



## **VUSAC Meeting Minutes**

**Call to order:** 5:30 PM, October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020

**Land Acknowledgement:** Tran Thai

Tran: It's really important that we all understand that the land acknowledgement we give is to understand that we are living on stolen land and that we need to appreciate that we are lucky to be operating on it. There are different ways to understand your relationship to the land, but we need to understand that we all have different relationships to the land and what our relationship to it is. We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

**Official Regrets:** Jenny Zhang

**Approval of minutes: Motion by Jay, seconded by Nerija.**

- Favour: all
- Opposed: none
- Abstained: none

**Additions to the agenda:**

**Approval of the agenda: Motion by Jay, seconded by Nerija.**

- Favour: all
- Opposed: none
- Abstained: none

## **EX-OFFICIO REPORTS**

**Campus Life Coordinator (Alero):** 4 minutes

Tran: Can we move the CLC update to the end of the meeting?

Zoe: Noted.

Alero: I am Alero, I am the new CLC and I started in June. I had a few updates because I have some stuff I want to talk about. We have a first-year experience page that has a whole bunch of resources for first years and we are thinking about having one for all of our students so we're currently looking at how to create that online right now. We are fine-tuning our COVID policies because things are changing so fast. Initially, the DO and the registrar had been open on campus on Mondays and Thursdays from 10-4. Recently the registrar had to close their office because the number of workers they had who were comfortable doing front line work decreased and they were no longer able to operate. We're also thinking that we might have to do the same thing with our

office unfortunately. Also, Henry Ivey, our old Academic Advisor has been transitioned from his position and they are currently hiring for a new Academic Advisor. I think they're going to be hiring someone new by the end of the month. We are also working on anti-racism conferences hopefully coming up in November and we are in the process of hiring for the BIPOC mental health counsellor. Finally, just a reminder that if any of you need me at any time, please let me know!

Spandan: Talking about the BIPOC counsellor, would they be through health and wellness or would they be through a separate entity?

Alero: We are hoping that they would be through health and wellness, but we are still figuring out what their role would be on campus.

**Dean of Students:**

**President of Victoria University:**

**Board of Regents:** 5 minutes

Vibhuti: We had our first board meeting yesterday and we talked about a lot, but I think something that's really relevant to VUSAC right now is President Robins' presidential priorities for the upcoming school year and they are mainly split between COVID-related goals and non-COVID related goals. One of his priorities is expanding mental health services; anti-racist training for student, staff and faculties; expanding Vic Ready; financial responsibilities and making sure that Vic has good investments so that they aren't hit too hard by this financial year. One of the things that I brought up with President Robins was outreach with BIPOC students. Vic has this thing called City Scholars which is basically a recruitment scheme for Vic to include low-income students from around the city and it's important that this program doesn't get forgotten this year with COVID. He also wants to increase financial support for BIPOC and low-income students at Vic. Additionally, we heard from the principal's office about the current status of some academic programs at Vic and Emmanuel. About 50% of the courses that are run out of Vic are in-person currently and they are having around 120 classes per week in-person. Residence is at a 1/3 capacity with an emphasis that bathrooms and common spaces are carefully monitored.

Michelle: One of the big things that was talked about at the GUA (Governance & University Affairs committee) was their board diversity survey that they do every year. This is a survey that is spread to around 40 of the members every year. The survey asks about the general diversity of the board and this is data that is collected every year in order to see where the board stands on the diversity of its members and how they can expand diversity on the council in future years.

Leila: Did they talk about how their budget is going to change in light of COVID and is there any chance that I can have access to their budget?

Vibhuti: We can't actually share the COVID information, but our standings are in really good shape this year. Vic is doing fine because we don't get effected by the swings of the market. Since we're federated, U of T sends Vic money in a big block grant to look after college affairs. In terms of the larger scale, COVID is ultimately not looking like it's going to affect us too much. In terms of the budget, I can get that info to you later.

*Mehr motions to extend this discussion by 3 minutes, seconded by Maximus. Motion passes.*

- Favour: all
- Opposed: none
- Abstained: none

Michelle: Also, just wanted to let you all know that Vic's enrollment numbers are actually quite stable this year including international students.

