VUSAC Meeting Agenda

**Call to order:** 8:00 pm EST, January 26th, 2022

**Land Acknowledgement:**

*Katherine*

*Although this meeting is being held virtually it is important to acknowledge the land on which the University of Toronto and VUSAC stands, and more importantly where many of us are probably tuning in from today. VUSAC would like to acknowledge that the land we’re on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We would also like to acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.*

**Official Regrets:**

*Thomas Keough(proxied by Tabina Ahmed), Alyssa Nurse(proxied by Jerico Raguindin), Erin Hill(proxied by Jocelyn Mattka)*

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

*Budgeting Procedure & Rules, put forth by Katherine Hovdestad (10 minutes)*

Katherine: To give an overview of this meeting, we will be going through VUSAC’s Winter 2022 budget, which I will be showing on my screen. We will be taking an overview of the significant points of the budget. We will be going through the budget by groups (Levies, clubs etc.) instead of line by line since everything appears to be within our bylaws and rules.

Alexander: This winter budgeting period, we were notified that we would be receiving 15% less than expected due to a drop in enrollment. I wanted to know if that was a consistent thing year to year and whether that could be something implemented into the budget steering policy? It would be a great addition and really help out the clubs and levies with knowing roughly how much they will be spending.

Katherine: Yes, that is something we can do. I will be sure to include procedures for the next Finance Chair on how to estimate what a Levy will receive more accurately. It is a consistent thing to see less enrolment in the winter semester. When I went to the Dean’s office, they had quite a drastic jump, so the cheque that VUSAC was going to be getting was about 15% less than what I expected to receive for the remaining term. We can do more accurate numbers in the future because the DO does report these numbers every month, so I will make sure to include that into the policies for next year. I will note that though there is a distinction between receiving 60% of your funding in the fall and 40% in the winter, the only rule is that the budget needs to be spent before the school year is over. So any funds you have remaining from the fall can be spent in the winter semester,

*VUSAC Winter 2022 Budget, put forth by the Budget Steering Committee (80 minutes)*

Katherine: Before we start, I will remind you that we can accommodate you if you need to change your budget after it is ratified today. This first page provides an overview of the expected budget. It is divided into funds requested by Levies, Clubs, Commissions, Executive and Staff, including individual lines and a summarized breakdown.

*Levies*

Katherine: We can start with any commentary on requests by Levies. Everything appears to be in line with our procedures and rules. For context, we are quite liberal with our rules for funding, but we cannot allow for controversial funding like alcohol. It has been very difficult for student groups to spend all of their allocated funds. We will encourage Levies to spend down any surplus that may have accumulated and expect further budget requests from some Levies.

Jaiden: As you can see, VicPride! currently doesn’t have a budget. We plan to submit one by the end of this week to be ratified at the next meeting, hopefully. I will take full responsibility for the delay, so please let me know if you have any questions.

Alexander: I will take note that the Cat’s Eye has been spending more and more every year on our honorarium. We made this rule where all of our executives were awarded an honorarium, which we felt was very justified based on our executives' work. Even though student enrollment does drop, we should still be receiving more money. This is when we could start paying our staff an honorarium or increasing the honorarium because covid has shown that we are overworked to an extent. I can’t drill this down enough, students do deserve to be paid, so if you can implement this, I recommend you do.

Jerico: We commented in the last meeting about the surplus VUSAC has and wanting to pay our council members. We are currently planning on putting that in the constitution, so hopefully, all of its members can be paid next year. If any Levy wants to work with us on that on your Levy constitutions, we would be more than happy to do so.

Katherine: Historically, VUSAC has not reported on their finances very much, but we can begin reporting on our understanding of enrollment and what we expect the Levy payments to be towards the entire VCU if that may help with transparency. Is that something we would like to see be reported in the future?

Alexander: I think that would be wonderful. I just don’t know the exact timeline of the budgeting period, ratification and when the numbers of enrollment are reported. It would be helpful if there was a general estimate of how much we can see for an increase, especially with the 60:40 breakdown.

Katherine: I will start reporting on that and set it up. For context, Levy/VUSAC payments do come later in the semester than we’d like which is usually 2-3 weeks after classes begin. That usually coincides with the last day to add/drop courses so Victoria College can confirm the numbers of enrolment. We should be able to still provide an expected estimate using the most recent numbers.

Kate: Just to make everyone aware, I am de facto Levy head for VISA and that means I will be submitting a budget for them, which will be ready in time for the next meeting. I also wanted to say that seeing there is no representative present from Vic Blvck, we will not be able to approve their budget.

*Motion: Kate Haberl motions to table Vic Blvck’s budget request until the next VUSAC meeting, seconded by Jerico Raguindin*

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

Kate: Something I would encourage all Levies to do is check Council Policies. I want to remind you all that in order to receive your Levy payments you have to meet the requirements listed in Chapter 10, Section 5. Some Levies have not been fulfilling these responsibilities. Even if your budget is ratified, Katherine and I will be verifying these minimums have been met.

