

**Students' Association of Mount Royal College
Students' Council Meeting
October 19, 2009
Students' Council Chambers**

Present:

Erin Delamont (chair)
Travis McIntosh
Jermyn Voon
Meghan Melynk
Jennifer Langille
Michael Decker

Robert Jones
Tommy Lieu
Holly Mazur
Kay Asiedu-Nketiah
Keeli Elaschuk (part)
Marcy Fogal (ex-officio)

Eily Sweeney
Troy McLeod (part)
Rance Williams
Sadiq Valliani (part)
Anna Piltingsrud
Megan Borg (scribe)

Regrets:

Fadwa Khourieh
Tegan Smyth

Guests:

Brendan Correia (Communications Manager, SAMRU)
David Wood (Registrar)

1.0 Approval of Agenda

Motion: To approve the October 19, 2009 Students' Council meeting agenda.
Michael Decker/Holly Mazur

Carried

2.0 Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion: To approve the consent agenda with the removal of 2.3 "Executive Committee Meeting Minutes".
Holly Mazur/Robert Jones

Carried

3.0 Items Removed From Consent Agenda

Eily Sweeney noted that Students' Council should be aware that the clubs policy has recently been amended. She explained that in the past, Students' Council approved club ratifications, but this was not in the best interest of Council's time. She explained that the policy amendments include the addition of a committee that will review and ratify clubs, and then forward the information to Students' Council for awareness. Eily noted that Students' Council still has the ability to de-ratify clubs if necessary.

Robert Jones noted that controversial clubs will come to Students' Council if the committee finds them to be a sensitive area.

Motion: To approve 2.3 "Executive Committee Meeting Minutes".
Rance Williams/Holly Mazur

Carried

4.0 Presentations

4.1 Reading Day Presentation

(David Wood and Troy McLeod joined the meeting)

(Erin Delamont passed the chair role to Robert Jones)

Robert Jones stated that the Fall Reading Day is an exciting initiative that Erin Delamont has been working on.

Erin Delamont explained that the idea of the Fall Reading Day was brought forward at GFC last year and it was recommended that the idea go to faculty council in order to obtain feedback.

Erin explained that the Fall Reading Day would most likely occur around Remembrance Day in November and stated that it would be an extra day off for the campus that may act as a "University Day" or "Celebration Day". She noted that other possibilities are that it could be a fall convocation day, or works with the open house so that the school can be closed, or else occur around Thanksgiving in October. Erin stated that she is open to suggestions and opinions.

Michael Decker recommended October for the Fall Reading Day and explained that he did a lot of work this year with FYI and some of the feedback he received from the student body was that students struggle a lot in October.

Erin Delamont explained that the recommended instructional days per semester are approximately 65 days. She stated that semesters are very condensed and because of the current policies, it gets confusing because there are only so many days to work with.

Meghan Melnyk asked if MRU students begin classes earlier than other institutions. Erin replied that she is not sure, but that other institutions have approximately 60-65 instructional days per semester. Meghan noted that it is important to the health and wellness of students to get an extra day off in the Fall semester.

Jennifer Langille noted that U of L and U of C started classes earlier than MRU this year. Jennifer stated that she is more in favor of the Fall Reading Day around Thanksgiving to allow students more time with their families.

Michael Decker also stated that it would be great to give students who do not live in the city an extra day for travel time around Thanksgiving.

Tommy Lieu stated that he would like to keep the same amount of instructional days, but believes that a Fall Reading Day is a good idea.

David Wood noted that the Office of the Registrar is neutral on the idea of a Fall Reading Day, but privately he believes it is a great idea. David noted that a lot of concerns came from faculty regarding the loss of instructional days. David noted that the standard at MRU is 62-65 days. David noted that a lot of research was done by Erin Delamont on this initiative. David cautioned Council against paying attention to semester start and ends dates because it messes with orientation and they cannot begin classes before Labor Day.

Meghan Melnyk explained that she has spoken to students who expressed to her that they feel there are wasted days in the semester anyway and instructors play with schedules as they want. Meghan stated that she does not believe that students will skip anyway and feels that giving students a day for health and wellness is great.

Robert Jones stated that he is more in favor of a Fall Reading Day in November because he finds that he gets more stressed, busy, has a tight budget and final papers are due around that time.

