



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS' ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL
95 CHARLES ST WEST - ROOM 5A
TORONTO, ON M5S 1K9
CANADA
T 416-585-4473
F 416-585-4462
INFO@VUSAC.CA
WWW.VUSAC.CA

CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES

November 1st, at 7PM in the Goldring Student Center

Introduction: Make sure to put your phones and laptops away.

Call to Order and Land Recognition: Zahavah (5 minutes)

I would like to acknowledge this sacred land on which the University of Toronto operates. It has been a site of human activity for 15,000 years. This land is the territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. Today, the meeting place of Toronto is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in the community, on this territory.

Recording Breakdown/Approval: Sayeh (1 minute)

For minute-taking purposes I'm going to ask if the room approves of being recorded throughout Caucus, whereupon the recording will be deleted after the minutes are dead. Please raise your hand now if this notion makes you uncomfortable. Everyone who is a VCU member has speaking rights, if you are paying Vic fees. You may interrupt the speaker if you have a point of privilege. Once you speak, please see Zoe who will take down your name and email address, so we can send you the minutes afterwards.

Katie Cohen: Thank you all for coming! Although you are constitutionally required to be here, it is much appreciated. There will be a general portion at the end for general inquires, but also please feel free to bring up more general questions during the portion of the agenda for Campus Life.

Additions to the Agenda (maximum 2 minutes per addition)

- [No update]

Motion: Molly Kay moves to approve the agenda as it stands. Zoe Ritchie seconds. Motion passes.

- Favour: ALL
- Abstained: None
- Opposed: None

Kaite: If you are here representing a club, levy or an elected representative, please sign-in, also get a name-tag with your name and club. If you want to receive the minutes afterwards, please see Zoe.

Discussion Items:

- Equity: Shailee (45 minutes)
 - Equity Commissioner Update

[Summary] I was elected uncontested into this position at the end of the last academic year. Apefa was hired to be the co-equity chair, by Zahavah and myself, during the summer. The commission was fully formed by the end of September, applications were open before the school year started, throughout frosh week and the week after. We have had three commission meetings, general notes can be found on the VUSAC equity website at vusacequity@wordpress.com. Since the start of the year, we have held three events 1. Doc and Talk, with the muslim student association 2. Two cultural celebrations 3. Four screenings of the show “Dear White People.” We had VUSAC equity training last week. We are making equity training available for all club and levy executives. I really, really, really encourage everyone to take part in this, I will send out an official email about it during the reading week. If you are a student leader, please make an effort to attend. We will be publicizing who has been formally trained, and if you really can’t attend there will be future opportunities for the training.

- Open Floor for questions, comments, and concerns

[Summary, continuation] We made an anonymous form available for caucus, because it is daunting getting up in front of a room full of people to ask questions. We received some questions, and will make this a permanent thing for every future caucus. I will answer the questions from the form, although some are addressed to clubs executives. After, I will receive any other equity-related questions. Any comments?

Is there anyone here representing Vic Pride? Please move closer to the front, because this question directed to you, so you can have an opportunity to answer it. I realized I kind of just put you on the hot seat, so just try and answer this question to the best of your abilities, and also know that it’s okay if you can’t because it is a hard thing to do. This question is from a fourth year student who identifies as LGBTQ.

■ Form Questions

1. *My concern is that Vic Pride runs proportional to other colleges very little events and programming. While other colleges run queer movie nights, trips to the village, book clubs, bi-weekly socials, doc n talks, print publications, office hours, soccer games and various other events Vic Pride so far this year has only run one event (as advertised on there Facebook page) during orientation and no substantial on-going programming. Last year Vic Pride also had a track record of holding very few events. I find Vic Pride to be cliquey (and I hear this a lot from my peers) which is a shame as they could have the potential to do so much more for the large group of LGBTQ+ students that are apart of the Victoria College community. I would like to hear from the president or an exec, why Vic Pride after receiving a substantial levy increase (that they at the time said would be used to give an honorarium to their president and allow them to do more events) is not delivering in the areas of events and programming? You received a 40% increase per student why aren't you using it?*

Cy Macikunas: Vic Pride has had a harder time getting started this year without a marketing director. But there is substantial programming planned going forward in the year. We have planned a few socials, including a Button Making Social on the 21st. I realize that this not for everyone, but it is a step that kind of direction. Especially since campus programing seems to be confined to Vic. We've heard that things have been clichy, there has been a massive amount of feedback regarding this. Partially my own hiring was part of an attempt to address that.

Essentially what ended up happening...things can be grouped together. But we are going to try more outreach, more general events, in order to address that, more widespread.

Benten Tinkler: I was hired this week, and haven't been to a meeting yet. But I know that this year we have a volunteer board, which is allowed to collaborate on the planning of events.

Shailee: Thank you for sharing.

Motion: George Wilson moves to give Krista Steeves speaking rights. Jayde Jones seconds. Motion carries.

- Favour: ALL
- Abstained: None
- Opposed: None

Krista Steeves: I just wanted to say that it is really hard starting off at the beginning of the year, so I just want to say thank you to Vic Pride. And we appreciate you. And if there is anything we can do to make it easier, let me know.

Shailee: Is there anything anyone would like to add?

Thomas Siddall: What I had in mind, was that if there is an issue with Vic Pride not having enough programing, being a levy, shouldn't there be that kind of difference between levies and clubs, that is having a substantial idea of their programing so they don't have such a difficult time starting up?

