

**Students' Association of Mount Royal College
Students' Council Meeting
February 8, 2010
Students' Council Chambers**

Present:

Robert Jones (chair)	Erin Delamont	Travis McIntosh
Eily Sweeney	Tommy Lieu	Jermyn Voon
Troy McLeod	Holly Mazur	Fadwa Hourieh
Meghan Melynk	Tegan Smyth	Kay Asiedu-Nketiah
Jennifer Langille	Keeli Elaschuk	Anna Piltingsrud
Michael Decker	Sadiq Valliani (part)	
Marcy Fogal (ex-officio)	Megan Borg (scribe)	

Regrets:

Rance Williams

Guests:

Jason Unsworth (SAMRU) - part
Arati Sharma (CASA National Director) – part via conference call
Spencer Keys (CASA Policy & Research Officer) – part via conference call
Jillian Flake (CASA Public Relations & Communications Officer) – part via conference call
Rick Theis (CASA Government Relations Officer) – part via conference call

1.0 Approval of Agenda

Motion: To approve the February 8, 2010 Students' Council meeting agenda.
Fadwa Hourieh/Jennifer Langille

Carried

Amended Motion: To approve the February 8, 2010 Students' Council meeting agenda with the following amendments:

- **Change 4.1 to "SAMRU Business Operations" presentation**
- **Change 4.2 to "CASA" presentation**
- **Move the Generative Governance Discussion to 8.0**
- **Add 8.4 "Alberta Budget"**
- **Add 8.5 "Eco Challenge"**
- **Add 8.6 "CASA"**
- **Remove "Day of Caring"**

Sadiq Valliani/Jermyn Voon

Carried

2.0 Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion: To approve the consent agenda with the removal of 2.4 "January 21, 2010 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes".

Fadwa Hourieh/Anastasia Piltingsrud

Carried

3.0 Items Removed From Consent Agenda

January 21, 2010 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Ana Piltingsrud stated that she would like to see an explanation regarding Travis' concern regarding the building of a nuclear power plant in Alberta under the Scotia Assets investment reports. Travis replied that it is hard to determine what is ethical and he believes that his concerns were in relation to his personal views. He explained that our investment group tries to get the most growth from our investments while trying to adhere to our ethical policies.

Troy McLeod asked if there are any rules in place to assess our ethical investments. Marcy replied that the SA has a policy on ethical investing. She explained that there is no right answer when it comes to ethics because everyone's views differ. She noted that the SA's benchmark is the same one that is used by the Ethical Mutual Fund Company and our investment company tries to mirror this company. Marcy noted that our policy has been around for about three years and they are assessing it to try to improve it. Marcy noted that our investment managers invest to see growth while trying to preserve our ethical position.

Motion: To approve the January 21, 2010 Executive Committee meeting minutes.
Fadwa Khourieh/Sadiq Valliani

Carried

4.0 Presentations

4.1 SAMRU Business Operations

Students' Council welcomed Jason Unsworth, Director of Business Services at SAMRU.

Jason began his presentation by giving a brief history of his experience with the Students' Association noting that he came to MRU as a student about 9 ½ years ago and started in his position as Director of Business Services in December of 2005.

Jason gave an overview of the value of business services to SAMRU and high-lighted three major areas:

1. Food Services

- 90% of students initially come into Wyckham House for food
- "Come for the food, stay for the services"

2. Campus Marketplace

- Wyckham House provides healthy competition on campus and promotes fair price, high quality products and service.
- SAMRU conducted extensive market research to see what our membership wanted in relation to food services, which resulted in 73% of food services options being franchises.
- SAMRU employs approximately 30 students who work on a regular basis at any one time and another 20 working more casually every year.

3. Financial Sustainability

- Tenancies help lower the financial risk of providing services students want
- Business Services is self-sustaining, in that it pays its own costs, and contributes approximately \$425,000 net to SAMRU's bottom line

Jason noted that a few significant things brought in this past year have been the Good Earth Café, the polystyrene ban in Wyckham House and the introduction of the eco-store

in Wyckham House, which have been excellent sustainability initiatives that are in line with our values, mission and vision.

Michael Decker asked if there are any plans to introduce additional services targeted specifically at Residence students, such as a store that provides fresh milk and other groceries. Jason replied that this need has been brought forward and they have been looking at this for about the past year. He explained that they are currently working with the new owners of the collegiate shop to offer suggestions according to the needs of students. He noted that there is a risk for tenants when bringing in perishable goods because it can lead to profit losses.

Jason noted that a few of the upcoming projects for business services include Phase II development, which includes the Liberty Lounge, the introduction of a hair salon in Wyckham House, as well as a bank of bank machines in Wyckham House.