Jennifer Langille asked what kind of feedback they have received from faculties. Erin replied that there have been some reservations, but she believes that more faculties are in support of the Fall Reading Day. Erin stated that there has been a lot of discussion around whether to have it in October or November. Erin explained that it is hard to work around lab courses because most of them normally hold labs on two separate days, so if one day is taken away then only ½ of the class will have a lab one week, putting the other ½ behind. She stated that this has been a challenge, but one solution would be to cancel labs for one week. Erin also explained that the Conservatory has expressed concerns because rehearsals for their big production occur in November and they would miss a day.

Michael Decker asked how approval will be reached. Erin explained that first it was brought to faculty councils for feedback and next the policy proposal will go to Academic Program and Policy in November, and then to GFC in December for final approval.

Eily Sweeney stated that this is a great initiative that will be valuable to students.

Robert Jones recommended that Students' Council show their support for this initiative formally in order to represent students.

Motion: To resolution Students' Council in support of a Fall Reading Day at Mount Royal University.

Troy McLeod/Holly Mazur

Carried

Students' Council thanked David Wood for attending the meeting. Erin thanked Students' Council for their support.

(David Wood left the meeting, Brendan Correia joined the meeting)

(Chair role passed back to Erin Delamont)

(Sadiq Valliani joined the meeting)

4.2 Communications Strategy

Erin Delamont welcomed Brendan Correia, the manager of Communications at SAMRU.

Brendan Correia began his presentation by giving a brief overview of his history within SAMRU and ASEC.

Brendan explained that the communications department is an in-house resource that acts as the central coordination of all communications that are responsive to their audience. He explained that communications manages the brand and brand architecture of the SA, works with EC and staff to develop messages, strategies and marketing with the communications department consisting of management, editing and content coordination and visual design.

Brendan noted that there were 194 communications projects in 2008-09. Brendan stated that the communications department handles the following areas: posters and banners, bulletin boards, displays, P.L.O blackboard campaigns, digital advertising, SA print

publications, online media, external publications, swag, external events and media relations.

Brendan explained that the purpose of the communications strategy is to give legitimacy and character to the SA and to build the SA's reputation. Brendan noted that the development of the communications strategy is rigorous and has involvement from EC, SC and staff.

Brendan stated that the audience and demographics that the communication strategy combine current and potential students, internal SAMRU, MRU and the government, with the target audience being first year students, residence students and SAMRU volunteers.

Brendan gave an overview of some of the statistics of demographics as well as an overview of the demographic profile. Brendan noted that one of the problems with profiling the demographic is that generalizations are made.

Brendan stated that the outcome of the communications strategy is to inform and engage members, cultivate genuine relationships, influence stakeholders, learn from member feedback, cross market and come up with technological strategies. He noted that some of the key messages of the SA are to contribute to the ultimate student experience, display autonomy, be the vibrant hub of the campus community and to take feedback and incorporate it.

Sadiq Valliani asked if there were any new communication events or methods used this year. Brendan replied that the SA has begun using Twitter. Sadiq asked if facebook is used. Brendan replied that the SA has a fanpage of SAMRU and a friendpage of SAMRC that is mostly used by alumni.

Eily Sweeney noted that the new website is now up that has a calendar of events. Brendan noted that if people register for an account online, they can receive email updates from the SA.

Students' Council thanked Brendan for the communications presentation.

5.0 Generative Governance Topic Discussion and Presentations "Creating Effective Student Participation"

Erin Delamont explained that one of Council's areas of concern is voter turnout and election involvement. She noted that there has been a decrease in voter turnout with only 12% being the highest voter turnout in SAMRU history. Erin noted that other areas of concern are getting students involved in surveys, committees and AGMs, as well as an increase in nominations for elections, among other things. Erin stated that it is Students' Council role to improve these areas and ensure that they are being addressed.

Erin explained that each group, consisting of point people groups, will meet to discuss and explore what the board can do to improve student participation, as well as look at what made each Councilor get involved in the SA and how can they increase effective methods. Erin asked Councilors to meet and determine specific strategies and examples.

Robert Jones asked if the SA can use incentives and enticements to get people to vote. Erin replied that in the policies, it prohibits election candidates from bribing voters. Marcy Fogal explained that in the past, the SA has had contests with prizes for people who voted, with one of the major prizes being a semester's tuition paid for. Marcy noted that candidates are not allowed to give prizes and have contests for voters, but the SA can. Rance Williams suggested giving voters cookies to encourage drop-in voters.