Zahavah: So, if someone from Vic Pride would like to speak to this you are welcome to, but I would also just like to remind everyone that in the process in going from a club to levy there is a really big shift and perhaps when we consider groups as insular we might want to think of why there is a culture that encourages groups to become insular, instead of pointing blame. And especially in cases where there are groups advocating for marginalized groups, how, what may be described as cliché-ness may be better described as solidarity in leadership. And just keeping in mind that when you go from a club to a levy and get levy funding that, there was a big increase for Vic Pride, though it is still one of the smaller levies...Just making sure we are giving all of our groups room to grow.

Katie: And just to clarify for you Thomas, Vic Pride just became a levy this year--last year, sorry. It just got the increase this year, that system would of been hard to account for in that they just got the levy increase this year.

Jordan LoMonaco: I've been here for six years, and Vic Pride has always been a levy.

Katie: Sorry, this is referring to the increase they've got.

Jordan: Oh, okay. Well I just want to add that Vic Pride has definitely improved a lot. They have been struggling for the six years I've been here to get programing they needed and they had steadily increased, and made a lot bigger changes than they did when I was here six years ago.

Jayde Jones: I'm technically here as your UTSU director. I know that we were in the unfortunate position of having an unfilled VPSO seat throughout the summer, and I was wondering if that potentially affected the support given to levies and has therefore affected Vic Pride's ability to get up on their feet? I was wondering if someone on VUSAC's exec or maybe Nick--even though I know you are just stepping into the position--can speak to how levy support might be more substantial as a result of now having that position filled? In ways that maybe could relieve some of the issues that were raised to one levy in particular.

Zahavah: I can't answer as to how levies felt this summer without a VPSO, as I am not a levy. I personally was filling in a large part of that role. In terms of your question about how things have improved now having someone to take over the role of VPSO, obviously that means there will be a lot less of a division of focus now that support has been given (and will continue to improve) with someone now dedicated to the position full time. In terms of if the initial lack of position will continue to affect clubs and levies negatively throughout the year my hope is not, but again, I am not a levy so I can't answer for sure.

Thomas: I was wondering if it were possible in the future that a motion be put forward for all members of the Judiciary of VUSAC be elected, or if not elected, hired before the end of the terms are over, so that going into the future issues such as an unfulfilled VPSO are fulfilled so that issues like this don't arise over the summer.

Zahavah: I would personally be uncomfortable with hiring an executive member as a voting member as we can definitely look at other ways for filling in these gaps. I will leave it at that, as I want to ensure that we are talking primarily about equity right now, but I would be uncomfortable with that.

Kaite: I would agree with that. Zahavah and I did split the role of VPSO over the summer, so it wasn't just left empty and it was ensured that all of the work that needed to be done was being done. Zahavah also met with the VPSO as she was leaving last year, to ensure gaps were filled. But it doesn't feel very democratic to hire someone for any interment period to be an executive on a student government.

Shailee: Before I move onto the next question, I want to quickly add that the onus of responsibility for making Vic a better place for queer identified students or any marginalized students should not be placed on those students themselves. I really understand where this student might be coming from, in their frustrations with the feeling like as a queer student who can not reach out to this group. But, this is not something that Vic Pride should simply be responsible for.

The next question comes from a second year student who asks:

2. *Will VUSAC's Equity Commission be doing an programming for LGBTQ+ students at Vic? I know Vic Pride is probably responsible for this work but since they are not very active does the commission have any plans to do work in this area? I would love to see maybe them adding something to there doc n talk series?*

Shailee: I'm happy to say that yes, we will be adding programing for LGBTQ students at Vic. Something we are working on now is some kind of partnership with the Sexaul and Gender

Diversity office, for the Transgender day of Remembrance, which is on November 20th. In terms of Doc and talk series, that is something we plan on an ongoing basis. I would encourage anyone with any ideas on programming that the commission can do, to reach out. I also want to let everyone know that we have bi-weekly meetings open to everyone at Vic. They are on Wednesdays at 5:30pm, and the next one is on the week after reading week. Any comments?

The last question was sent by a first year student:

3. *Will the equity commission be doing any advocacy or educational work on issues of disability or ableism this year?*

Shailee: Yes! At the last equity commission meeting, our UTSU rep, Jayde Jones...are you comfortable with coming up to speak about this?

Jayde: Sure! One of the things I'm hoping to facilitate in the coming year (the second semester) is a disability justice week, hopefully it will be a campus-wide week. If anyone was around for queer orientation or saw what was happening it was a coalition of specific groups--in this case equity-minded or disability justice-minded--providing programming. I kind of see it going down three streams, one being education, one being advocacy and one being community building. If you have questions or suggestions, or see a way for your club or levy to be involved, let me know! So, this is in the works and the equity commission has graciously offered their support and definitely has some great ideas, so that is one way they will be involved in the programming for disabled students on campus.

Shailee: Our partnership with Jayde's initiative is not a one-time and it's addressed issue on campus. Again, we are more than welcome to more ideas, and that is the best part about our meetings, hearing everyone bring ideas and then working to make them happen.

That concludes the anonymous equity questions, so now the floor is open for other equity-related questions anyone might have:

Zoe: I was wondering if you could you talk about what the equity training is going to look like for clubs and levies? So they can get an idea of what to expect.

Shailee: So equity training for clubs and levies is being offered the week after reading week, in two hour sessions. Both sessions will be the same, they are just offered at different times to accommodate students. The current format will run like a mock event planning scenario. We will give you the details on an event and go through all the steps of how to put on a successful event in the most equitable way possible. When I contact clubs and levies with this information via email in the next few days I am going to be asking for suggestions for things they would like to cover during equity training. And after every session getting feedback incase there was something missed that they wanted to focus on. Clubs and levies will be encouraged to sign up in advance. And provided that this is useful, we will do it again.