Rheannon: Could any of you give an approximate date for when the budget ratification meeting might happen?

Jay: It is happening next week on Friday at 5:30pm.

Vibhuti: Just wanted to clarify that the budget I'm talking about is the Board of Regents budget. Vic is governed by 3 different bodies, the Board of Regents, the VCC and the Senate. The Board of Regents is the highest body at Vic, and we have four student reps who sit on this board. We basically focus on big-picture Vic issues, so if you have any large-scale questions about Vic you can talk to any of us about it.

**Victoria College Council:**  
**Victoria University Senate:**

ACTION ITEMS:

*Motion by Jenny Zhang to ratify Ava Harrington and Barbara Hellinaras as The Bob Co-producers for the 2020-21 season (3 minutes), seconded by Nerija.*

Tran: We are here to ratify the co-producers of The Bob. The Bob hired a director back in the summer and they recently hired two co-producers. Applications were opened in mid-August and closed at the beginning of the school year. They hired two co-producers instead of one because there's only one director this year. Jenny will be helping with the Bader this year and budgeting for the show.

All in favour. None abstaining. None opposed. Motion passes.

*Motion by Leila Tjiang to approve the addition of VUSAC's signature on Divest Canada Coalition's Open Letter, seconded by Michelle Zhao (5 minutes) [Appendix A]*

Leila: If you weren't at our previous meeting, I'll just give a quick run-down. Divest Canada is a coalition of around 15 universities who are all calling on their administrations to divest from fossil fuels and invest in a just recovery. We have decided that we would like to add VUSAC's signature to this letter. We think it is important to express our commitment to this letter.

Jay: I wanted to clarify but will this be an official statement from the council or will this just be signing a letter in VUSAC's name.

Leila: The next motion on the agenda is basically just saying that hey we've signed this, and you should too.

All in favour. None abstaining. None opposed. Motion passes.

*Motion by Leila Tjiang to approve VUSAC's statement in support of Divest Canada Coalition's Open Letter, seconded by Michelle Zhao (5 minutes)*

Leila: this is a letter explaining why we have decided to sign DCC open letter and urges students to continue supporting divestment initiatives.

Michelle: I just wanted to give a shout out to Leila and Jericho and Mehr for all their hard work on this letter!

All in favour. None abstaining. None opposed. Motion passes.

*Motion by Tran Thai to ratify the VUSAC Fall 2020 election results (3 minutes), seconded by Rheannon.*

Tran: The fall election results were announced today! We have 8 counsellors, an international counsellor and our equity chair! This motion is just to clarify that these elections were run in a fair and equal manner. If anyone has any questions they can ask now!

Nathan: I just wanted to say congratulations to everyone elected!

All in favour. None abstaining. None opposed. Motion passes.

### DISCUSSION ITEMS:

*Fall Election, put forth by Vibhuti Kacholia (5 minutes)*

Vibhuti: I wanted to break down the fall elections and ask for some feedback for my report which will be released sometime in the next month. In this election cycle, we had 18 people running. We had a 6.7% turnout with 270 people voting. Out of the 16 counsellors, we had 5 first-year counsellors. We also had a really low spoil turnout with the most people around 10%. Spoils indicate the VCU's disdain for VUSAC and elections so that's awesome for this upcoming year. I wanted to thank Veronica and Tran and Michelle for all the help they gave this year. I would also love to have people give me feedback from the election this year that can be addressed in the report and addressed right now. We only gave out one strike, so it was a nice clean election this year.

Alexandra: I'm wondering what the reasoning was to not include social media links underneath the statement on the voting platform.

Maximus: I feel like a lot of people didn't know how to access the town hall or the open house this year and we had a really low turnout. We also didn't send out the emails out telling people that they could vote until late in the election cycle.

Vibhuti: Are you talking about the email that Michelle sent out or was it another body that sent it out?

Maximus: I believe I got it from Vic One?

Vedika: When it came to advertising, I know that a lot is still done on Facebook which I think it going to have to change since most of our advertising and campaigning happened on Instagram. On Instagram, I know it's harder to engage with things like Zoom links which is maybe why we didn't have as much engagement, so I think we need to find another alternative.

