



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

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VUSAC Meeting Minutes

May 20th, 2016 at 7:00 PM in the Goldring Student Center

MINUTES

In Attendance

VUSAC

Judiciary

PRESIDENTS: Stuart Norton and Rahul Christofferson

VP EXTERNAL: Stephen Warner

VP INTERNAL: Golda Greenspoon

VP STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS: Hannah Brennan

Assessor Members

CAMPUS LIFE COORDINATOR: Emily Gilbert

CHAIR: Saambavi Mano

COMMUNICATIONS: Shailee Koranne

CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER: Taylor Cenac

FINANCE: Nicole Gumapac

SECRETARY: Artimes Ghahremani

Commissioners & Councilors

COMMUTER: Karen Indraathadia

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL :

EQUITY : Zoe Kwan

SCARLET & GOLD: Zahavah Kay

SUSTAINABILITY : Jamil Fiorino-Habib

COUNCILORS

LEVIES

GUESTS

Peter Huycke

Seraphina Vasilodimitrakis-Hart

Stephanie Spagnuolo

Garnet Lollar

Shannon Brown

Not In Attendance

OFFICIAL REGRETS

Nina

Olivia

Motion: Stuart moves to table minutes from last meeting.

- Abstained: Steve

Motion: Golda moves to approve agenda (as it stands below). Steve seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

- VPSO update added to agenda
 - Rahul seconds
 - Stuart Opposed
 - *Note: Jamil enters the room, did not vote above.*

EX-OFFICIO REPORTS

CLC – Introduced to the Council

Rahul and Stuart welcome Emily Gilbert, the replacement Campus Life Coordinator. Emily will be here for the next 8 months, to accommodate changes in the Dean's Office. She is a past student at U of T, having completed her undergraduate degree at Victoria College. She is now working on her PhD at U of T.

ASSESSOR MEMBER REPORTS

Finance – Nicole

Nicole introduces herself as the finance chair. In terms of budgeting, Nicole notes that committee, as it stands, requires restructuring. The current structure consists of the finance chair, a co-president, the VPI, the VPSO, and a councillor. It has been brought up that the power is concentrated in the judiciary. The proposed structure consists of the finance chair, a co-president, the VPSO, a councillor, a levy representative, club representative, the equity commissioner or their designate as a non-voting assessor member, and the Student Projects Chair.

Golda approves, agrees that it is time for restructuring. Rahul asks if these changes will apply to the audit committee as well, Nicole responds that it will be looked into. Shannon notes that the audit committee has not met for the past few years because someone from the Dean's Office has been taking care of it professionally.

Communications – No Report

Chair – Saambavi

Saambavi discusses publicizing voting records by name, and releasing this information on the website. The intention is to increase transparency and accountability, as well as preventing the abuse of abstentions. She notes that the engineering society did this last year, and saw a decrease in abstentions, but also less dissent. For sensitive motions, the decision to publicize voting records by name can be done on a case-by-case basis.

Steve clarifies that this would only be for substantive motions, and adds that role call votes may be a pressure tactic to influence the vote, creating an atmosphere of pressure to join the majority. Saambavi agrees, but adds that VUSAC seems to be this way regardless, and considers whether the benefits outweigh the concerns. Steve says the pressure now pertains to a lack of information. In the past, abstentions have been used because people are unclear on what is being voted on - not as a political decision. The proposal will help differentiate between these abstentions.

Rahul asks why it is desirable to decrease abstentions. Saambavi responds that abstentions are to be used as a political statement. They apply to a direct conflict of interest, not for not paying attention. The appropriate choices are to be in favour, opposed, or abstaining, and if you don't know what is being voted on, you must make that clear to the chair.

Peter begins to discuss that the actual role call doesn't increase pressure, the public vote does (TIME CUT OFF).

JUDICIARY REPORTS

VPSO - Hannah

Hannah begins by introducing VISA as a new levy, one of their conditions being office space. We don't have space to offer at the moment, and Hannah proposes several options:

- Judiciary office
- Share Vic Records' space
- Collaborate with the Commuter Dons temporarily

Rahul questions who said they get office space, Hannah is unsure. For context, Rahul clarifies that Vic Pride wanted space in the past, and we can't offer anyone else's space. It is potentially an option to share Vic Records' space, but other autonomous levies are limited. He notes that it may be better talking to dean's office.