Vibhuti: Can you update us about the degendering of bathrooms on campus?

Shailee: For sure! So, when the bathrooms were degendered we made a post that was talking about why some bathrooms were degendered and not others. This came from a conversation with the Dean's office regarding the infrastructure of the washrooms that are gendered because of the

things still inside of those washrooms, such as urinals and changing tables. To de-gender these kinds of washrooms, actual construction will have to take place. Unfortunately, I am not able to give you a solid timeline of when that will happen, but I can tell you that in the next two to three days I am personally putting up signs around all the washrooms at Vic pointing them in the direction of the degendered washrooms. Another issue to consider is privacy. And again, the reason I am telling you these things so that we can have a conversation about it. Another issue to consider is privacy. If the student identifies a certain way and presents a certain way, they are at risk when it comes to traumatic experiences in washrooms. Something to consider is putting stalls in all washrooms for privacy.

Zahavah: We think it would be great to hear feedback on routes that we can take for degendering washrooms that are gendered in their infrastructure. There are essentially two routes. The first being renovating the washrooms to make the infrastructure not gender specific. The other option would be to just change the door sign on the washroom and--there would need to be larger discussion about what it would say--but for example, "all gendered washrooms, stalls and urinals," something to that extent. Also, there would still be the issue of installing the box for menstrual products in the washroom currently labelled for men. So, the issue that we would love to hear feedback on is that the first of these routes cost a fair amount of money. Although the signage one is quicker and less expensive, to change the infrastructure of the washrooms is a much larger project that would take more time. And the answer really depends on where we are prioritizing and that is something I think that we would all benefit from hearing feedback on this topic.

Stephanie: I'm not a part of the trans-community, so my opinion on this should have less weight, but I think that changing the signage should be the first step we should be doing. The washrooms themselves are close in location, so if there weren't urinals or stalls in one washroom there wouldn't be an accident in going from either place. I think that even if we can start by changing the signs, that doesn't mean that in the future we can't change the infrastructure later on.

Shailee: The only thing I would add to that is that even if we just change the signs the issue of privacy still remains. It is a good first step, but people would still be at risk of potential harassment.

Cy: I would first like to speak in support of what Stephanie said, to both in terms of changing the signs sooner is more important, than worrying about what we can do later. Because that doesn't mean that later we can't change the infrastructure. And also, speaking as a non-passing trans individual, the safety threat is going to remain no matter what, really. Though, eventually I'm sure we can move to washrooms that minimize the chance of harassment and any other safety or privacy concerns. Waiting longer to do that by insisting that we should change the infrastructure first is only going to allow these insurances to happen more frequently, than if we just put up the signs. Because, frankly it is a matter of comfort. There are a lot of days where, if I don't want to risk harassment, I know which bathroom to use. Seeing the word "female" on there does not make me feel better, but I know what I have to do if I don't want to risk getting punched in the face that day. So what I want to say, is the choice shouldn't be between do we need to de-gender the infrastructure first? Because, honestly, that doesn't make a lot sense to me. Are things such as urinals and menstrual product dispenser bins, I mean, are those truly gendered? Do we need to remove them, or add more? Urinals are convenient for multiple people, so it wouldn't make sense to remove them.

Shailee: Thank you Cy. And thank you all of you for sharing. So, what I'm getting from this is that changing the signs is a preference. Also, something I mentioned in the statement I put out about the degendering washrooms, was increasing programming at Vic, that in some way even if

it seems miniscule, just makes Vic a better understanding, and more informed space. To echo what I said earlier, I am focusing on the issue of privacy right now because it is a concern. But in terms of right now, we (as in the people in this audience) should be working to educate ourselves and other people on these issues, in order to create a more welcoming space moving forward.

Thomas: Just sitting on this discussion that has been going on so far, combining both the idea that Vic Pride does not have enough programming, and just with you talking about program, I think what might be a better focus is having the equity commission work with Vic Pride, on the construction of the washrooms and other events. That way, they have a better chance of being a stronger levy. Speaking as someone who served as a student trustee, I personally believe that within schools, the best things we could do is not even list something as an “accessible washroom” or “gender neutral” but if you just list it as “washroom” that takes out half the issue among binaries within which washroom to use. When it comes to infrastructure, I mean, we can leave urinals in the washroom, but when it comes to privacy within the washroom, say the stalls for example, the stalls could go all the way down to the floor. That way there is more privacy for the individual.

Shailee: Thank you. The equity commission looks forward to using our resources to helping Vic Pride. The equity commission will do whatever it can.

Molly Kay: I’m wondering, instead of putting all the pressure on Vic Pride and the equity commissioner, what can other levies and clubs do to equal out the work that needs to be done? For example, using our power of the media, to promote what we can...and I’m sure this will be discussed within equity training. We would really like to help out, and I’m sure other levies would say the same thing. So if you could speak on what we could do to sort of alleviate some of that?

Katie: Just on that, I think that caucus is a great space to reach out to people, who you might not know. You should have your group and name on your name tag. That way you can say hello to someone you don’t know and talk about what you represent. If there is anyone, you have an idea for an event and think that someone or another group might be interested, you are welcome to email myself or the VPSO, Nick, to connect you to groups. There are lots of channels you can go through in order to be connected with someone.

Shailee: Things like caucus and levy meetings are the best way for levies to talk to each other about the ways that they help each other. We can look into having levy meetings happen more frequently through the year--and club meetings.