Kate: In terms of town hall, I've never been to a well-attended town hall. So, I actually thought it was quite good this year. I think Facebook might also not be the best venue because I think maybe that encouraged the Zoom bombing. I think maybe there should be an RSVP link to access the Zoom meeting.

Vibhuti: The Zoom bomb was because I posted the links on Instagram. We're going to be changing the way that we use Zoom calls entirely but also changing the way that we access Zoom.

Joy: I know in my Comp-Sci class, they only allow people who register with their UofT account into the meeting so that might be an extra layer of security

Rheannon: Having the links posted just within the election form might also reduce the number of people who are Zoom bombing.

*Jay motions to extend for 5 minutes. Seconded by Nerija.*

- All in favour
- None opposed
- Motion passes

Jay: First to the comment about the U Toronto address. The idea of Zoom bombing is that you can give it to a bunch of bot accounts so I think that verifying accounts would help. I also wanted to go back to Alexandra's question since I think it got lost.

Vibhuti: I didn't put it explicitly in the nomination package that you could include your social media links which is why we omitted it. You have 20 minutes to vote in the elections form so if you include a link to your socials, the voter might get timed out before you're finished voting.

Leila: There's a webinar feature on Zoom that means that people can join without being seen or heard which might be a good feature for next time.

Vibhuti: We really wanted to do a webinar Zoom call but using the U of T account, you can't access the webinar feature.

Cathy: A lot of the upper years still use Facebook which is why I think it's important to stay on that.

Lulu: I just wanted to thank Vibhuti for making the process really smooth and for responding so fast. A lot of things were very straight forward which helped make things easier for us.

Vibhuti: Thank you all so much for making this job so much easier! I also wanted to say that I'm excited to see how incoming counsellors will transition to new platforms in the coming years.

#### ASSESSOR MEMBER REPORTS:

**Vic UTSU Directors (Ava & Radhika):**

**Orientation Co-Chairs:**

**Victoria College Dons:**

Constituent Organizations:

**Acta Victoriana:** no report

**Caffiends:** no report

**Cat's Eye:** no report

**Student Projects:** no report

**The Strand:** no report

**VicXposure:** no report

**VicPride!:** no report

**VISA:** no report

**VCAA:** no report

**VCDS:** no report

**WUSC:** no report

#### STAFF REPORTS:

**Chief Returning Officer (Vibhuti):**

**Communications (Veronica):**

**Finance (Ralph):**

**Office Manager (Holly):**

**Chair (Zoe):**

#### COMMISSION REPORTS:

**Academic (Nerija & Cathy):** 5 minutes

Nerija: The Academic Commission is doing a collab with Mental Wellness. We are having a discussion even about managing your health and wellbeing while under academic stress. We are also planning to host some giveaways throughout the month so follow our socials for more info. We are planning a learning strategist session with our academic advisor.

Cathy: We are trying to transition our social media to not only be events advertisements but also just general information for people who need academic help. We are also starting drop-in study sessions starting next Thursday and running every Thursday after that.

Alexandra: How will the pens and physical items be distributed?

Nerija: We've budgeted for shipping costs and we're also assuming that that people will be able to pick up items.

**Arts & Culture (Jenny):**

**Commuter (Rheannon & Aya):**

**Equity (Sooyeon):**

**Mental Wellness (Dorian):** 7 minutes

Dorian: We have hired a full exec team! We have also created an Instagram page which has a good following so I'm excited about that. Obviously, we can't be hosting regular events, so we are hoping to distribute stress kits. Right now, we are hosting an interest survey about what people want to see in those stress boxes and hopefully we'll get more responses by the time the form closes on October 10<sup>th</sup>. 56% of people are willing to pick the kits up from somewhere. We are hoping to collect donated items from Vic clubs and levies to fill these boxes as well as some support from Student Projects as well. I'll have everything delivered to my house and then I'll put together these boxes and have them shipped out by December. Right now, I'm looking for help with advertising this because I think that this is something that all Vic students could benefit from. Aside from that, we are currently working on a book club centered on mental health topics, we are also collaborating with the Academic Commission and looking to start on some other events with different commissions. The Mental Health resource list is on VUSAC's website under student resources. If you ever have something you want to add to that, just let me know and I can add it.

