



# STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF MACEWAN UNIVERSITY

Minutes for the Students' Council Meeting of the  
Students' Association of MacEwan University  
January 19, 2022 at 6:00pm via Zoom

---

## Voting Members:

Gabriel Ambutong, Councillor  
Abby Beka, Councillor  
Freja Cartujano, Councillor  
Thomas Cross-Trush, Vice President Student Life  
Jayden Depeel, Councillor  
Myles Dykes, President  
Jordan Gable, Councillor  
Alex Hominiuk, Councillor  
Lisa Kotelniski, Councillor  
Joseph A. La Torre, Councillor  
Nhi Phan, Councillor  
Kendell Semotiuk, Councillor  
Rayyah Sempala, Councillor

Asif Siddiqui, Councillor  
Alem Tesfay, Councillor  
Elaine Tran, Councillor  
Larissa Williams, Vice President Operations  
and Finance  
Matt Yanish, Vice President External

*SAMU Officials and Council Support:*  
Timothy Jobs, Chair  
Alan Honey, Governance Advisor  
Samantha Callaghan, Administrative Coordinator

---

Meeting called to order at 6:00pm.

## 1. Treaty 6 Land Recognition

We would like to acknowledge that this meeting of the Students' Association of MacEwan University is taking place on the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 6 region in Central Alberta.

The Students' Association of MacEwan University is situated in the centre of what we call the city of Edmonton, which is called Amiskwacyi Waskahikan or Beaver Hill House in Nehiyawewin (Cree). This is the traditional home of the Nehiyaw (Cree) and Michif (Métis), and meeting place for many Indigenous peoples including the Nakawe (Saulteaux), Siksika (Blackfoot), Nakota Sioux (Stoney) and other nations.

## 2. Approvals

**2.1 MOTION** **TO APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR JANUARY 19, 2022**

**SIDDIQUI/HOMINIUK**

**CARRIED**

**2.2 MOTION** **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 15, 2021**

**PHAN/VPO**

**CARRIED**

## 3. Presentations

**3.1. Wellness and Psychological Services (Pres)**

- Presentation from Tory Pino.

## 4. For Information

**4.1. Reports**

**4.1.1. President**

Interim Vpa update. Covid-19 and course modality.

#### **4.1.2. Vice President External**

As presented

#### **4.1.3. Vice President Operations & Finance**

As presented.

#### **4.1.4. Vice President Student Life**

As presented

#### **4.1.5. Appointment Advisory Committee**

As presented

#### **4.1.6. Audit Committee**

As presented.

#### **4.1.7. Bylaws and Policy Committee**

As presented.

#### **4.1.8. Budget and Finance Committee**

As presented.

#### **4.1.9. Executive Committee**

As presented.

#### **4.1.10. Governance Remuneration Advisory Committee**

As presented.

#### **4.1.11. Leadership and Review Committee**

Exit interviews complete – will provide summary at next LRC meeting.

#### **4.2. Executive Committee Minutes**

Minutes of December 1 and 16, 2021 provided.

### **5. Question Period**

#### **5.1. Written Questions**

La Torre - Can the president or Vp ops talk about the priorities discussed in the Deans and Associate Deans meeting?

Pres – The VP Academic and myself met with the all the Deans to introduce ourselves and share priorities. For SAMU, we shared our priorities that are included in our Strategic Plan as well as elected priorities of the Executive Committee such as equity, diversity and inclusion in classrooms, engaging the student community and more. Some common themes from the Deans when they shared their priorities were around equity, diversity and inclusion in hiring practices, program curriculum reviews and pedagogy, faculty resourcing, and more.

La Torre - **CAUS Organizing and Public Engagement Committee:** What were the campaigns discussed in the meeting to get the government and public to see the value of post-secondary education in our province?

Vpe - Great question! While we cannot divulge specific details until CAUS agrees upon a strategy, some of the things that have been done in the past are: organized provincial budget protests at the legislature grounds in light of the 21% of increases at MacEwan (over 3 years) back in 2019, the Public Interest Alberta collaboration on “#StopPseCuts”

(<https://www.pialberta.org/stopsecuts>), and the very famous “penguin protest” that my predecessor worked very hard on (<https://edmonton.ctvnews.ca/tripping-hazard-protest-penguins-destroyed-at-alberta-legislature-grounds-1.5291893>). There are certainly other routes we could take, such as general advertising campaigns focused on not cutting student supports or increasing tuition, or very specific ones such as lobbying public support for a particular aspect of PSE. I will be sure to share with you all my answer when CAUS has decided on one.