Zahavah: Also, without speaking about what the members of Vic Pride would find beneficial, but speaking to what in my experience what has been beneficial across the board, is just collaboration on events, on articles, on anything. There is always a better turnout when groups collaborate. And that is something that VUSAC clubs and levies can all do with one another. We can look for ways to help facilitate these collaborations in an easier and more streamlined way, because that is going to help every group.

Shailee: Any other thoughts to add? Questions, comments, related to that or anything in general.

Katie: If not, I want everyone to understand that even though we did a separate equity portion at the beginning, equity questions are welcome throughout all of caucus. Don’t feel like you’ve missed your chance. Thank you Shailee and Apefa, for facilitating that part of it, as a new thing we are trying. If you have any thoughts about it please reach out to myself.

[Applause]

- Dean’s Office Update: Krista Steeves (8 minutes)

Hello everyone, my name is Krista, I am the Associate Dean of Students in the Dean's Office. It's hard for me to believe that it's November already, and we've been here now two months. I just want to give you an update on the office. Last week we were so pleased to have had our Minding Our Minds conference on mental health, where over 60 students and staff discussed mental challenges on campus and how we can build a more compassionate community to help support mental health. It was hugely successful! We are in our way to preparing for our next conference on Nov. 24th it's called "Sex and Gender on Campus," and it is a call to conversation about how to make a safer, more comfortable campus. I wanted to let you know that we have a number of series that are a part of our success series, which is a group of programming designed to connect you to other groups. This is our connection series which is talking about how to connect you with different alumni and professional opportunities; we have a skills session for academic challenges, and an opportunities section for research on campus. Also, I am here tonight because we don't have a Campus Life Coordinator. I really need that person, because they bring in enthusiasm and get to work with all of you! That position is currently posted, and we will be hiring within the next month. We will be able to introduce them to you in our next caucus meeting. Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who is here tonight, I know that you say it is mandated constitutionally, but the truth is if you didn't care, you wouldn't be here. But I want to thank all of you, from the Dean's Office, because you all make a difference on campus. Thank you for all your time and energy, we appreciate it. Any questions? If you have questions, we are located on the ground floor of the Goldring, or you can email us at vic.dean.

[Applause]

Kaite: With that, our councillors are just setting up dinner. One of the things I discussed in my campaign was the food at caucus. So, I hope the falafel bar delivers that. Come up if you have any questions regarding that.

Zahavah: I just had a question for Krista, if you could clarify that without having a Campus Life Coordinator, whether or not you would be the primary point of contact where clubs, levies and VUSAC members would normally come to a CLC?

Krista: From a risk assessment perspective, if you have an event that you need risk assessment for, you can contact vic.dean and Wanda will distribute risk assessments to different officers. But if you have any bigger issues or questions about funding or space, I can assist with those questions. But if you don't know, come and I can point you in the right direction.

Zahavah: And just a follow up, since there wasn't a new student leader day, in terms of alcohol training, can you talk about the procedure for that?

Krista: Absolutely, so instead of running a full day workshop for new student leaders (we ran one in the spring) we ran two one hour sessions in the Wymilwood lounge, where we talked about how to get an event risk assessment. If there are enough people we can always run another one of those, or you can meet with me.

Jordan: Would it be better to have it online? For clubs seeking to host a bar event. How to host a bar event on campus.

Krista: I don't know if anyone knows, but the website is in a bit of a limbo right now because we are getting a new website. In the next month, I think the launch date is Nov. 24th, we are working on getting a new website. That is a great idea, and we will work towards it. As well, the Vic App! Please download the Vic App, it is easy, and it will display the different events on campus and if you have an event you want on the app, you can go onto the website and upload that information to have it on there.

[Applause]

[Dinner Break (20 minutes)]

- UTSU Directors Update: UTSU Directors Jayde Jones (7 minutes)
 - CFS Referendum

[Summary] Hello again! Exciting and contentious things are happening at the USTU! Our VPE wanted me to mention to you, who has heard about Ucommute? We are working on affordable transit and a Upass. We are meeting with metrolinks, and we will talk more about price point and what a Upass would potentially pass. Also, shoutout to VUSAC! There was a strong presence at our last meeting on Thursday night. As well, I would like to introduce the petition You Decide, as you are all members of the CFS, which is best described as a student union for student unions. We all pay student fees. We initiated our membership with CFS in 2002 and since then we haven't had a chance to reconsider our membership. You Decide seeks to collect enough signatures to initiate a referendum. You Decide is in the process of collecting signatures right now. We have pitched to VUSAC, but if there are any other clubs and levies interested in participating in student politics, and signing the petition--seek me (or Hambo) out! It is an exercise in democracy. Let me know if you have any questions about You Decide, or about the UTSU in general.

[Applause]

- Board of Regents Update: George Wilson (5 minutes)

I'm here on behalf of the Board of Regents, which is the highest body at Vic. I just wanted to give a quick update on the stuff we've done. All committees met in September and will again on November 12th. It is hard to find something that every single body who has control can all agree on. The regent is looking at redeveloping the building of Northrop Frye, which was built fifty-one years ago. Right now the three options that are being looked at now include a complete tear down, a gutting and then kind of rebuilding the floors inside and a partial gutting which would include an extension. There have also been people looking with an arborist because we may have to tear down trees for some of those options, which is something we would like to avoid. Vic has a new IT department which is cool. Go them. The board has a new chair which will be announced soon, just because we know the board itself is not always super accessible to students, and doesn't always have a lot of interaction, in second semester we will be having VOCA pancakes. Thanks to Emilia and Gabe for that. I think that is about everything, so if anyone has any questions...