Steve asks whether the referendum question specified office space for visa, Saambavi clarifies that it did not.

Garnet proposes to investigate whether space should be given to VISA and, if so, potentially making use of the back meeting room. Hannah responds that VISA wants space for drop-ins within the community, and the back room requires a key for access. She then adds that the other offices do as well though.

Golda suggests that they might book the back meeting room weekly for office hours.

Stuart notes that it is probably going to encourage VUSAC to rethink space usage. 2 years ago there were concerns around VCDS using space VUSAC space, as there is a significant demand. He suggests we should re-approach the use of this building, as it has not been revisited since opening.

Rahul adds that the use of the VUSAC office should be revisited. We could start opening spaces to have more levies in there, similar to 21 Sussex. He suggests changing the space from VUSAC space into a student organizations space.

Stephanie asks whether it is possible to have a space rented for office hours for a period of time per week. Hannah responds that there is a booking system, but it should be made more public.

UPDATES and REPORTS

Sustainability – Jamil

Jamil proposes the use of an organic waste bin. He encourages VUSAC members to be mindful of their use of the printer and supplies, be conscious and use less.

Zahavah suggests we bring in travel mugs, make them available to students who want to grab coffee. This will cut down on waste.

Rahul asks where the garbage cans are. Artimes responds that three have been found in the back meeting room.

Jamil presents VUSAC members with a challenge, which is to try and eat vegetarian and vegan foods 3 days a week.

Golda responds that this sounds great, and Zahavah adds that she has a vegetarian cookbook to offer ideas to those who are stumped on what to make.

Secretary – Artimes

A new initiative that is being introduced is the availability of pads and tampons in the VUSAC office. Hopefully to be sponsored by Proctor and Gamble, VUSAC wants to offer feminine hygiene products to students who may need them in emergency situations. More updates will follow.

Chair – Saambavi

Saambavi encourages members to look at the meeting procedure document. If anyone outside VUSAC wants to see it, she has a copy available.

Update: Jahmil

Jahmil introduces COP week, which focuses on the divestment for fossil fuel omissions. Last year, a conference was held with professors and activists, and he suggests we think about extending it for a week with other events. This is important because Gertler's recent decision was insufficient, and it appears as though it will hold.

He also suggests a sort of 'Inside Scoop Documentary' on waste at Rowell Jackman and other residences. In addition, he proposes a more general VIC documentary with regular updates on the community. Shailee notes that she is interested, and has ideas with her own portfolio as well.

Update: Hannah

Hannah has streamlined club applications. It is now a much easier Google Form application. The Clubs Handbook will include bios on VUSAC members and clubs at VIC. This will be done for Orientation. If there are any suggestions for inclusions, email Hannah. Stephanie asks whether the handbook will be available to all members, Hannah responds that it features members and levies, and will be handed out to frosh.

Update: Golda

Golda briefly notes that one-on-ones with her will be held in the next few weeks, and the summer retreat is coming up as well.

Update: Steve

Steve introduces the student experience survey, which was Alex's priority last year. It was meant to go out last march, and is a census of VIC students regarding campus life, resources, and programming for upcoming year. We are now feeling out what's going on, and hoping to get it done for September. Seraphina adds that she has relevant notes from a meeting with the Dean and Registrar. Garnet requests that it also focuses on racial and gender diversity at VIC, combining this with feelings on VUSAC and interactivity. Steve responds that last year on the VCC, Gabe brought forward the idea of getting race data from incoming students. This has hit roadblocks, but such questions can help fill this gap.

Updates: Rahul and Stu

Summer Office Hours

Rahul introduces the Presidents' summer office hours. They will be held for 30 hours a week over 4 days, usually Monday to Thursday. Moving forward, Stuart will be doing them for the first month, then Rahul. There will be a 2 week period in which the office will be closed. [July 18th – August 1] Stuart adds that as summer office managers, they hold hours and meetings, and are here for the community as well if they have questions. Diana is also mandated to hold office hours, and members should respect her directions. The office has to be closed during business hours unless one of the three are present.