Council broke off into groups and discussed effective student participation.

Eily Sweeney presented her group's discussion:

- Ideas:
 - Televisions on campus with election video segments
 - Working on connections with candidates and students to build friendships and networking
 - Seek to obtain more feedback through focus groups and surveys
 - Use events to promote elections (such as announcements as concerts)
- How to get students involved:
 - Try to obtain support from instructors
 - Connect elections to each faculty
 - Give students incentives, such as prizes
 - Make candidate debates televised

Troy McLeod suggested that they have an anthem competition.

Travis McIntosh presented his group's discussion:

- Have more personal communication with students as it is more effective and valued than emails and print media.
- Repeat correspondence.
- Advertise SC as a resume booster through presentations at Career Services.
- Have interactive activities or prizes during classroom visits.
- Engage students in intimate settings and then send them out to pass on the message.

Rance Williams stated that promoting SC as a resume builder is a powerful tool. He explained that more employers look at individual's volunteer work as building on their education. Eily Sweeney agreed that it is important to sell this as an advantage.

Michael Decker stated that it is important to encourage students to join clubs and volunteer because it gives them a change to relax from their workload, create friendships and connections, as well as changes their views of the University and the community. Sadiq Valliani noted that extra-curricular activities are selling points to potential employers because it is another form of education. Jermyn Voon noted that being a volunteer is a great achievement and they should be promoting this and encouraging individuals to have the desire to give back to students.

Holly Mazur stated that each Councilor needs to put in the time and work together to reach students. Travis McIntosh encouraged Councilors to throw around their titles in social settings, such as in classes and at events, or else just talking to students. He stated that he believes it creates an emotional connection and also displays that Councilors are proud of their positions. Jermyn Voon noted that his enthusiasm about the SA and his position radiates to students during conversations.

Erin Delamont presented her group's discussion:

- Give cookies to voters
- Have give-away contests during elections – have lots of little prizes for instant gratification
- Focus more on the perks of the positions for candidates
- Give power point slides to Professors to show in their classrooms
- Have ThINK give-away in the halls.

- Have more communications in The Reflector

Robert Jones presented his group's discussion:

- Give prizes to students at elections
- Have classroom presentations
- Have a standard video for candidates for exposure
- Have a voting pop-up on mymru
- Increase resources for elections
- Clarify SC roles
- Expand on the website about what the SA and SC does
- Have pictures of candidates on televisions
- Have more tours
- Look at the connection between voting and self-interest
- Make the election process relevant to people and communicate how it makes sense.
- Have more face-to-face opportunities with students and SC
- Have nominees wear T-shirt to advertise voting
- Create an SA anthem or catch phrase
- Have elections posters in the Liberty Lounge
- Have elections posters in the bathrooms
- Have bands at events promote elections

Michael Decker stressed the importance of the relevancy of the positions and advertising. He explained that they should look at communicating through televisions about what SC has been doing in order to create a connection. He explained that most students only see Councilors during elections and then don't hear anything about them until the next election.

Sadiq Valliani cautioned against advertising the SA in washrooms because it may give a bad reputation to the SA and candidates.

Meghan Melnyk explained that she believes televisions would be a great tool on campus and will help to spread our message to students who may not venture into Wyckham House. She noted that the information on the televisions is quick, easy and grabs attention. She suggested that they could have information about Wyckham House and SA events on the televisions to grab all audiences on campus.

Kay Asiedu-Nketiah noted that a lot of students do not come to Wyckham House and stated that he believes televisions would be a good communication tool. He also suggested that pop-ups when logging into the web would be good communications as well.

Jermyn Voon noted that it is important to make advertisement as clear as possible to students so that they can easily understand the communications. Jermyn stated that he also supports the idea of having more one-on-one communication with students, as it would be a more personal approach.

Jennifer Langille noted the importance of advertising to students who live in Residence because they are so close to Wyckham House. Sadiq Valliani agreed that it would be great to build a community with Residence students.

Erin Delamont stated that the discussions were awesome and the input was excellent. Erin encouraged Council to bring all of their initiatives to EC.