**La Torre - Mandatory Non-Instructional Fee:** Is there a statistic or usage rate of how much students use SAMU Supports? If so, is the service being underutilized? And how could we increase its utilization?

Pres - The mandatory non-instructional fee for mental health is a fee that will be levied by MacEwan University, not by SAMU. As the official student representatives, the new mandatory non-instructional fee requires our approval per the regulations of the Post-secondary Learning Act. This fee will not be tied to any of SAMU's resources that are available to students, such as our supports. If Council would like more information surrounding usage of SAMU supports, please let Executive Committee know and we can look to get that data.

**La Torre - Student Board of Governors Representative Policy:** What is the reasoning for removing clause 6.2 in the policy? Doesn't its removal create further ambiguity on the attendance of meetings for the Bog representative?

Vpo – Hi thanks for the question, I will tackle this question in two parts, the first being regarding the concern for the ambiguity of meeting attendance for the BoG Rep and secondly on the rationale of removing clause 6.2.

Regarding meeting attendance, Clause 4 of the policy it states that:  
*“The Board of Governors Student Representative retains all the rights and participates in Students' Council orientation and training sessions in the same capacity as a Councillor during their term as a Councillor.”*

This means that during the time that the BoG Rep and Councillor terms overlap, the individual partakes in Students' Council events/meetings as a Councillor, where the requirement is to attend every Students' Council meeting.

Once their term as a Councillor ends, if they are not reappointed or elected, they become a non-voting resource official as stated in clause 6. Clause 6.1 outlines their responsibility to attend meetings where they have submitted a report.

I believe if we wanted to ensure there is no ambiguity, we could make an amendment to clause 6 and 6.1 to specify that we are talking about Students' Council in these clauses by stating:

**“6** The Board of Governors Student Representative will become a non-voting resource official **to Students' Council** at the end of their Councillor term if not re-elected or appointed

**6.1** As a non-voting resource official the Board of Governors Student Representative is required to attend all **Students' Council** meetings where a report is provided and be available to answer questions.”

Clause 6.2 Specifically covers the mandatory orientation and training sessions of Students Council. This clause was removed because mandatory training sessions/orientation happens twice a year. Once in October for New Council Orientation and once in April for the Students Council Refresher. In regards to the BoG Rep's appointed term, they would be a Councillor during the April transition meaning that they would be required to attend anyways and if they did not they would be removed from Council. During the October Training if the BoG Rep was not re-elected to Council, they would be a non-voting resource and therefore won't be required to attend the New Councillor Orientation as they would not be a Councillor, though an invite to attend would be extended to the BoG Rep.

Given this, I personally don't believe that removing this clause creates ambiguity, but it is up for Council to debate.

Cartujano - For VPE - Is there more information regarding the “feasibility of making university campuses in Alberta distribution hubs for rapid tests and N95's”? During my isolation, I noticed a lack of rapid kit tests available for the public. So, how likely will universities be to provide it for students when the province doesn't have a decent supply of rapid kit tests?

Vpe – Thank you for the question! In short, Alberta is going to receive millions more rapid tests and masks, but they are having a really hard time distributing them equitably. Rachel and I, as representing CAUS (and therefore 140k+ university students), are hopeful that our campuses or student associations can aid in the distribution of these safety measures. We would not be procuring tests or masks ourselves, rather, we are liaising with the Ministry of Advanced Education to see if they can work with the Ministry of Health to distribute these incoming tests to students via campuses (even if classes are still mostly online). In theory, this would take 140k+ Albertans away from unnecessarily lining up at pharmacies across the province (easing the availability of tests for all other Albertans), make the tests and masks easier for students as a transit-reliant population, and ensure that we are giving our university students the same reassurances that the province is affording its primary school students. For all the same reasons that it makes sense to give students K-12 masks and tests at their place of education, the same goes for university students.

Tran – For President: Are there plans to host the Executive Forum as a recurring event, especially as the updates about the return to campus continue to be undisclosed and seemingly without students' input/voices?

