



Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association
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Council Meeting Minutes

Date: July 28, 2010

Place: Teleconference

Time: 6:15pm

Attendance: Amanda Nielsen, President
Denise Ferris, VP External
Michael Balaski, VP Academic
Nathaniel Ostashewski, VP Operations & Finance
Ric Wheeler, VP Student Life (entered at 6:48pm)
Greta Kirstein, GDHERM Rep
Lorna Howieson, MBA Rep
Lawrence Poon, MSIS Rep
David Keene, Arts Rep
Adam Snider, Coordinator

Regrets: Melissa Seaborg, Counselling Rep

INDEX	MINUTES	ACTION
1.0 – Call to Order	Meeting called to order at 6:26pm	
2.0 – Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes	MOTION: Michael moved to approve the previous meeting's minutes as presented; Lawrence seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.	
3.0 – Reports	Staff and council presented their monthly reports. Coordinator's report – See attached. President's report – See attached; Adam noted that the Bell letter may not have been answered because he is not authorized to speak to the account and that Amanda may need to follow up on this.	

	<p>VP Academic’s report – See attached; Michael also noted that the Student Academic Appeals Committee may have required more prep time than he has listed on his report.</p> <p>VP External’s report – See attached.</p> <p>VP Operations & Finance’s report – See attached, plus: trying to get info from AU regarding AUGSA’s past; setting up new computer with accounting software; getting people to fill out TD1 forms to start the payroll process (note: people should fill out the Alberta form regardless of what province they reside in, unless they live in Quebec). <i>Current bank account balance: \$68,461.21.</i></p> <p>VP Student Life’s report – See attached. (Note: References to “Alberta Governing Council” in the report should be read as referring to the “Alberta Graduate Council.”)</p> <p>Arts Rep’s report – See attached.</p> <p>Business Rep’s report – See attached.</p> <p>GDHERM Rep’s report – See attached.</p> <p>MSIS Rep’s report – See attached; also doing some research into “semantic wiki” to help make the internal AUGSA wiki more searchable.</p> <p>Counselling Rep’s report – See attached (note: Melissa was absent and did not present her report in person).</p>	
<p>4.0 – Old Business</p>		
<p>4.1 – Project Updates</p>		
<p>4.1.1 – Discussion boards for AUGSA website</p>	<p>Greta is looking into discussion boards for the new AUGSA website. She has contacted AUSU about their discussion boards and policies for moderating the boards, as well as looking into different software options.</p> <p>Research showed that no other Alberta GSAs offer online discussion boards; we will have to suss out interest to see if this is worth pursuing.</p> <p>Lawrence noted that WordPress and Joomla (one of</p>	

	<p>which will be the basis for the new AUGSA website) should both have free discussion board plug-ins and that there are also a variety of other free software options we can use, such as PHP BB (which is what AUSU uses).</p>	
<p>4.2.1 – Seminars/Webinars</p>	<p>Amanda & Adam have been working to arrange seminars and/or webinars with all of the AU departments that have direct interaction with graduate students.</p> <p>So far, one presentation has been given, to Student Counselling Services.</p> <p>Amanda reviewed the PowerPoint presentation used (see attached).</p> <p>Amanda asked people to note if they are available for any of the dates currently scheduled (see attached).</p>	
<p>4.1.3 – Bookmarks</p>	<p>Lorna discussed the AUGA bookmarks. They have been ordered and the cost was \$400 for 5,000 bookmarks. BluFyre charged \$125 for the design.</p> <p>The bookmarks will be shipped to the Edmonton office and the Coordinator will be the custodian of the bookmarks, ensuring that they are handed out to students who request them, that all council members have a few on hand to give out, etc.</p>	
<p>4.1.4 – Transition Materials Update</p>	<p>Ric presented his “STAY” concept and noted that the information could be used in a variety of ways: as a stand-alone pamphlet, online, as an insert in the AUSU handbook, etc.</p> <p>Denise offered to help work on this project, as she develops a similar package every year in her role at the University of Calgary Students’ Union.</p> <p>Amanda noted that the document should be more of a listing of services and contact people—i.e., where to go and who to talk to when in need of service X—rather than simply an inspirational document.</p>	
<p>4.1.5 – WIMP Updates</p>	<p>Web and Information Management and Policy Committee Report – Adam discussed the development of the internal wiki, a social media policy, and wiki training to be held in August.</p>	

	<p>Adam and Amanda discussed tele-/web-conferencing software (see attached).</p> <p>Nathaniel suggested talking to AU about being allowed to use their Elluminate package to host our own web conferences.</p>	
4.1.6 – Update on Audit Process	<p>Nathaniel indicated that there is nothing new to report at this time. He is still working with the accountant and the audit is on track to be completed before the September deadline.</p>	
4.1.7 – Draft Letters	<p>Denise presented two letters she had written, to be sent to AU requesting new services be developed.</p> <p>Career services letter (see attached) – Amanda noted some changes, but overall the letter was approved as presented.</p> <p>MOTION: David moved to have Denise send the revised letter to the AU Executive and to Cc the AUGSA Executive; Amanda seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.</p> <p>Email services letter (see attached) – Amanda noted some possible edits.</p> <p>MOTION: Amanda moved to have Denise send the revised letter to the AU Executive and to Cc the AUGSA Executive; Lorna seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.</p>	
4.2 – Committee Updates		
4.2.1 – Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Restructuring Committee	<p>Denise and David are both sitting on the governance subcommittee of the larger FHSSRC committee. They are developing a report on how other institutions handle faculty governance and will report back at the next meeting.</p>	
4.2.2 – Ad Hoc Governance Committee	<p>Ric reported that the university has not yet contacted him about this committee; Amanda will look into why not.</p>	
4.2.3 – Awards Committee	<p>Nathaniel reported that this committee does not meet in the summer months, so there is nothing to report at this time. The next meeting of this committee will be in</p>	