Katherine: We will now proceed with reviewing club budgets, in particular, those that requested over $1,000.

*CARE UofT*

Kate: I did not get a confirmation that a representative would be here, so we will have to table their budget as well.

*Motion: Kate Haberl motions to table CARE UofT’s budget request until the next VUSAC meeting, seconded by Jerico Raguindin*

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

*GLAM*

Kate: I would like to make note that GLAM has been a very strong performer with budget utilization and they are a strong community contributor to VUSAC. Nothing in their request stands out to me, but the floor is open to discussion. Something I did notice was that a lot of clubs are requesting similar software(Adobe, Canva etc…) and so there might be a discussion about whether or not clubs should not be approved for specific software and instead have it be provided by VUSAC.

Jerico: I believe this was discussed at the last budget meeting. I think this is something we could figure out which may create more incentive to become a club if we provide basic software.

Alexander: I will note that for Adobe it is extremely difficult to have multiple people access the same account. I don’t know if it is more cost-effective for VUSAC to provide that or to have the clubs that need it request for it. Canva can also get very cluttered, so logistically, it may not be so feasible.

Katherine: Something I might suggest is that we don’t make any changes to our policies this year but I can look into the matter further and provide a more concrete response. An interesting point is that there could be issues with continuity and the subscriptions may get lost over the years and become a repeating expense.

Jerico: One thing we did propose was that Levies could be an exception to this but something we provide to the different clubs if they would like access.

Kate: I think it is a good idea for Canva but maybe not the other software. We all share one account and have yet to have an issue. Most clubs likely don’t use Canva that often so I am not sure if it is worth it for us to be paying the individual subscriptions for each club. I would be happy to look into having a shared Canva if the clubs would be willing to wait a week until our next VUSAC meeting.

*Motion: Jerico Raguindin motions to table any line items put forward by clubs titled “Canva” until the next VUSAC meeting, seconded by Kate Haberl*

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

*Goose Fiction*

Katherine: Once again, nothing of the issue here. They are naturally a journal and will have a lot of journal-related printing but nothing out of the ordinary. It is my understanding that we have printing of the 2020-2021 journal edition as well as one for this 2021-2022 year.

Emily: Yes there are two separate publications. We did not submit a budget last year to publish our 2020-2021 publication, so we have included it in this year’s budget.

*Screenwriting at Victoria College*

Katherine: They have largely a bigger expense towards merchandise which I find to be quite appropriate and essential for community bonding. Everything else is really up to par.

*The Boundary*

Katherine: The Boundary is a very active club at Victoria College and their large expenses are printing related costs. Other than that I see no issue.

Alexander: I always see the social media advertising in a lot of the requests and was wondering if anyone could speak to how effective that is?

Zach: One thing I found is that you do get a decent amount of exposure, but it is not the channels that you’re hoping for. It is nice to have exposure in places across the world but it is not too helpful for students.

Kate: Frankly, even if they are a little bit effective, we are struggling so much to get student engagement that I think it is worth it while we are still online. We should definitely re-evaluate once we have access to more conventional methods.

Katherine: It is also nice to let clubs have some autonomy on how they want to spend their budget as long as it's ethical and within our policies.

Alexander: I agree with Katherine’s point and just wanted to say that I am just more interested in if this is an effective method.

*Tunes Beats Awesome*

Katherine: Their expenses largely come from rental spaces, which is nothing I would flag as a concern.

*Vic Records*

Katherine: Vic Records is a very active group on campus and they have had excellent budget utilization in the past. A lot of their expenses are coming from doing many different initiatives and everything looks to be within our policy.

Jerico: Who will be the host of said panel? Is it a student that you will be hiring?

Zach: We are still trying to decide this. It will definitely be a student but we just haven’t decided if it will be a member of the exec team or someone out in the community.

Jerico: I just want to raise a concern about requesting an honorarium to be given to someone on the exec team. I think that you should get an external student.

Zach: I understand and that is totally fair. I would be more than happy to remove that from the budget since we were leaning towards have an exec member be the host for the event.

*Motion: Jerico Raguindin motions to strike Vic Records’ budget item “Honorarium for Panel Host”, seconded by Tabina Ahmed*

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

*VEFS*

Katherine: There are a few things that I wanted to call out and bring up for discussion. VEFS is an initiative that is going to cost a lot of money and has previously cost a lot of money. I did want to note if we could have a discussion about prioritizing some budget lines to first be done by seeing if the equipment is available elsewhere. It would be great to have policies in place where clubs must first reach out to the different clubs requesting the use of their equipment to prevent any large expenses that are not the initiative's main goal. So this would apply to the camera equipment, set up equipment and renting out spaces.

Grace: I realize that our budget is really out there but we did request a little more so we wouldn’t have to later on in the semester. I would love to know more about borrowing equipment as I think it is unnecessary to purchase them, especially if they are with Vic.