Jennifer Langille asked if they will be bringing a BMO machine into Wyckham House. Jason replied that they approached the Bank of Montreal, but they were not interested because they have a machine at the Garrison Woods Safeway.

Students' Council thanked Jason for his presentation.

(Jason Unsworth left the meeting)

4.2 CASA

(Rick Theis, Jillian Flake, Spencer Keys and Arati Sharma joined the meeting via conference call)

Travis McIntosh noted that due to time limitations, if there are any additional questions that Councilors would like to ask, they can feel free to email them directly to Arati Sharma.

Arati Sharma noted that CASA would like to focus on 4 areas of concern that SAMRU expressed in their letter. She stated that she hopes this is the beginning of a dialogue between CASA and SAMRU to try to work through the concerns and focus on what initiatives CASA is taking to address the concerns. The areas of concern identified are:

1. Governance & Leadership
2. Communications & Transparency
3. Voting Structure
4. Representation

Arati explained that policy governance is a challenge with CASA because they only meet a few times per year. She stated that they are currently looking to restructure and are in the process of consultations with the membership, as well as in the process of developing a new constitution. She noted that they are looking at a board structure for transparency.

Arati stated that they are currently meeting to discuss membership concerns regarding accountability and have begun weekly staff meetings and are focusing on professional development opportunities.

Arati noted that CASA's budget is reflected by the goals of its members and explained that a new process has been created for the next budget.

Arati noted that regarding internal communications, the following has been put in place to address concerns: they are trying to ensure home office communications with members,

have online communications with committees, have written reports (2 released thus far), and government officers reports are being done monthly.

Spencer Keys gave a brief history on the CASA voting structure and explained that in the past few years, CASA members have been asking for another structure. He noted that in June 2008 a committee was formed to assess other voting structure models and then in June 2009, a proposal was brought forward and the committee continued to look at other options. He stated that in November 2009, a new voting structure was put in place and the effects were that the one school, one vote structure was eliminated.

Rick Theis gave a history of lobbying and MRU representation and noted that these are significant reasons why SAMRU should remain in CASA.

Sadiq Valliani noted that there were 27 working days between when SAMRU sent their initial concerns letter and when CASA sent a response letter and also noted that CASA's response letter was received a week later than promised. Arati replied that CASA took our concerns seriously and wanted to take the proper time to develop a strategy and understanding of the issues. Arati noted that they want to ensure that they are working to rectify the concerns of SAMRU.

Holly Mazur stated that the new voting system does not represent smaller schools fairly and asked for an explanation. Arati replied that it is still too early to evaluate the new voting system and noted that they will be reviewing the new voting system's effectiveness collectively.

Troy McLeod asked how CASA is addressing aboriginal students and how they are handling the latest news from Saskatchewan. Arati replied that CASA has a working relationship with First Nations students. Rick Theis stated that in the past two years, CASA has focused on and made it a priority to advocate on behalf of fundings for aboriginal students. Spencer Keys noted that CASA has not taken a specific stance regarding Saskatchewan right now, but will keep looking at it. Troy asked if CASA has any policies in place to anticipate any potential issues with Métis and Inuit funding issues. Spencer replied that they have a program for these students and stated that they recognize the issues and that there needs to be funding outside for non-reserve students.

Meghan Melnyk asked why the consultations regarding the voting structure were not released to this year's delegates. Spencer replied that there was a need to recognize each school fairly because of the disproportionate funding.

Michael Decker asked what the importance of a federal lobbying group is. Rick replied that institutions do not have the resources necessary to lobby, which is why a lobby group is important.

Tegan Smyth asked Arati what her background is. Arati replied that she was a student leader for three years and has been involved in student politics. She stated that she is currently taking online classes to further her education, along with French classes with a tutor. She stated that she has a Political Science undergraduate degree.

Sadiq Valliani asked why the budget is not representative of the membership and asked if there was a lack of communication within the organization around this. Arati replied that the membership goals change every year and there is a large demand of goals. She also noted that CASA is in capacity with their membership size.

Meghan Melnyk noted that the travel budget of \$22,000 was used up in December and noted that not all schools were visited, but BC was visited on three separate trips. Arati replied that they visited three different schools in BC and also visited BC on one occasion

because they were trying to retain that school's membership. She stated that there was also an increase in members between when they determined the budget and now. She stated that they were trying to be selective in which schools they visited, as well as trying to stay within the budget. Arati stated that they hope to visit MRU after the lobby conference in March.

Students' Council thanked the CASA staff for joining the meeting.

Arati stated that she hopes to continue the dialogue and noted that any follow-up questions can be emailed directly to her.

