Minutes of the ASSU Executive Meeting

Friday February 26th 2021

3pm EST

Present: Ikran Jama (Chair), Paavni Grover, Foti Vito, Emma Davy, Victoria Chen (after 4:22pm EST), Fatemeh Nami, Jane Seto (Executive Coordinator), Gavin Nowlan (Secretary to the Executive)

The meeting was called to order at 3:14pm EST

1. **Approval of the Agenda**

MOVED (Davy/Vito) “To approve the agenda as presented”

\*CARRIED

1. **Approval of the Previous Minutes -Friday Feb 5th 2021**

MOVED (Nami/Davy) “To approve the previous minutes as presented.”

\*CARRIED

1. **Report of the President**

Course Union UTSU Funding

Ikran Jama reported that there was an overture from the UTSU about ways they can collaborate with ASSU on a number of issues. One of them was the ways UTSU and ASSU can work together better to fund course unions out of the UTSU budget. In the previous years, only one ASSU course unions got UTSU funding, which is a drastic change from other years.

Jane Seto asked Jama what sort of advice they are looking for in their own budget process.   
  
Foti Vito asked whether UTSU was interested in setting up a separate fund for course unions or was this going to come out of regular clubs funding. Vito said Course Unions should be eligible for regular funds.

Jama said that they would get more information from the relevant people at UTSU to find out what budget issues they are trying to ameliorate.

ASSUxUTSU Events

Jama asked the Executive whether they would be interested in jointly hosting events with UTSU including a jeopardy event where course union could compete.

Jama reported that UTSU wants to jointly host a final year end speaker and asked the Exec if they would be interested in doing a joint event. Fatemeh Nami asked whether UTSU can let the Exec know who they are thinking of booking. Emma Davy asked whether the UTSU could let the Exec know the general budget for an event so the Exec can think about speakers.

Black History Month Speakers Series

Ikran Jama reported that the speaker’s series that finishes tonight has been going great. The Varsity has reached out to ASSU to write a report on the speakers.

Mental Health Meditation Sessions

Jama reported that they were still unsure about supporting this event because of the connections with the foundation behind the group.

1. **Report of the Executive**

Emma Davy reported that the latest edition of the Podcast is being edited right now and it is going to be great. Marth and Emma did a breakdown of first year advice for students.

Foti Vito reported that the next issue of Arbor is ready to go and looks amazing. The design is amazing, and Vito and Davy are so happy how it turns out.

MOVED (Davy/Vito) “To give a $75 gift card for the design of the journal to Larissa Eland”   
  
\*CARRIED

Vito reported that he had not had any luck in securing a speaker for that final speaker event of the year.   
  
Jama asked whether the event could be during the day so it could be scheduled at the same day of the Open House

Fatemeh Nami reported that the Hart House Music Committee wants to co-host the open mic with ASSU. Nami reports that the way it is scheduled is a little different, but they have come to a compromise where there is partly a scheduled program, and partly a open session where folks could drop in and preform.

1. **Report of the Executive Staff**

Jane Seto reported that she is sending out the next newsletter this weekend. Execs should send in their info before the weekend.   
  
CR/NCR proposal

There are so many students still messaging the union about the proposal to change the rules regarding CR/NCR for program requirements for this semester. The Exec should make a public statement to let students know that this proposal is not going to be adopted by the Faculty this year.

Office Opening

The office is still closed because the lockdown is ongoing, but when the Province lifts the order what hours should the office be open?

Honoraria for BHM speakers

Jane Seto asked what sort of honoraria should be given to our speaker? Bernice Carnegie’s usual speakers fee is $1500 but she knows that this is a small union but still expects something from the Exec.   
  
MOVED (Jama/Davy) “to give an honoraria of $750 to Bernice Carnegie”   
  
\*CARRIED

MOVED (Jama/Vito) “To give a gift card of $100 to Nedège Compoaré”   
  
\*CARRIED

Gavin Nowlan asked the Exec what the mood among students was at this point in the term. There have been a number of posts and messages that indicate that students have reached a wall this semester.

1. **Budgetary Process with the Faculty**

(Victoria Chen joined the meeting at 4:22pm EST)

The Dean has reached out to ASSU about being involved with the budgetary process. This is in light of the ASSU, CSSU, and UTSU campaign to limit the program fee in Computer Science. The Dean has asked for two members of ASSU to sit in on the budget process during the summer.   
  
Nami said that the Dean’s office should host a town hall of course union leaders to give their feedback to the process. Vito said that the Dean might not be as candid in a larger meeting even with course union reps. Nami said that maybe two separate meetings might make sense. Nami also said that the Exec could present the discussion with the Dean at a special ASSU council meeting. Jama said that it is super important the Exec reach out to students in general. Nowlan raised the question of how much actual feedback is the Dean looking for, or is this process more of an informational exercise. Jama said that this question could be raised at the next Dean’s meeting.

1. Constitution

Ikran Jama raised the issue of the deadline for submitting constitutional amendments to ASSU council is this upcoming Wednesday. The discussion surrounding ex-officio Course Unions is something that the ASSU Exec want to see past this year. The two main questions are whether these course unions would have two votes on council and whether they should get their full budget.

Jama reiterated that ASSU wants to support theses course unions who have lost their status over the years due to lack of enrollment, especially the smaller programs like Caribbean Studies.

Vito argued that maybe it is easier to give these course unions voting rights rather than money. Then there would not be a need to have other rules regarding one or two votes.

Chen asked to clarify whether this would mean extending all ex-officio course unions two votes.   
  
Foti said that yes they would have full voting rights and that making them have voting rights would not make a huge difference in council meetings.   
  
Nami raised the point that these ex-officio seats having rights would have a large impact on council and extending these rights to these small course unions would give them the same representation as large rights, which is giving them an outsized voice on council when compared to the size of their student population.

Grover asked whether it could be done in a ratio, where course unions closer to 50 get full rights and those further from 50 get one.

Jama said that instead of trying to complicate things with these types of rules, all ex-officio should have only one vote.

Vito said that ex-officio means they do not have voting rights like in Faculty Council and they should get full rights or nothing.

Jane Seto began a discussion on whether the ex-officio Course Unions would get full funding? Seto said that ASSU should be giving them funding for some things to try to raise support within the Faculty for these programs. Seto said that some of these programs are shrinking because of lack of support from the Faculty. Seto was not sure what sort of funding would be available because this can be changed at a later date.   
  
For voting, Seto brought up that originally it was only going to be Presidents who could sit ex-officio   
  
Jama said that the Exec would draft different versions of a proposal to ASSU council and the Exec would reconvene Monday afternoon to go over these proposals.

Nami asked whether there is something where lower year students could be protected as a position. Nowlan brought up the Fall by-elections as where in the past lower year students would have been elected. But there is nothing in the Constitution which says lower year students have to be elected at this meeting.   
  
Jama raised the issue of proposing making an Honorarium for Executives in the Constitution. The issue is whether it is worth it to propose this change for this year.   
  
The discussion ended without a decision and the Exec were going to come back on Monday with their constitutional proposals.

1. Other Business
2. Adjournment

MOVED (Grover/Vito) “To adjourn”   
  
\*CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 5:06pm EST