Alero: If any of you needed, we have a newsletter that we can possibly promote events on. We also have a book club focused on anti-Black racism if any of you are interested in joining. We are buying copies for everyone who is in the club so let me know

Alexandra: Are the Mental Health resources on campus or off campus?

Dorian: They are both on campus and off campus. I've distinguished the two on the list so you can tell when you look at it whether or not it's U of T-specific or Vic-specific or off-campus.

**Scarlet & Gold (Fatima):** 3 minutes

Fatima: We are fully online right now, so we had to change a lot of the events that we usually put out. After looking at the S&G survey, we know that students just want a chance to socialize. We have decided that we are going to host an arcade event in the middle of October and we're also planning an event with the Commuter Commission for Halloween. We're thinking about having a morning event and an evening event for that. For November, I am planning on hosting a listening

party and that's what we have for fall right now. Highball refunds are almost done now so if you got an email from me, please respond!

Vibhuti: I know that the Cat's Eye and Caffiends are having an event on Halloween

Fatima: I didn't know about that actually, but I'll send them a message to ask about that!

*Tran motions to extend this discussion by 3 minutes, seconded by Mehr. Motion passes.*

- Favour: all
- Opposed: none
- Abstained: none

Holly: I know that the Cat's Eye and Caffiends event is happening on the 30<sup>th</sup> so you don't need to worry about conflict.

Fatima: Okay great, thank you!

Jay: Just wanted to say that everyone can submit they dates to a collective dates calendar!

Spandan: I wanted to point out that the 31<sup>st</sup> is a Saturday so I'm not sure if you're worried about that or not.

Fatima: Since we're all online, I'm not sure how much it matters whether or not it's on a Friday or a Saturday anymore.

Mehr: I think that Saturdays are a little inaccessible because people have other plans on the weekends.

**Sustainability (Leila & Jerico): 3 minutes**

Jericho: We are starting to plan our first sus-comm event which will likely be an asynchronous cooking club and we are looking at starting a discussion club related to environmental justice. We also just held our first sus-comm meeting with our full exec team. Vic-Zero is a report that is urging Vic to become more sustainable and those reports should be done next week. We are starting a campaign around campus so that we can actually get some support for this. Lastly, we're hoping to host an event with the Mental Wellness Committee and with a few other University of Toronto sustainability-based bodies. Also, please sign the open letter!

Leila: Can we add the link to the open letter without having to vote on it?

Tran: Personally, I don't see an issue with hyperlinking it.

Mehr: Is this the link to the same statement that we are putting our signature on?

Jericho: Yes, it is.



Mehr: Then yes, I believe it is okay since we've already approved the statement.

Jay: Just wanted to say that you should send the updated PDF to communications so they can put it on the website and everything.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS:

**VP External (Mehr):** 3 minutes

Mehr: I'm currently working on understanding how to better navigate conveying issues to the Dean's Office at the DAC because student concerns are extremely volatile and need to be better reflected. A concern I brought up at the DAC was the status of residence students with the worsening situation of COVID to ensure that students are not faced with housing uncertainty and that there are safety strategies in place. The ISAN Town Hall took place with an open forum for international student concerns. Some significant points were the disproportionate burden of the free increase on international students, equity with domestic students and more transparency about immigration infrastructure. I'm going to be connecting with the International Councillor to discuss support moving on. I've also reached out to CIE and UofT Housing to determine accommodations for students who can't return home over the winter break. Also, I'm in the process of working with the DO to flesh out the Race and Racism Conference and also going to reach out to discuss the creation of a working anti-racism policy. I have also been considering ways to break down the governing bodies at Vic and will be reaching out to last year's UTUS Vic Directors to chat about a mapping project that was brought up last semester. I've connected with the current UTSU Vic Directors to discuss better outreach amongst the VCU and have been supporting the lovely Caffiends managers in terms of their space agreement.

*Rheannon motions to extend this discussion by 5 minutes, seconded by Nerija. Motion passes.*

- Favour: all
- Opposed: none
- Abstained: none

Alero: If you need any support or if you needed someone to chat to about anti-racism topics, just let me know!

Mehr: Thank you! I'll talk about that in our next meeting!