Katherine: Something I would like to note is that this budget is reflective of what has been requested in the past.

Jerico: I think we should clarify our equipment policies because VicXposure is the Levy students pay so we can have access to the equipment. Would it be possible to discuss this now, since respective bodies are present?

David: Yeah we have a lot of equipment that we would be more than happy to provide, so feel free to reach out to us through our email.

Katherine: I will be meeting with VicXposure for their yearly audit where we review their finances and make sure everything is up to par. I would want to note the possibility of linking it with the equipment for the fashion show. I say this because, in the event that we find that VicXposure has ample room in their budget to purchase more equipment, this could increase the rentable amount of equipment the fashion show can use. They do have full autonomy on what they would like to use the excess budget for, but would it be possible to table this budget until after the audit is over to get a sense of what is in our inventory?

Alexander: I will be honest and say that I don’t think the Cat’s Eye will be a rentable/bookable space for this type of event and I would suggest looking elsewhere for a venue. In terms of lighting, I don’t think we have anything transportable and could be of use.

Grace: We were looking to use the stage for a photo shoot for the magazine we’re putting together. We just wanted a place with lighting and a backdrop so that we can get the professional photos done.

Dorian: We do have lighting but I don’t imagine that we will be open and a bookable space. Until we hear back from the DO, we, unfortunately, can’t promise anything.

David: VicXposure can definitely help with the photoshoot as well. We do have a portable backdrop and lighting setup that could be of good use.

Katherine: I wanted to clarify that I would encourage and strongly support ensuring the fashion show can purchase the equipment we don’t have and that they need. I would recommend that we table these budget items until we can collect an inventory of what is available and what needs to be purchased.

Grace: We can get back to you after we have contacted VicXposure to see what equipment they have. If covid restrictions aren’t allowing us to do in-person events, would we be able to come back to you with a different budget proposal? Also a question for Kate, I wanted to know where I could get more information about renting out Hart House?

Katherine: If you ever need to re-do your budget, we can definitely accommodate that. I will also pull up the old contracts we had for VEFS which will hopefully have the contact information on how to book Hart House.

Kate: Katherine is likely your most helpful point of contact as it is not really within my purview to organize renting that space.

*Motion: Jerico Raguindin and Kate Haberl motion to table VEFS’ budget items “Promo Shoot” and “Camera Equipment” until after VicXposure’s audit, seconded by Tabina Ahmed*

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

*Women’s Circle*

Katherine: Their budget request is within the reasonable range of previously requested amounts.

Sheema: A lot of the budget amounts come from in-person events if possible. We were also thinking of having two series and hopefully an end-of-year gala where the money can go towards supporting the mental health services and counselling.

Kate: I believe the expected revenue listed is not actually expected revenue since it’s going towards a donation. The total should be the same as the expected expenses. Clubs are allowed to donate the money raised from events but they are not able to donate any funding from us.

Katherine: Thank you for the clarification and I will make that change for future reference.

*Women in International Affairs*

Katherine: Conference honoraria accounts for most of their request but once again, no issues.

*Commissions*

Fatima: I would like to table our budget for the Academic Commission until the next meeting as we experienced some unexpected changes today regarding Vic Networking Night.

Alexander: I was wondering if the budget surplus spoken about at the last meeting was implemented into this semester’s budgeting practice?

Katherine: The numbers will change quite a lot and we will start to have a good idea of what the true surplus will be as we start to complete Levy audits and receive funding from the DO, so the surplus has not been actioned on yet.

*Motion: Kate Haberl motions to table the Academic Commission’s Budget until the next VUSAC meeting, seconded by Fatima Mohamed*

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

Jerico: I would also like to do the same for the Sustainability Commission. They only have one budget item and I think they should be held accountable for a more detailed budget.

*Motion: Jerico Raguindin motions to table the Sustainability Commission’s Budget until the next VUSAC meeting, seconded by Kate Haberl*

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

*Executive and Staff*

Katherine: Requests from Executives and Staff oftentimes relate to mostly honorariums and inlcude other initiatives. I personally wanted to ask Jerico to explain the hobby form further.

Jerico: Something that we were discussing in the last meeting was that we would have a Microsoft Office form sent out to helo students explore different interests. The hobbies have yet to be figured out, but for example, if you selected crotcheting we would send those students with a crochet kit.

Katherine: Sounds great! Quickly to speak to the VPSO snack fund, it was something we wanted to include for clubs that did not budget for snacks but would like to have that option. If there are any other concerns please address them now. I will be sending out a summary email to provide an overview of this meeting as well as opening up the portal for requesting winter 2022 reimbursements.

ACTION ITEMS:

*Motion: Jerico Raguindin motions to ratify the VUSAC Winter 2022 Budget, seconded by Tabina Ahmed (3 minutes)*

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

*Motion: Kate Haberl motions to adjourn the meeting, seconded Kayla Man*

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

*Meeting adjourned at 9:28 PM.*