[Applause]

VUSAC UPDATES (20 minutes)

President - Zahavah Kay

- Update (2 minutes)

[Summary] My name is Zahavah, and I am the president of VUSAC, if you didn't know. I am going to keep this short and sweet, because I want to give you as much small sound bites as possible so that in the question period you can ask for more information on these things and anything else at all. We're now two months into the year, which is, wow, a lot. We've had some great programming, we had our first pub night, we had Corn Coming...Some other changes that have been going on, Secretary Emma has done an unbelievable job redoing the office and making it a more welcoming and professional space. She has

redone the back room, making it a new quiet space. The storage room, especially for those of you who have seen it before, it is unbelievable. You can actually walk into it. This is huge in terms of how VUSAC functions and we hope to keep this theme going. In theme with being more organized, Graham and I have tried to improve internal memory in VUSAC. Including finding the keys to the filing cabinets. Improving bookkeeping and transition reports. There is also a lot of constitutional amendment discussion going on right now, so this past meeting and the meeting before, I brought forward a copy of the constitutional amendments, a lot of which was written by Steve Warner (former VPE). And we are still in discussion, a lot of changes being considered. Before anything comes to a vote, the amendments will be published online and made public, available outside the door of VUSAC. I would love to get feedback. We had elections, which were contested, which is an improvement from our last elections. We hope that continues. If anyone has questions about the mandatory leave of absence article, that they might of seen circulating around the Varsity, feel free to bring them forward.

Vice President External - Kate Cohen

- Update (3 minutes)

[Summary] Hello, everyone! I am Katie the Vice President External of VUSAC right now. I just have a couple of things to update on. First, for clubs and levies, in regards to signing posters it has previously been required that you get the signature of someone from the Dean's Office. But now VUSAC executive has the authority to sign posters (as long as they have nothing to do with risk assessment or alcohol). Myself, Nick, Artimes and Zahavah all have authority to sign off on your posters. Another thing, that everyone on VUSAC is very excited about, is that I have designed a merch line! VUSAC is producing said merch line and it will be out by the end of November, we are doing five different items in the first wave of it. They will be sold at cost, or a little bit above, we are not trying to pocket from this, but just often students things at a very reasonable price. The most expensive item will be 20\$, and least expensive will be around 10\$. It will be a pop-up shop in the atrium, around November, please watch out for it, it is going to be super cute, and I am very excited. We have also started an infographic series, which will be released during reading break. It is a series on how to access the health and dental coverage that you get from the UTSU because unless you opt out, it is covered and you are paying for it as a student at U of T. The coverage is expansive and quite good, it's just not accessible; so we have been working on making it more accessible. If you have any advice, ideas of what we should cover next, please reach out to me. Another thing is that this is the first caucus of this semester, and I am very excited it is happening, and I want to have a more discussion based caucus in January. I'm not totally sure what this will look like, but I am thinking round table kind of topic. Reach out to me if you have any discussion ideas.

Secretary - Emma Lailey

- Update (3 minutes)

[Summary] Hello everyone! My name is Emma and I am the secretary of VUSAC, and I just wanted to go over some of the basic services that we offer within the office, that not everyone may be aware of: The office is open from 9:30-7:30pm weekdays and 9:30-3:30pm on Fridays, whereupon students are welcome to print (for five cents a page), hangout in the student lounge, or study. As of September, I have renovated VUSAC's backroom, formally a spare storage space, into a new designated quiet space for students. We have received a lot of positive feedback regarding this space as there are now designated spaces both for the social studying in the boardroom, and focused studying in the backroom. During exam season, VUSAC is also looking forward to hosting study space, as we have done in the past. As always, both the boardroom and the back room are available for group booking at anytime within our office hours, if you contact myself at secretary@vusac.ca. In addition, I have reorganized and labelled everything within the club storage room, so if you are struggling to locate something or are curious if we own a specific item, please send me an email, again at secretary@vusac.ca, and I'd be happy to help you out!

That being said, if you have any questions or concerns regarding VUSAC office space, or ideas of how to make the space more inviting and productive, I would love to chat with you after!

Arts and Culture Commissioner - Blanaid McNally

- Update (3 minutes)

[Summary] Hi everyone, sorry I thought the other commissioners would be updating too, so mine's kind of random. First of all, we have our first ever commission and we are receiving a few applications. I'm hoping to receive more applications by Friday, but I can always extend if people would like that. I am happy with the responses I have received so far, a lot of people have really great ideas. Secondly, the First Thursdays tickets for the AGO are available at the office, they are only 5\$. There are a lot of things going on with our Arts and Culture Commission, like today we just put up our first event with VOCA at the Gardiner (a pottery class) and it just sold out right now. I am hoping to do more of those next semester since the response was so great! So thank you!

Sustainability Commissioner - Jared Connoy

- Update (3 minutes)

[Summary] Hello, my name is Jared I'm the Sustainability Commissioner. I just wanted to give everyone a quick update on the commission. The first project we're working on is composting at Vic. For those of you who don't know, Vic does not compost and it has been in the works for sustainability commission to make this happen. We are finally making headway and are currently in communication with psych plant. Secondly, we are in cooperation with U of T Fair Trade to get different food services at Vic. The third is the food waste campaign with Burwash, we are working with the equity commission to reduce and implement strategies within Burwash to eliminate/reduce food waste. In terms of events, we are planning on having many different activities throughout the year including doc screenings, workshops, social environmental week, lifestyle events...like the Vic sustainability page on Facebook to stay in tune with these upcoming events and to be notified. This month we are planning a plant potting event on the 21st of November and a documentary screening on the 29th. Again, like the sustainability page for more information, or feel free to find me or send me an email. And, I just want to extend my apologies for the slow start up for the commission, I was elected in October and I am working to catch up. If you have any questions, feel free to find me.