**VP Internal (Tran):** 3 minutes

Tran: Retreat! Retreat is a two-day training workshop that all VUSAC members must attend. It's happening on October 17th and 18th and basically just gives us a chance to hash out some soft skills that you're going to need in your positions on VUSAC this year. The Centre provides resources for sexual health and they are giving a workshop on October 23rd at 3:00pm. Counsellors: you'll be getting an email from me sometime in the next couple days to ask you what kind of portfolios you'd be interested in working with. We'll also be having 'get-to-know-you meetings' with each of the counsellors so be on the lookout for that in your inbox too. Typically, we hold in-person office hours and this year they haven't been so well attended online this year. Hopefully we'll get some more interest if it's more scheduled

*Nerija motions to extend this discussion by 3 minutes, seconded by Vedika. Motion passes.*

- Favour: all
- Opposed: none
- Abstained: none

Maximus: Is this going to be on Zoom or an actual retreat?

Tran: It's going to be on Zoom! We're going to make the most of it and hopefully have fun!

Stuti: I was just wondering what the format of the retreat would be, but I think you clarified it.

Tran: It's just an online Zoom retreat!

Alexandra: When will we find out what commission we're working with?

Tran: I'll send out the email tomorrow morning and once I hear back from everyone, I'll put you in your top 3-4 commissions. You'll usually be assigned to 3 portfolios but hopefully I can get this done by next week.

#### **VP Student Organizations (Jay): 5 minutes**

Jay: I was the CRO at the VicPride elections. VicPride election nomination and election period have ended and they have officially elected their new president! Hopefully we'll be ratifying them next meeting. If you're interested in VicPride, you can run for the other two vacant positions on the exec team right now. I'm on the budget steering committee and the budget meeting is next week! Student's Project Advisory Board met again since last meeting and the Student Projects Committee has finished hiring but they are still looking for one more member. They are now accepting applications. Equity training is up and running and all clubs and levies need to undergo equity training via CLNx. If you're on VUSAC you'll get trained at retreat so if you're already on a club or levy you don't need to sign up again. Every levy has their own constitution, and I've been working with WUSC to draft their constitution and we'll have to ratify that soon. All the documents related to levies should be accessible so I've been working with them to help them distribute their documents and get them into a public place that VCU members can access. I'm hoping to work with Holly on organizing the club storage. I also updated the clubs' application package so hopefully it should be easier to access now.

#### **President (Michelle): 3 minutes**

Michelle: Congratulations to all the new VUSAC members! The VUS has met for the first time this year and they had their AGM. They oversee scholarships and awards at Vic along with other things. I also met with the AVC (Alumni of Victoria College) and they are trying to figure out what their best way forward is to connect with Vic College alumni online. They are going to be doing a number of events for their alumni online. We're going to be talking about how to collaborate with them on events and that sort of thing. The SGRT is trying to find a chair as well

as a clerk so if you know anyone who is interested in applying for that, please send them my way! I also recently met with President Robbins and we talked mainly about his goals for the year. We're trying to establish a BIPOC student leader scholarship this year and President Robbins had a lot of helpful resources to help us out with setting that up. We are also working on setting up a Slack channel for council-wide projects that you can sign up to and work on throughout the year! Jay also suggested creating an internal archive team called the VAT. Budget ratification meeting is happening next Friday and the final master budget should be in your inboxes by tonight. It is really important that you look over it before the next meeting and flag anything that might look a little fishy.

*Jay motions to extend this discussion by 3 minutes, seconded by Maggie. Motion passes.*

- Favour: all
- Opposed: none
- Abstained: none

Tran: For the newly elected members of council, the budget might look kind of scary so if you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Jay or Mehr or myself. Also, we will set up your emails by this weekend, so we'll send the budget to you there.

Michelle: If you submitted a budget and got an email back with action items, please respond to the email because you'll have to talk about it at the meeting

Jay: If you're a new counsellor who's scared about speaking up about weird things on the budget, please bring it up! You know more than you think you know about budgeting and VUSAC, I promise!

*Motion by Maximus to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Nathan. Motion passes.*

- Favour: all
- Opposed: none
- Abstained: none

Meeting adjourned at 7:22 PM.