(Rick Theis, Jillian Flake, Spencer Keys and Arati Sharma left the meeting)

5.0 Dinner

Motion: To recess for 15 minutes.

Fadwa Khourieh/Sadiq Valliani

Carried

6.0 New Business

6.1 Executive Goals Assessment Report

Robert Jones noted that the report has been attached that are a compilation of the goals identified by the Executive Committee at the beginning of their term last May.

Erin Delamont noted that there are both group goals and individual goals in the report.

Marcy Fogal noted that the goals in the report were identified during the summer planning sessions, the summer staff planning retreat that EC attended, the May EC retreat and goals that were noted during last year's budget process.

Jennifer Langille asked if the ongoing and in progress goals will be completed. Erin replied that it depends on the goal and stated that some won't be achieved this year because of timing or because they are long-term goals to pass onto the next EC.

Sadiq Valliani noted that the goal regarding bringing in a 5th Executive has been deferred and asked for an explanation. Travis replied that the main reason why this has been deferred is due to timing. He noted that it would have significant budgetary implications, but they would still like to bring the idea forward for future ECs to evaluate. He also noted that they would like to re-evaluate the ECPPP first.

Sadiq Valliani asked if the goals will be given to the future Executive Committee through a report. Travis replied that the outgoing Executives will definitely give their recommendations to the next EC.

Marcy Fogal noted that ongoing refers to work that should always continue and that does not necessarily have a start and finish or will ever end.

Erin Delamont noted that an example of something that was deferred was the MRU faculty code of conduct because the reality is that this is a huge project and maybe should not be coming from students. She noted that this was a goal that was made at the beginning of the year that had been an idea passed on from previous VP Academics, but upon further evaluation, they decided it was not a priority.

Meghan Melnyk asked about the goal referring to an Advocacy Centre. Travis replied that this was an idea for a student centre that focused on advocacy, but with the hiring of the new researcher, a lot of this work can be achieved through the researcher's support. Travis also noted that because our ASEC affiliations have been strengthened this year, they have provided a lot of advocacy resources to SAMRU.

Marcy Fogal noted that since all of next year's Executive Committee is either currently on EC or SC, it will be easy to pass on the goal information.

Motion: To table the EC goals assessment report to the next Council meeting in order to give Council more time to review.

Keeli Elaschuk/Holly Mazur

Carried

7.0 Generative Governance Topic Discussion

Governance Best Practices & Lessons Learned

Robert Jones explained that Council has come a long way from the beginning of the term and have learned a lot and gained lots of experience. He stated that the purpose of the discussion is to explore what is best in governance, what is a good board meeting, what they wish they had known and what they wished they had gotten from the Executive Committee. He noted that previous agendas and meeting feedback have been provided for reference materials.

Students' Council met in 4 individual groups and then each group reported the following on the discussion:

Group 1:

Best Practices:

- This year is better than last year and are succinct in their discussions
- They meetings are shorter this year
- Committees have been struck
- Ambitious Council this year
- This Council has realized limitations

Lessons learned:

- The work can be intimidating and public speaking is difficult
- There should be a definition of roles for Councilors and Commissioners
- The point person meetings are a great accomplishment – gives access to information and time to ask questions
- Want to look at raising the prestige of Council

Group 2:

Best Practices:

- Point person meetings very good
- Very capable EC this year
- A solid governance structure
- EC did a good job educating SC
- The Executive Director is a great resource
- The agenda structure is better this year

Lessons Learned:

- Need job descriptions for Councilors and Commissioners
- Need to review the workload of EC and try to delegate some of work to Commissioners
- Should make it mandatory for Councilors to attend the first faculty meetings
- Nice to have a mid-year report from EC to know where they are at

- Small order forms are nice
- Good for EC to respond to feedback sheets

Group 3:

- Strike a sub-committee to define job descriptions for SC
- Have a mixer event with the old and new SC
- Have an introduction of the SAMRU with all of staff to inform of roles
- Accomplished effective meetings
- It is important to stress the importance of volunteering expectations
- Important to understand work cycle
- It would be helpful to prioritize reading material in importance
- Commissioner positions could be appointed in the Spring so that they can train and work with EC over the summer

Group 4:

Best Practices:

- Time management skills development: Roberts' Rules training and point person meetings
- SC meetings have been well mediated
- There has been good SC participation with events and meetings
- There has been good communication between SC & EC
- The dinners have been really good
- Election promotion was well done

Start:

- Encourage students to attend SC meetings
- Budget training at initial retreat
- Roberts' Rules reference cards instead of books
- Hold a one-day winter retreat
- Hold a student appreciation night for networking

Eily Sweeney noted that regarding the winter SC retreat, they have decided not to hold this because Councilors have been asked to dedicate so much of their time to strategic planning this year, but she noted that they are looking to have an evening for Councilors where they will have a dinner and hold an assessment discussion.