Form Question: Question for VSAC president: how will you make sure the next vusac election is contested since you weren't?

Zahavah: A lot of what ensures we have a good elections turnout is the general turnout to events throughout the year. The way that VUSAC is reaching out to members of the VCU is something that has been a really big focus for myself and the entire VUSAC team, is making sure that we are engaging VUSAC and members of the VCU as much as possible, with clubs and levies--for example mandating that these members go to events hosted by clubs and levies. What doesn't work is just promoting elections, and you can promote, and promote and promote but at the end of the day if people don't feel like they are heard on VUSAC or that it is a good environment to be a part of then people won't run. The wrong idea is to look at what we can do right before elections, and the right idea is to look at what we can do constantly everyday throughout the year. So that it is more clear that VUSAC is a good place to be and cares about students and is open for everyone. Something that is really exciting about this year is that so many members of council have never been on VUSAC before. And I think that says something about VUSAC being open to

members of the VCU and I hope we can continue that being clear. Other than promoting which we always do, I hope that this can continue throughout the year.

- Open Floor Discussion
 - Are there other services you would like to see us do?
 - What events would you like to see?
 - What are VCU members excited for this year?
 - Is there anything you felt was promised in elections that has not come to fruition?

Zoe: I was curious if the Scarlet and Gold commissioner could tell me about Highball and Winterfest?

Stephanie: What a great question. If you want to get involved with Highball, you can get involved in our Highball committee! Applications are online on the VUSAC website and outside the VUSAC table. There is still a week before the applications are due. Also, Winterfest! Great question. For those who don't know, Winterfest is like orientation week for all students, it goes across U of T and it happens the first week back after the winter break. What you want to do is apply to our co-chair applications--due this coming Monday! So they are due soon, and you don't have to have a partner, you can apply by yourself, you'd be working with me! And you'd be starting to create events. There is an open mic night, a sugar shack (candy in the Cat's Eye)...and you also get a committee--which is a great leadership opportunity--and those applications will be out after reading week. Please apply!

Katie: Another initiative I want to mention that I forgot in my update, is Nick and I are working on a full calendar, something that I discussed during elections, a calendar that VUSAC, levy heads, club heads and dons have access to. Where they can update on events they are doing, and basic information. So you can look and say, "I want to plan an event on the 26th. Oh, nine other clubs are planning an event on the 26th. Maybe that isn't the best day!" It is a point of information, that hopefully will inform the app and encourage collaboration. As clubs and levies, if you have anything you want to say about this, let us know.

Zahavah: Okay, I am going to ask you all a question. Something that the executive and all of council has been discussing is improving internal memory and especially improving transitions, between executives and between councils. Something I am passionate about implementing is a standardization in the transition reports, so it is more strict about the information you have to include. I would like to know, particularly from our levy receivers, if you would like to work with us and/or have access to these procedures. Because I know that having good transition reports has been a problem among levy heads and VUSAC heads. What can we do to help you or etc? I see you levy receivers.

Carl Christian Abrahamsen: I'm a levy head for Acta-Victoriana. I think that would heavily depend on what the standardized procedure looked like. I imagine that the type of transitions we want in levies are quite different than the transitions you have at VUSAC. A lot of the information is about how to interact with VUSAC and the Dean's office and other institutions at Vic. I personally, would like to work with VUSAC on a standardized form--but I don't imagine that if VUSAC came up with a report that worked for VUSAC that it would also work for levies. Zahavah: For sure. So one of the ideas is to create an outline of what needs to be in your transition reports. That would include all of your important contacts, a month-by-month template of what you had to do, just of the necessary information. And something else is ensuring that all

transition reports are submitted to one localized place by a certain date, so we can know who is getting it and who isn't. This can be a conversation we can all have together.

Molly: I'm the editor of the Strand, I think one thing to be mindful of is that levies do have autonomy from VUSAC. And I think that is something we need to respect. I don't like the idea of having to run my transition report by somebody, for a lot of reasons. And I think, something we can talk about is there is usually a time when levy heads switch over and during that time perhaps levy heads can let VUSAC know that they are doing it or if they require help. That would probably be easier because I don't think it's very necessary since the reports are very specific to us, so I'm not sure how anyone not in that position can help track that. But I think in some instances where clubs or levies have folded because of poor transition, I think just knowing that you are available to help us is enough because they should be responsible and it's not your job to babysit. Because we have been elected into these positions, and it is our responsibility to make sure our clubs and levies carry. Although we would be appreciative if someone take this own, perhaps internally, (like through the VPSO.) I know that it's important for student organizations to have their independence.

Jayde: Following on Molly's point, I liked the part of your platform Zahavah where you mentioned of one-on-one budget consultations. And I wondered about, not mandating, but making available in a similar style if consolation during transition periods would be helpful. Having like, "door's open, we're here to help if you need us." But then, not stepping on anyone's toes or kind of crossing that line which I don't think you were suggesting at all, but I can kind of see a risk of that happening if it becomes "Hey, everyone submit your reports to the VUSAC Secretary so that we know we have them" kind of thing. So yes, something to consider. Because I loved that part of your platform, and I'm sure it went well, I know nothing about budgeting.

