to communication

requests. Notes that there is still clear confusion, believes it would be worthwhile to have a clear proclamation after ratifying the results.

PICH: Appreciates the idea of ratifying the election with a directive to put out a clarifying statement in order to ease any confusion regarding the process.

2023-25/9a **GRIFFITHS/MAJEKODUNMI MOVE TO** approve the first principles of the Truth and Reconciliation Policy.

CARRIED

See SC-2023-25.03

GRIFFITHS: Notes that the policy is set to expire soon, which is the main reason they went through the process of reviewing and updating this policy. Notes that there is potential to incorporate ARRC recommendations and have been committed to working alongside ARRC and ISU while designing this policy.

2023-25/9b **RAITZ/AISENSTAT MOVE TO** approve the First Principles of elections related bylaw amendments

CARRIED

See SC-2023-25.04

RAITZ: Proposal for these first principles are based on reflection and discussion about the recent D.I.E Board rulings. Appreciates comments that there are aspects of the current situation that are not reflected in the proposed amendments, however they are working within their scope whilst respecting the amount of time left in their terms.

Bylaw committee chose to move forward to establish a stronger directive that would ultimately create better direction for everyone involved in the process. The first change being brought forward is establishing a Duty of Honesty to the C.R.O. The second change addresses further clarity regarding the role of a volunteer. The proposed changes also address concerns for further appeal processes.

Speaks to concerns that the amendments felt rushed and that they did move at a quicker pace than prior bylaw proposals brought forth by the committee, however the process did still meet the minimum thresholds required per procedure. Notes that any council that is to respond to election issues would be rushed, because elections occur in March and Council terms end in April.

GARBUTT: Asks if the Bylaw committee discussed what the penalty would be for breaching the duty of honesty or if that will be discussed at future meetings.

RAITZ: The Bylaw committee did not discuss that specific aspect. The duty of

honesty section is to communicate to candidates what they owe to the C.R.O. Subsequent councils can determine fines and penalty sections to reflect concerns that have been brought forward.

FLAMAN: Reiterates that this was not a unanimous decision in the Bylaw committee and was one of the dissenting votes. Notes that reviewing previous D.I.E Board rulings is well within the powers of the subsequent Bylaw committee. Believes that election related processes need to be amended, but would have rather worked on this holistically rather than in pieces.

PROMETHEUS: Wanted to note that the power that the C.R.O holds should be strictly regulated.

AISENSTAT: Hears concerns, however believes they are doing their due diligence by beginning the process now.

2023-25/10	<u>GENERAL ORDERS</u>
2023-25/11	<u>CLOSED SESSIONS</u>
2023-25/12	<u>INFORMATION ITEMS</u>
2023-25/12a	Students' Council Submissions  See SC-2023-25.01-04
2023-25/12b	Students' Council Votes and Proceedings (SC-2023-23-VP-20240305 and SC-2023-24-VP-20240323)  See SC-2023-25.05-06
2023-25/12c	Students' Council Attendance  See SC-2023-25.07
2023-25/12d	Students' Council Motion Tracker  See SC-2023-25.08
2023-25/12e	Students' Council Submissions  See SC-2023-25.09
2023-25/12f	Executive Report  See SC-2023-25.10

SPEAKER adjourned the meeting at 10:00 P.M.