Pres - At this moment, there are no plans for the Executive Forum to be reoccurring. This project was part of my campaign platform when elected. If the Executive Forum is successful this year, I will recommend to next year's Executive Committee to continue on with it but it will ultimately be up to them. After two years of a successful Executive project, we generally look to see how it can be included into the budget for the year following.

Tran – For President: In the event that students are unable to attend the Executive Forum, what is the best email to contact for follow-up/questions, especially in regard to pandemic-related events?

Pres - Students can use the Contact Form on the SAMU website to follow-up or ask questions, as well as reaching out to us at our emails. The Executive Forum will also be livestreamed on Facebook, meaning there will be a copy of the footage after the event has ended.

Tran – For President: Since your letter on November 30, 2021, has there been an update on where the \$5 million collected from students has been redistributed? If so, where can the information be found?

Pres - Unfortunately, there is no update to give regarding the \$5 million. The university is still in the process of constructing the budget, meaning no formal allocations have been made. The Board of Governors will approve the next budget before April, which will be when the formal allocations have been approved. Even with the budget being approved, there may not be a straight-forward answer on how the funds are used. The \$5 million generated from the tuition increase for next year contributes to the university's gross revenue rather than being a segregated fund, which is why it becomes difficult to know where the allocations are made.

Tran - For VP External: In your report, you mentioned that Mount Royal University (MRU) in Calgary utilizes unused dorms for emergency student housing. Could you provide more information on the program?

Vpe - The long and short of it is that students are able to access temporary housing that is less disruptive to their education, and this is done at little to no cost for the students in question by using some vacant residence housing. Unfortunately, beyond that, I cannot update much else, as such a thing was only mentioned to me in passing. However, I have a meeting booked to discuss this further with Rachel, and I can surely give you an update when we have the meeting.

Tran – For Vpe: In the case that a similar program is implemented, would there be additional costs for students who access the service or in terms of additional mandatory non-instructional fees for the student population overall?

Vpe - It is my sincere hope that we can develop this idea (of student emergency housing) and bring it forward to changemakers before the end of the semester. Assuming we are able to do this, I am not interested in such a program if it means levying additional fees from students. Part of what makes this so appealing to me as an advocacy priority (both to municipal actors as well as MacEwan administration), is that it would be low cost as it uses rooms that are currently not occupied anyways. If this turns out to not be the case, or the cost is somehow significant, then the priority needs to be reworked in a way that does not add yet another fee for students to pay, but potentially asks for less.

Tran – For Vpe: On a similar note, what are the current student housing supports available to students who are facing homelessness/houselessness provided by SAMU?

Vpe - Unfortunately, there are no direct housing supports that are offered by SAMU (and none that I am aware of from MacEwan), and this is partially why housing itself has been such a research priority for me this year. However, I am very proud of what SAMU does offer through The Pantry, SAMU Cares, and SAMU awards. Even though none of these are housing-specific, they all are very significant ways we take financial burdens off of students and make housing more attainable as a result.

I will also say that there is a side-of-my-desk priority that involves setting up a PO box of sorts for students to send packages to, and for SAMU to hold onto them for students for them to pick up the packages at their convenience. This would allow for students in precarious or unsafe living arrangements (without a permanent or private address) to be able to still access the billion dollar world of affordable online shopping to meet their basic needs. At the moment, the legal/liability considerations have yet to be done, as well as determining a permanent space for said packages, so this is very much a project that is “still on the drawing board”.

Tran – For VP Operations and Finance: Can you elaborate on the meeting with Dr. Craig Monk, specifically in regard to class modality and student mental health?

Vpe - Hi, thanks for the question. This meeting with Dr. Monk happened our first day back in office and was the first meeting I had had with him in the place of the VP Academic, so the majority of the meeting was spent with me questioning Dr. Monk on the norms of these meetings and figuring out what was normally discussed as there wasn't much in regards to notes for these meetings. This meeting also took place before we heard from a significant number of students and before the facebook pages got really saturated with student concerns in regards to course modality. Though the President and I in preparation for the meeting had went searching for any student concerns for me to bring to Dr. Monk. The big theme was Course Modality flexibility given that students were nervous about coming back to campus on January 21st. I had informed Dr. Monk that we were beginning to hear some concerns in regards to course modality and return to campus and told him that as we begin a new term with uncertainty yet again that the university and specifically faculty should be flexible because while the uncertainty the pandemic brings to the future cannot be controlled, it takes a heavy toll on our students' mental health which is already and still continues to decline due to the pandemic.