Hana Nikcevic: I'm from Vic Exposure. I agree with Molly in that I wouldn't want to run our transitional reports by VUSAC. But considering how necessary transitional reports are towards future memory, and how often they are not made properly or used effectively, I think it actually would be useful for the VPSO--not to read over the transition reports and say what is okay or not--but to maintain a repository of transitional reports, year after year, and please submit it by this date, just so that a deadline would exist. And it would also be useful in future years, for example, a levy's own record keeping. It would be useful if VUSAC had all of these files on file. Also, if there was a committee formed to create VUSAC's transition reports, I think it might be useful for levy heads to sit in on that as well, not to help out, but just to get an ideas on what they include.

Zahavah: So definitely, I wouldn't want any sort of requirement where transitional reports have to be run by VUSAC at all. I was thinking more like proving a tool, like a generic template, that you can opt to use or not opt to use. But I do think that the idea of keeping a repository, again not with them being reviewed, or being passed or not passed, but just to have incase for example if there isn't a transition one year, we could pass along last year's transition report, just to be sure. But I definitely wouldn't want to do anything that would step on toes, and there are many levies that transition very smoothly and just looking at those groups that have not had that experience.

Leora Nash: I'm from VCDS, and just thinking about what everyone has said and with my own experience, and the previous executive's experience with transition reports...when we turned over a lot of our members didn't write transitional reports to the point that it was negatively affecting our production. We had to incorporate into our new constitution, that was just ratified by VUSAC, that all executive members must write transition reports. I think that a lot of our members were intimidated last year and were unsure what to write, as the job changes year to year about what was expected of them. But, we definitely saw that with our turnover some of our

executive members were negatively affected because they didn't know what to do, like they didn't have passwords to the accounts and information they needed. And also, having them on file at VUSAC would be very helpful. As some of our forms from two years ago that were related to our constitution were lost internally. Having VUSAC there to help us would be extremely important.

Ali Kehl: I'm here with the Cat's Eye—that we are here in right now—and I am mostly just here to support your question. I actually never received a transition report, so I feel like I would definitely of loved that. I'm actually just going to be saying the same thing, so I'm really sorry that you have to write this down. I think that this is a really great idea. Thank you for thinking of us as levies. And Nick is so great, I just want to say that. I think he has been amazing as VPSO. I think maybe if you wouldn't mind, sending out a reminder email to all the levies and like, "hello levy, I know you're about to get a new levy head--this is a reminder to write a transition report--thanks (with a thumbs up)." That is all I have to say, thank you again for the question Zahavah. Yah, I'm from the Cat's Eye.

Sayah: We are going to move on to our next agenda item, which is campus life.

CAMPUS LIFE UPDATES (8 minutes)

- Last year we had trouble with attendance across Vic – has this improved?
- Has participation improved?
- How can we be reaching out to the wider Vic community?

Kaite: If there are any strategies people are using, or problems you are experiencing, you are welcome to share! If not...I'm happy to talk about my next discussion. But I also want all clubs and levies to understand who your main point of contact is, because it can be a little confusing with a VPE, VPI and VPSO and general council. So just making sure you know who your main point of contact is.

Zahavah: Nick stand up! There he is!

[Applause]

Artimes: In response, I just wanted to say that if there are any first year students in the crowd, or dons who have first year students, if you have any ideas in ways in which we can get more first year students to come to more events, I'd like to hear what you have to say.

Thomas: I'd personally like to respond as a first year student, so I know that recently you have just had your fall elections, now one issue among first year students in general at Vic is that we don't really know what's going on. In fact, we don't even know who our first year councillors are. I'm pretty sure 90% of us don't know, I just learned who they are tonight. Another issue with first year students and in relation to being involved within the Vic community, there are a certain handful of us who want to get involved in the Vic community, but the issue is how we are reaching out to them. I think what might be a better way is for VUSAC, is that they always want to accommodate the commuter students, and as a commuter student I appreciate that, but a large portion of the first year lives in res and I think that VUSAC should be working with residence dons to be working with those first year students and bringing them out to events. If we are talking about raw numbers themselves, I know that at certain events they were really catered

towards first year students, and I know that as a first year student and a commuter I would try to make my way out. I think that VUSAC should work with the residence dons especially, to promote ideas because that is the main point of contact for many first year students.

Motion: Stephanie moves to grant Shainiya Balachandran speaking rights. George seconds. Motion passes.

- Favour: ALL
- Abstained: None
- Opposed: None

Shainiya: I just wanted to speak quickly on behalf of the residence don peice, I know that we have a few residence dons here, and they are always willing to hear more about how they can support their first year students. Speaking to a change that developed during our orientation week this year, we did have a new program and initiative called Transition Mentors and International Mentors, and I know that some of you in this crowd right now are Transition Mentors, and they are meant to communicate directly with first year students, not by creating new programs, but by bringing them along to existing programming at Vic. It's been successful, but the way that it continues to be a success is if you continue in your role as Transition Mentors and encourage those first year students to come out to events. So I just wanted to highlight that program as well, as it was specifically made to encourage first year attendance at events at Vic. I'm not speaking from numbers, but from my own observation, that we have seen an uptake in events at Vic, such as the Success Series that happened, and this has been a positive impact in our commuter population. As the Residence Life Coordinator, I can say it's really positive because I hear from the residence students, but this has also been a positive commuter experience as well.

Steph: Just going off of that, what's really great about the Transition Mentor program is that it also has a Facebook group, so if you have an event that you want specifically to be reached out to first years, which a lot of our students are good with keeping up with, we would love to promote your event on that page. Another thing I would like to ask is if dons are able to send out emails regarding events on campus, I don't know if this is something they already do (which is awesome) but just a reminder that I always find that when I'm creating events that I don't have a lot of first year contacts on Facebook, so then I get one or two that say they are going, but yah...