Erin Delamont also noted that there has been a lot of interest from Council to form a sub-committee to develop the roles and responsibilities outline for Council. She stated that if Councilors want to initiate this committee, they are welcome to create a terms of reference for the committee direction and bring it to EC. Marcy Fogal noted that a draft may already exist for this and she will look into it.

8.0 Announcements

8.1 Committee Updates

Fadwa Hourieh noted that ECPPPC hasn't had an official meeting yet, but they were able to meet today to elect Holly Mazur as the chair and Keeli Elaschuk as the vice-chair.

Marcy Fogal noted that John Hadley has volunteered to be a staff resource for the committee as they want to provide some insight on past practices and challenges, as well as to help them frame their policy ideas. Travis McIntosh noted that the Executive Committee will be getting together this week to bring together their recommendation to the policies for the committee, which will be a good perspective of those who use the policies. Holly Mazur suggested that the committee personally meet with EC to discuss their ideas, or else suggested that they submit them in writing.

Eily Sweeney reported that the CEC met and determined four main priorities for the semester, which include:

1. Election Awareness: Have created a letter to be sent to instructors to promote elections in classrooms
2. Day of Caring: Tommy Lieu has volunteered to lead this initiative
3. Exam Relief: Working to get sponsorship and hope to potentially get this for the free breakfast program as well
4. Students' Council Day: Reflection on the year

Eily thanked everyone for their help with election awareness.

8.2 Elections

Erin Delamont reminded Councilors that this week is voting and all Councilors should encourage students to vote. She noted that cookies are going to be given out while supplies last and all students can enter to win \$250. Keeli Elaschuk asked if online students will be entered into the contest. Marcy confirmed they will be.

Erin invited all Councilors to attend the election results announcement in the Liberty Lounge on Wednesday night.

8.3 ASEC Campaign

Robert Jones explained that he sent an email last week regarding the ASEC event this coming Thursday that is in response to the Alberta budget cuts to be announced this week. He explained that he will be meeting with the beaurcrats this week to discuss the cuts. Robert stated that the ASEC campaign will be an all day event with booths on Main Street and encouraged all Councilors to come and help out. He explained that fortune cookies will be offered to students to give the opportunity to write to the Advanced Minister of Education and everyone in the legislature. He noted that there will be a large poster for students to sign and the theme will be around what you would do for post-secondary education if you were the government.

Jermyn Voon asked if this will count towards volunteer hours. Robert confirmed it will because it has to do with representation and advocacy for students.

8.4 Alberta Budget

Robert Jones stated that the budget will be released on February 9th and he will be meeting with Robin Fisher tomorrow to discuss this. He noted that he will report in full at the next Council meeting.

8.5 Eco Challenge

Eily Sweeney announced that MRU will be holding the first ever eco-challenge on campus in March. She noted that it is in collaboration with the SAMRU Sustainability Centre and club and the Mount Royal Sustainability Committee.

She explained that there will be challenges that include bike riding, carpooling and reusable plates that will be counted at points, as well as a recycled funk event at the end of the challenge in the Liberty Lounge.

Eily noted that it would be great for Council to get involved and sign-up will be happening either at the Sustainability Centre or else at the booth on Main Street this week.

8.6 CASA

(Robert Jones left the meeting)

Travis McIntosh gave an update on some of the CASA work he has been involved in, which includes a discussion with CASA regarding communications, budget and governance concerns. He stated that he is also working on consultations and research with the pan-Canadian accord and working with the CASA secretary to look at their governance structure, including trying to draft a board structure into policy. He stated that he would also like to look at introducing a document of their annual work cycle, communications strategy and conference strategies.

(Robert Jones returned to the meeting)

Robert Jones noted that he is currently reviewing CASA's communications with the U of C Vice-president External and are working together to outline problems and looking at simple solution recommendations.

Robert noted that as follow-up from the early CASA discussion, they will evaluate the conversations and discuss in full later.

9.0 Action Items

Motion: Meghan Melnyk will draft the sub-committee terms of reference for the roles and responsibilities of Councilors and Commissioners.

Meghan Melnyk/Fadwa Khourieh

Carried

Michael Decker asked if there are plans for MRU to recruit overseas students. Travis replied that he hasn't heard anything, but will look into it. Kay Asiedu-Nketiah suggested that SAMRU look at creating a scholarship that is targeted towards international students.

10.0 Board Meeting Feedback

11.0 Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Fadwa Khourieh/Jennifer Langille

Carried