



Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association
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Council Meeting Minutes

Date: September 09, 2010

Place: Teleconference

Time: 6:30pm

Attendance: Amanda Nielsen, President
Michael Balaski, VP Academic
Nathaniel Ostashewski, VP Operations & Finance
Ric Wheeler, VP Student Life
Greta Kirstein, GDHERM Rep
Lorna Howieson, MBA Rep
David Keene, Arts Rep
Melissa Seaborg, Counselling Rep
Adam Snider, Coordinator

Regrets: Denise Ferris, VP External

Absent: Lawrence Poon, MSIS Rep

| INDEX | MINUTES | ACTION |
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| 1.0 – Call to Order | Meeting called to order 6:30pm | |
| 2.0 - Approval of the Agenda | MOTION: David moved to approve the agenda as presented and Nathaniel seconded. Motion carried unanimously. | |
| 3.0 – Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting | MOTION: Michael moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting as presented and Melissa seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. | |
| 4.0 – Old Business | | |
| 4.1 Council Reports | The Executive, Council, and Staff presented their reports (see attached). | |

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| | <p>Michael noted the following additional information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The upcoming AUGC / AUAC Joint Retreat will be held at the Fantasyland Hotel in West Edmonton Mall. • The SAAC recently upheld a decision to expel a student from his or her program as a result of plagiarism; AUGSA should make an effort to make sure that students know what plagiarism is and what the consequences are for engaging in academic fraud. | |
| <p>4.2 – Information Sharing Agreement</p> | <p>A new version of the Information Sharing Agreement that we have been negotiating with AU has been presented by AU (see attached).</p> <p>MOTION: Nathaniel moved to approve the information sharing agreement as presented on September 09, 2010 and Ric seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.</p> <p>Amanda will execute the agreement tomorrow.</p> | <p>Amanda – Sept 10</p> |
| <p>4.3 – Transition Package</p> | <p>Ric noted that the document is nearly complete and the final draft should be submitted over the weekend.</p> <p>Nathaniel noted that this is a very large project for AUGSA and will, for many students, be the first major “interaction” that they have with the GSA. With this in mind, it might be a good idea to have a neutral 3rd party review it for completeness and accuracy once we are done with it.</p> <p>Dr. Doug Reid—who was a GSA President at another university in the past—is willing to review the document for us at a cost of \$1,500 for 30 or more hours of research and “double checking.” We will also look at the possibility of having Dr. Reid write an executive summary of the document.</p> <p>MOTION: Amanda moved that we hand the document over to Dr. Doug Reid for review and research once Ric has submitted his final draft. Ric seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.</p> <p>Nathaniel will email Dr. Reid to make sure that he is still able to take on this project.</p> | <p>Nathaniel – Sept 10</p> |
| <p>4.4 – Financial Report</p> | <p>The VP Operations & Finance (Nathaniel) presented the financial report:</p> | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current bank balance: \$63,481.64 • Noted that we can only write payroll cheques once per month, for CRA reasons, so if you do not get your report in on time, you won't be able to get your cheque for that month until the following month. • Has been trying to get a hold of past president and former coordinator, Robbie Chernish, regarding missing financial documentation. He has not received any response yet, and requests that any information people might have with regard to contacting Robbie (phone numbers, addresses, etc.) please be passed on to Nathaniel. | |
| 5.0 – New Business | | |
| 5.1 – Student Awards Committee Formation | <p>MOTION: Amanda moved to create a Student Awards Committee to review applications and administer AUGSA awards consisting of 4 members of the Executive and/or Council, the Coordinator, 2 students-at-large, and 1 AU faculty member. Melissa seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.</p> <p>After discussion, it was decided that, if a faculty member who is willing to sit on the committee cannot be found, we will form a committee without a faculty member.</p> <p>The 4 members of the Executive and/or Council were selected to sit on the committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amanda nominated Melissa to sit as the committee Chair; the nomination was unanimously approved. • David nominated Michael and the nomination was unanimously approved. • David nominated Ric and the nomination was unanimously approved. • Amanda nominated Lorna and the nomination was unanimously approved. | |
| 5.2 – Val Olver Offer of Assistance | <p>Amanda noted that Val Olver, AU Student Awards Coordinator, has offered to help out by sitting on our Awards Committee in an advisory role.</p> | |