	September.	
4.2.4 – Governing Council (and subcommittees)	<p>Amanda noted that AUGC is recessed until September, so there is nothing new to report at this time.</p> <p>Amanda feels that it would be good to present and seminar/webinar (see 4.2.1) to AUGC; she will ask Carol Lund if she can present this to AUGC (Carol is on vacation at the moment).</p>	
4.2.5 – Academic Council	<p>Michael noted that he sent the latest set of minutes from Academic Council to Adam. The document is several hundred pages long; please ask Adam if you would like to review this document.</p>	
4.2.6 – Student Appeals Committee	<p>Michael noted that the next meeting of this committee is in August, unless those involved withdraw their appeals. Also noted that the rate of cheating in post-secondary is very high, approximately 73%, according to an <i>Edmonton Journal</i> story.</p> <p>Amanda noted that something about cheating and the importance of <i>not</i> cheating should be included in the transition manual.</p>	
4.3 – AGC Updates		
4.3.1 – Graduate Student Survey	<p>Denise is noted that the AGC is looking at the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (CGPSS) as a way of providing graduate student information to disseminate to relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>AGC is also considering doing a smaller survey of their own, regarding what students expect to do upon graduation.</p>	
4.3.2 – Lobby Week	<p>The dates for Lobby Week have changed to mid-March 2011. This will mean lobbying just prior to a presumed 2011 election, and will allow AGC to promote the graduate research conference at the same time. AGC will lobby again in the fall, during election season.</p>	
4.3.3 – Graduate Research Conference	<p>Happening in mid-May, 2011, the conference will focus on research and helping students transition into graduate studies. The conference will be combined with the U of C's conference to prevent competition between the two.</p>	

	<p>Denise will be starting to meet with people to form various committees for the planning and development of the conference.</p> <p>Denise noted that there are still a lot of stakeholders who need to be spoken to (primarily university administrators), and that AGC is still attempting to secure funding to allow out-of-province students to attend the conference.</p>	
4.4 – Coordinator Health Plan	Adam indicated that he will continue to use the Alberta Blue Cross Individual Plan B that is his current plan. As decided at the previous meeting, AUGSA will pay 80% and Adam will pay 20% of the cost of this plan.	
BREAK	A break was called at 8:01pm.	
RETURN TO ORDER	The meeting was called back to order at 8:10pm.	
5.0 – New Business		
5.1 – CASA Consideration Report	This item was tabled until further research can be done.	
5.2 – Student Services Offered by Student Associations at Other Distance Universities	Lorna presented the attached report.	
5.3 – Photography Quotes (Discussion)	<p>Ric presented his quotes (see attached); noted that he looked only at national firms, so that we can get the same deal for members in any province/territory.</p> <p>The best deal appears to be Sears (see attached quotes).</p> <p>MOTION: Lorna moved that AUGSA use Sears as our photography provider and Ric seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.</p> <p>Ric will visit Sears on Friday to see what backgrounds they have for the photos, and send out an email to everyone by Friday afternoon indicating which background should be used by everyone.</p>	Ric – July 30, 2010
5.4 – Final Bylaw Review	MOTION: David moved to approve the <i>Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality</i> document as presented; Nathaniel seconded the motion. Motion carried	

	<p>unanimously.</p> <p>MOTION: Nathaniel moved to approve the <i>Removal of a Member of the Executive or Council Committee</i> document as presented; Michael seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.</p>	
5.5 – Board Member Compensation	<p>After discussion, a motion was made:</p> <p>MOTION: Nathaniel moved that the board develop a process, including a template and rubric, to manage people’s payment and keep it in line with salary and have the rubric to council within one week; Amanda seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.</p>	Nathaniel – August 05, 2010
5.6 – AUGSA Council Meetings	<p>MOTION: Amanda moves that we have two council meetings per month and Lorna seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.</p>	
5.7 – Upcoming Projects	<p>Amanda discussed upcoming/on-going projects. The following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Sharing Agreement between AUGSA and AU is still a work in progress. • The Wildrose Alliance is having a BBQ on Friday; please attend if you are able, so that some advocacy work can be done. • If you do not current have a project(s) on the go and/or are not sure what you can be working on, please ask Amanda or Adam. 	
6.0 – Other Business		
6.1 – Double Signatories	<p>Nathaniel noted that most corporations do not use double signatories on cheques, and that the need for two signatures could become a barrier to financial processes in the future, due to the distance nature of AUGSA.</p> <p>After discussion, it was decided that Nathaniel will go to the bank and see about creating an account that only requires a single signature, with the following restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-signature cheques cannot be written for more than \$2,100; amounts greater than this will 	

	<p>require two signatures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A signing authority cannot write a cheque to him or herself. <p>Nathaniel will look into this and report back at the next Council meeting.</p>	
7.0 – Adjournment	<p>MOTION: Ric moved to adjourn the meeting and Greta seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.</p> <p>Meeting adjourned at 8:51pm. Next meetings to be scheduled using Doodle.</p>	

Amanda Nielsen, President

Adam Snider, Coordinator

Date of Approval