6.0 Dinner

7.0 New Business

7.1 Alberta Student Executive Council Discussion

Robert Jones noted that there was an ASEC information session at the Council Retreat where he gave an overview of ASEC, but he would like to expand on that presentation with more information.

Robert explained that ASEC was formed in 1982 and currently represents approximately 120,000 students in Alberta. He explained that ASEC works with the government to address student concerns, works externally and takes part in various media events.

Robert explained that last year ASEC changed its name from ACTISEC in order to represent the six-sector model to include more diverse and specialization in the sector.

Robert noted that ASEC is one school one vote and contains 12 schools. He noted that Portage College is currently looking to join.

Robert gave an overview of the positions and job descriptions within ASEC, including the Executive Director position, which is currently held by Carol Neuman, the Chair position, Vice-chair, Director of Marketing and Communications, Director of Finance, Director of Policy, Director of Advancement, Treasurer and the Internal Publications Officer.

Robert gave a brief history of some of ASEC's successes: creation of an internal structure, student loan work and tuition freezes. He explained that ASEC is currently working on a strategic plan and website.

Eily Sweeney asked what the time commitment is for EC positions within ASEC. Robert replied that most positions are approximately 5-10 hours per week, the Executive Director position full-time and his position as chair is 30 hours per week maximum. Robert noted that he works a lot of weekends for ASEC.

Eily Sweeney asked how many conferences ASEC holds each year. Robert replied that there are 4 yearly conferences, some including goal setting and planning and a progress conference.

Sadiq Valliani asked Robert how he balances his time. Robert replied that it is difficult with classes, ASEC and SAMRU. He stated that a lot of writing is involved in his position.

Jermyn Voon asked Robert how many SA representatives are in ASEC. Robert replied that only 2 representatives per school are allowed to sit on the ASEC EC.

Tommy Lieu asked how much money SAMRU gives to ASEC. Robert replied that he believes SAMRU gives \$13,000 and noted that the maximum is capped at \$14,500 for any school. Meghan Melnyk asked where the funds go. Robert replied that they go towards paying the Executive Director's salary, hosting events, hosting meet and greet events with stakeholders, travel for ASEC EC, swag and campaign events.

Michael Decker asked what our membership in ASEC does. Robert replied that the membership provides excellent lobbying initiatives. Robert stated it would be great to have all schools under one organization.

Sadiq Valliani asked what ASEC is lobbying right now. Robert replied that ASEC is looking at the Post-secondary Learning Act and ways to change it to include SAs more, as well as looking at interest rate reduction on student financial aide, trade apprenticeship issues and tuition cap.

Kay Asiedu-Nketiah asked if there is a possibility of ASEC merging with CAUS. Robert replied that they looked at this last year but it was unsuccessful. He noted that ASEC and CAUS are currently discussing their relationship and the future.

Travis McIntosh stated that it is a great privilege to be a member of ASEC. Travis stated that Robert represents ASEC in his role there and is able to bring things back to SAMRU. Travis noted that ASECs recommendations to the PSLA will make it more effective and efficient. Travis stated that he believes Robert is given an excellent opportunity in his ASEC position to give feedback on issues.

Erin Delamont thanked Robert for the update and information on ASEC.

7.2 Councilor Hours and Honorarium

Robert Jones apologized to Council for any confusion around SC volunteer hours and honorarium and noted that they wanted to present this to bring clarification. Robert explained that EC sat down and discussed in great length and have included a list on what counts for volunteer hours.

Erin Delamont noted that Councilors are able to get up to \$800 per semester. She noted that the ECPPP is incorrect in its honorarium amounts. Erin stated that it is difficult to keep track of each hour, but an hourly rate has been included in order to be fair to everyone. Erin explained that they want to encourage all Councilors to participate and contribute whole-heartedly. She noted that Students' Council works hard and thanked Council for their patience in this matter.

Michael Decker asked if Councilors can approach their point people if they have specific questions around hours. Robert confirmed this.

Sadiq Valliani asked how Council meetings are counted. Erin replied that Council meetings are given a flat amount of \$50 per meeting attended.

Robert noted that they have tried to make it easy to have Councilors contributions recognized. Travis noted that if Councilors are researching, promoting the SA or doing anything that they are unsure of, they should clarify it with their point people, as well as let their point people know what their doing in order to keep them aware.