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| | <p>MOTION: Amanda moved to accept Val Olver’s offer to sit on the AUGSA Awards Committee in a non-voting, advisory role. Ric seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried.</p> | |
| <p>5.3 – PC Party AGM</p> | <p>The Alberta Progressive Conservative Party’s AGM will be held on October 29-30, 2010.</p> <p>MOTION: Nathaniel moved to send two members of Council to the PC Party AGM and David seconded. Motion carried unanimously.</p> <p>Amanda noted that typically the President and the VP External would be the ones to attend such an event but, as the VP External will be unavailable for this event, someone else should go in her place.</p> <p>MOTION: Amanda moved to send Michael (VP Academic) to the PC Party AGM in the VP External’s absence and Nathaniel seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.</p> | |
| <p>5.4 – Fall AUGSA Newsletter</p> | <p>Once the Information Sharing Agreement is executed, we will be able to begin sending out email communications to our students (i.e., a newsletter).</p> <p>Lorna will look into what other GSA’s newsletters typically look like.</p> <p>Lorna, David, Adam, Melissa and Amanda will meet to brainstorm what the fall newsletter should look like and what sort of content should be included. Amanda will use Doodle to schedule a meeting with these people.</p> | <p>Lorna – Sept 22</p> <p>Amanda – Sept 22</p> |
| <p>5.5 – Project Planning and Delegation</p> | <p>Amanda noted that she will be more actively delegating projects to people on Council and encouraged those who may not currently have much on their plate to request additional projects.</p> | |
| <p>5.6 – AUGSA Fall Survey</p> | <p>Amanda noted that she has been in discussion with Denise & the AGC about conducting a fall student survey to gather demographic information about AUGSA students.</p> <p>MOTION: Nathaniel moved to publish the results of the completed survey in an academic format that can be used as a primary source for future academic research into distance education. Ric seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.</p> <p>Nathaniel offered to assist with doing selected interviews of students after the initial survey is complete to include in the</p> | |

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| | <p>publication.</p> <p>Nathaniel noted that this survey will likely not be done nor in a publishable format by November 30 as originally suggested, due to the time necessary to make sure it is approved to be made public by an ethics board.</p> | |
| 5.7 – Course Materials Insert | <p>MOTION: Amanda moved to produce a two-sided course insert designed by BluFyre Media and print 5,000 copies on cardstock, based on a modified version of the content that Michael created (see attached). Michael seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.</p> <p>Michael will make the necessary amendments to the document.</p> | Michael – Sept 20 |
| 5.8 – AUGSA Landing Project | <p>Nathaniel presented his proposal for a joint project of AUGSA and TEKRI to develop a courselet on how to use the AU Landing and other social media as a tool for research and education.</p> <p>MOTION: David moved to approve the project as presented and Michael seconded. Motion carried unanimously.</p> | |
| 5.9 – Course Payment Policy Amendment | <p>MOTION: Nathaniel moved that AUGSA change the current wording of the course payment policy to read:</p> <p><i>AUGSA will pay up to \$2000 worth of graduate fees at Athabasca University per council member during each single term in office, provided that each Council member can verify that his or her program costs this amount or more per year.</i></p> <p><i>The fees are to be collected via the expense claim process, and will be rewarded upon proof that the Council member has spent that amount of money on AU graduate level programs. This payment is to accompany a full term of service on council and should a council member serve any less than a full term, it would be prorated, and if overpaid, collected back from the council member.</i></p> <p>Michael seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.</p> | |
| 6.0 – Other Business | | |
| 6.1 – AUSU Letter / Response | <p>AUSU sent the attached letter to AUGSA regarding comments made on Twitter by Amanda. Amanda drafted a personal response letter and Adam drafted a response on behalf of</p> | Adam – Sept 10 |

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| | <p>Council. After discussion, the following motion was made:</p> <p>MOTION: Michael moved that Amanda not send her letter and that Adam revise the letter he has written on Council’s behalf and send the revised version to Council for approval via e-vote before sending it. Lorna seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.</p> | |
| 6.2 – Casual / Part-time Employee | <p>David suggested that we hire a part-time, casual employee to assist Adam with administrative duties so that Adam can focus on higher level functions and not burn out.</p> <p>Adam and Amanda noted that they have been discussing this issue, as it is currently in the budget for the fall, and would like to think about what this role should entail, how this person might work, etc. before we begin recruitment/hiring processes.</p> | |
| 7.0 – Adjournment | <p>MOTION: Ric moved to adjourn the meeting and Lorna seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.</p> <p>Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.</p> | |

Amanda Nielsen, President

Adam Snider, Coordinator

Date of Approval