Summer Goals

1. Stuart states that in past discussion, [Hannah exits] the list-serv has supposedly given access to all of the VCU, but apparently it is only reaching 400 students. Technically, the registrar has access, so they will work on getting access to everyone. This is hoped to be done by September.
2. Rahul mentions that they will look at and discuss the alcohol policy with the Dean's office. Anyone who is interested, has experience, or wants to know more can contact them via email or in person.
3. Stuart introduces an Indigenous Studies course requirement, as well as recognition and acknowledgement of residential school involvement. The previous judiciary began discussion on this last year and they hope to move forward this summer.
4. Rahul discusses race census data, which has to come from the registrar. They are working on getting it, but have yet to meet new registrar. [Nicole exits] Stuart adds that central U of T collects this data, but as we are federated we do not have access to this information. [Zoe left]
5. Stuart brings up a non-academic disciplinary policy for non-residence students or non-academic offences. It is unclear whether it will exist. Rahul adds that Kelly wants as much student perspective as possible, anyone not on VUSAC is welcome in these meetings. Garnet asks whether there will be considerations on sexual assault. Rahul responds that this is a VIC central version of the governing [Hanna and Nicole enter] policy, and maybe this is something they are planning but not yet.

6. Rahul introduces incorporation, which is being looked into. It keeps us more accountable as a legal entity that exists independently.
7. Stuart discusses budgeting as a goal, changing how it works and the period. It is clear there are complications on levy cheques, tuition, fee deferral, etc. They plan on working with Nicole. [Zoe enters]

Judiciary Meeting Summary

Rahul offers a brief summary of the judiciary meeting, which may become a routine part of VUSAC meetings. The VOCA co-chair was ratified, and they will look into working without the commissioner for the time being. With Open Vic coming up, VUSAC will have presence, and it is a chance to talk to incoming students. The summaries of judiciary meetings work to make the judiciary more accountable, and to present the information in a more accessible way. Garnet asks whether these will be posted on the website, Stuart says yes.

Executive Meeting

Stuart notes that these meetings include all judiciary members and commissioners. There is a duality of being focused on commission and executive obligations, and disenfranchisement occurs. Routine meetings will be frequent. They will share what is happening.

One-on-Ones

Rahul points out that overall, everyone wants more communication and support. The general purpose is to establish a relationship, and to find out how to support and communicate. Stuart adds that they based their platform on not doing their own initiatives, but emphasizing others' portfolios and assisting/standing in solidarity with them. The meetings have been positive so far. He adds sabbily that if we have a strong foundation, our output to the VCU will be better. Saambavi offers tissues to teary eyed members. Zahavah fake vomits.

Equity Co-Chair

Stuart notes that no one ran for the commissioner position in the spring, and there is too much work for one person. The Co-chair divides the work, and they are still revising constitution.

Motion: Stuart moves to ratify Zoe Kwan as Equity Co-Chair. Jamil seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

St. George Round Table

Rahul explains that the Round Table is an unofficial body made up of college heads which discuss things at U of T in a non-binding way. They contribute to the organization of orientation, winterfest, SLC, etc. It is different than SGSU. The past meeting went well – it is not well advertised, but all U of T students are welcome to these meetings. They will be held once a month for the summer, and VUSAC hosts the next one in June. The SGSU, a proposed St. George students union, started last year and was pushed in response to elections and the board proposal for UTSU. More details in coming meetings. UTSU orientation is now U of T Welcome Week.

Indigenous Studies Course Requirement

Stuart proposes this requirement in response to reports from truth and reconciliation. The new judiciary wants to see a requirement for VIC students, hosted at vic. Because Victoria college is separate, it is a lot easier to implement our own programming. They are investigating how to make students more aware of indigenous perspectives. The focus is on the lens of reconciliation, legacies of action, and incorporation of diverse voices. No consultation with indigenous students has been done yet. A meeting with President Robins and Johnathan, the head of First Nations House, has taken place. Rahul adds that one of the most important things is that lives of indigenous students are being affected, and we must incorporate their voices. Stuart notes that the judiciary is not personally affected, and can not take on the struggle or personal legacy. Any further questions or input can be emailed to them, as they are open to feedback.

COUNCILOR REPORTS

None

Motion: Stephen moves to adjourn meeting. Hannah seconds. Motion passes unanimously. Meeting is adjourned.