7.3 MRU Black T-shirt Breast Cancer Campaign

Motion: To approve no more than \$250 towards the purchase of a maximum of 18 t-shirts for \$10 each for Students' Council and for decorating materials from the special projects budget.

Eily Sweeney/Sadiq Valliani

Carried

Eily Sweeney explained that the event will be a catwalk event with an MC and music that is a joint sponsored event that the SA will be providing space for. She stated that she believes this event provides great exposure to the SA and also shows that the SA supports events. She explained that she believes Council involvement will promote the representatives to the student body. Eily explained that the idea is to have Councilors

walk down the catwalk and model the t-shirts and be judged. She noted that another idea would be to have a team competition with Residence. Eily noted that the event will take place on October 28th from 12:00 - 2:00.

Anastasia Piltingsrud stated that she thinks this is a great idea.

Holly Mazur noted that she will be in class. Eily replied that Council could possibly be scheduled for 1 hour for the event.

Meghan Melnyk suggested that the t-shirt be purchased and then Council gets together as a group to decorate. Meghan noted that some Councilors may not feel comfortable with modeling. Erin asked if Councilors will be able to walk together. Eily replied that the event is quite flexible.

Holly Mazur suggested that they put the entire amount allocated towards the event to show support, even if all of the Councilors do not get involved.

Eily noted that she will ask the communications department to take photos of the event. Michael Decker stated that it would be good to have media so that other schools can see and encourage them to do the same kind of event. Eily replied that she believes this event is happening at other schools too. Erin Delamont stated that media contact is a good idea because it also boosts the brand of the SA. Erin asked what kind of advertising has been done. Eily replied that posters have been hung in Wyckham House and around the campus.

Students' Council expressed interest and support for the initiative.

Sadiq Valliani suggested that Councilors also wear the shirt ahead of time to promote the event. Sadiq stated that he would like to be involved somehow, even if he cannot attend the event.

Motion: To use the participation list and have a deadline of Wednesday, October 21, 2009 at 4:00 for other interested Councilors to email Eily Sweeney to add their names to the list.

Robert Jones/Michael Decker

Carried

Erin Delamont encouraged all Councilors to get involved. Erin noted that Eily will coordinate the decoration time details. Erin also stated that if any Councilors have committed to attending, but cannot do to plan changes, they should let Eily know as soon as possible.

8.0 Announcements

Meghan Melnyk announced that Walk a Mile in Her Shoes will be held on November 4th for men to take part in. Travis McIntosh explained that it is violence against women event and donations will be accepted at the Peer Support Centre. Travis encouraged all male Councilors to take part in and asked anyone who is interested to speak to him. Robert Jones noted that he will be attending the event and encouraged others to do the same.

Robert explained that he would like to offer Council a workshop on finance and budgets. He stated that Council is responsible for approving financial reports and documents. Robert noted that he will organize a workshop and let Council know the information.

Sadiq Valliani announced that the Arts Faculty is currently hiring staff members. Jennifer Langille asked Sadiq what positions are being hired. Sadiq replied that he believes they are professor positions.

Eily Sweeney announced that the non-violent communications workshop has been canceled, but they are hoping to reschedule for a later date. Eily encouraged all Councilors to attend.

Eily also announced that there will be a workshop held for Theatre for Social Change Forum Theatre. She explained that the info session will be Thursday, October 22nd from 6:00-7:00. She stated that she will send the description by email.

Eily explained that Council sizes are needed for swag. Erin Delamont noted that they will be collecting sizes during point of contact meetings where they will be able to try on samples. Sadiq asked how much swag costs to the SA. Travis replied that he is not sure.

Travis McIntosh announced that the Calgary Student Caucus will be holding the meet and greet event on Monday, November 2 at 5:00. He stated that it will be the opportunity for Council to meet with Councilors from other institutions. He explained that it is a great networking opportunity and there will be free food and games. He noted that the event will be held at SAIT. Holly Mazur asked when the event is expected to end. Travis replied that it will end around 6:30-7:00 and will count as volunteer hours if attended.

9.0 Action Items

Action: Eily Sweeney will purchase t-shirts and look into advertising for the Black T-shirt Campaign event.

Action: Eily Sweeney will obtain swag samples for Council.

10.0 Board Meeting Feedback Form

11.0 Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.
Rance Williams/Jermyn Voon

Carried