Tran - General: Over the last few years, a member of the Executive Committee has left their position before the completion of their term. Will there be measures/safeguards to be implemented in the future to ensure the stability and success of the individuals on EC?

Vpo - Hi, thanks for the question. Unfortunately, as per the democratic nature of our elections there are no concrete, fail-safe ways we can safeguard this. Though a member of EC has left office before the completion of their terms the past few years, their absences have all been due to different situations. The best thing that we can try to safeguard is transition by ensuring that whoever steps into the role is as prepared for the position as can be.

Speaking as the Chair of BPC the Governance Transition Policy is something that is on the docket coming up and the hope is to have it updated before Executive transition begins, as this is something that I, personally, can provide a unique perspective on as I was an incoming executive whose outgoing executive was on leave during the time of transition.

Speaking as Vice President Operations and Finance, I believe that the process of appointing an Interim Executive will help in the success of members of Executive Committee who are in this position in the future as we have now developed a process to have another individual step in and take on some of the responsibilities of the role. Filling the position with an interim appointment is not something that has been done before and there was no process in place as usually the remaining executives split up the workload of the portfolio. This Executive Committee took the time to develop a process that will be able to withstand the test of time and can provide the Executive Committee with another option that has an established process and would only need to be tweaked to fit the given circumstances if this situation arises again.

## **5.2. Oral Questions**

Topics include: Week of Wellness & advertising; “digital warehouse’ idea from LRC; Psychological & Wellness Services/MNIF; municipal advocacy; Winterfest postponement; GovWeek;

## **6. In Camera Period**

### **7. Motions & Business Orders of the Day**

#### **7.1. MacEwan Mental Health Mandatory Non-Instructional Fee**

***MOTION TO APPROVE MACEWAN UNIVERSITY'S PROPOSAL FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW MENTAL HEALTH MANDATORY NON-INSTRUCTIONAL FEE BEGINNING THE 2022/23 ACADEMIC YEAR AT A RATE OF \$7.00 PER STUDENT PER TERM TO ENABLE MACEWAN UNIVERSITY TO INCREASE THE LEVEL OF MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AND CRISIS RESPONSE SERVICES***

***PRES/SIDDIQUI***

Favour: Kotelniski, Ambutong, Beka, Cartujano, Depeel, Gable, Hominiuk, La Torre, Phan, Semotiuk, Sempala, Siddiqui, Tesfay, Tran, Pres, Vpe, Vpo, Vpsl

***CARRIED***

#### **7.2. Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Governors Student Representative policy**

***MOTION TO APPROVE THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE POLICY ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE BYLAWS AND POLICY COMMITTEE***

***VPO/VPE***

Favour: Kotelniski, Ambutong, Beka, Cartujano, Depeel, Gable, Hominiuk, La Torre, Phan, Semotiuk, Sempala, Siddiqui, Tesfay, Tran, Pres, Vpe, Vpo, Vpsl

***CARRIED***

#### **7.3. Students' Council Meetings policy**

***MOTION TO APPROVE THE STUDENTS' COUNCIL MEETINGS POLICY***

***VPO/VPSL***

Favour: Kotelniski, Ambutong, Beka, Cartujano, Depeel, Gable, Hominiuk, La Torre, Phan, Semotiuk, Sempala, Siddiqui, Tesfay, Tran, Pres, Vpe, Vpo, Vpsl

***CARRIED***

#### **7.4. Bylaws and Policy Committee**

Nominees: Depeel, Kotelniski

***MOTION TO APPOINT COUNCILLOR KOTELNISKI TO THE BYLAWS AND POLICY COMMITTEE***

**VPO/VPSL**

Favour: Kotelniski, Ambutong, Beka, Cartujano, Depeel, Gable, Hominiuk, La Torre, Phan, Semotiuk, Sempala, Siddiqui, Tesfay, Tran, Pres, Vpe, Vpo, Vpsl

**CARRIED**

**8. Consultation**

**9. Evaluation**

**10. Recognition**

**11. Adjournment**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**SIDDIQUI**

**CARRIED**

Next Meeting Date: January 21, 2022

Meeting adjourned at 7:51pm