Shainiya: And just as a reminder that we can also share posters in our residences. If you have an event that you want to advertise to the residence community, or pass a long to our commuter dons as well, just drop them off in our office and we will also share it on our Vic College Facebook page and instagram as well. We are always happy to promote events that are already happening and encourage students to come out.

Aloysius Wong: I am a first year student here at Vic, and also a commuter, so one thing that has helped me this past year in terms of getting involved is knowing certain events are recurring and happen every week, for example soup every Thursday, and just knowing this is really helpful. But in terms of events that are one offs, for example caucas, on thing that has really helped me is word of mouth or hearing it from your friend group. So, if somehow there are ways of reaching people within certain clubs or having these things posted widely to get that outreach...Because

sometimes you don't need to hear the same message over and over again, you just need to hear it once from the group you are most connected with. That is usually the best way, I find.

Blanaid: I have a question for Graham, so my question is about the cheque requisition process, that we have undertaken as levies and clubs and VUSAC members, I don't find it to be the most accessible form to be dealing with our finances. I know others have taken issue with it in the past, and I know that personally, I don't have a credit card and I have to find other ways to put money onto cards; which can make it stressful. I know that the other options are quite difficult to undertake. I was wondering if there were any updates on how to make it more accessible for students.

Graham: Hello, I'm the Finance Chair at VUSAC. And actually, something I was planning to do during reading week is to look more closely at the forms we use and re-evaluate them, as they were kind of passed down from who knows how long ago. For the process of reimbursement on VUSAC, I know it is inherently inaccessible, the turnaround for cheque reqs I try to make within a few weeks. But as of recently I have slowed down a little bit. I don't want this element of how we strategize to change our process to be all on our own, but I am thinking about incorporating a schedule of my availability for VUSAC members and club and levy heads to have discussion about this process. Feel free to reach out to me if you have any immediate concerns, or thoughts.

[Applause]

George: Building off of that, I know something that works really well for VCDS is that since we all have bank accounts, which money goes through eventually, the producers and then myself as CFO, have debit cards that we use for our members if they are purchasing something that they can't put onto a credit card.

Jayde: I know nothing about budgets and such, so...is it possible, maybe Graham, maybe Zahavah, maybe someone from a club or levy who has a club credit card or debit card...why is it not possible? Could you tell me why it's not possible? I feel like someone in the room knows.

Zahavah: It is a lot harder to account for the money that is spent and to coordinate it with the books. And since that's the limit of what I know I'm going to turn it over to Graham. I know it is difficult, I couldn't give you details on why.

Graham: Yes, just something to add onto that, the reason it is kind of this bureaucratic procedure, is that--well, I'll just tell you what I do. When I receive a cheque requisition form, I put it into our accounting software, and make sure it is aligned with what was budgeted. The process with the form allows me to look at every transaction that goes through VUSAC's account. It provides the security of having the account easily audited, and in regards to the debit cards, the reason VUSAC doesn't use cards is that measure of having a copy of every transaction.

Zahavah: Also, for using cards there is a lot less accountability to them. If there was a card in my name and in Graham's name (which is all that is possible for the VUSAC account) myself and Graham would have to go witness every transaction. Also, if there was a transaction that I couldn't account for and Graham couldn't account for there is no where else to go. The process now is a more secure process, even though it is slower, unfortunately.

Motion: George motions to grant Steve Warner speaking rights. Zoe seconds. Motion passes.

- Favour: ALL
- Abstained: None
- Opposed: None

Steve Warner: I just want to really quickly defend--or not defend--explain a little bit about the context with the VUSAC accounting system. Just to say that it is not specifically a VUSAC thing, it is a student society thing. And within the vast majority of involvement I've had in student life, when an individual needs to get reimbursed if you don't have an institutional bank account, the reality is that any reimbursement system is going to be you handing in the receipt and they'll give you back the money. There is really no reimbursement system, at least to my knowledge, where if you don't have a bank account then you will not get the money upfront. While the VUSAC system is inaccessible, the reality is there is not really a better system unless you have an institutional bank account for whoever is actually getting the money. So while it can be frustrating, there is not really a better way.

Zahavah: Also, just to make sure that everyone knows, that if there is a large purchase that you know of in advance, you can ask for an invoice, sent to VUSAC, and then we will pay it directly or give you a cheque, we can figure out other ways if there is a big purchase if you know about it in advance.

Katie: Is there anything else anyone would like to ask?

CLUBS AND LEVIES (8 minutes)

- How has your year been?
- Have you felt that VUSAC has done enough to support you?
- Now that club storage is organized, is there any other way to improve that space?
- Do you know who to contact if you have questions/need support?

CLOSING REMARKS - Katie(1 minute)

I just want to say that I know I made most of you be here, but I so, so, genuinely appreciate that you came. Caucus is an incredibly important space for people to talk to each other and for student leaders to have these conversations, and while this may not be the highlight of your social calendar (or even your day) I appreciate everyone of you for being accountable to the VSU. It is extremely important. I hope the falafels were acceptable. If there is anything else you want to talk about, feel free to email me at vpe@vusac.ca, I know getting emails and I am happy to chat about anything. That might make me sound sad, but there it is. Thank you so much for participating and coming to caucus! I just want to again, acknowledge the land which the University of Toronto operates on, and thank you all!

[Applause]

Motion: Haleema moves to adjourn meeting. Artimes seconds. Motion passes.

- Favour: ALL
- Abstained: None
- Opposed: None