



STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF MACEWAN UNIVERSITY

**Minutes for the Students' Council Meeting of the
Students' Association of MacEwan University
February 15, 2023 at 6:00pm in Council Chamber**

Voting Members:

Gabriel Ambutong, Councillor
Jakob Cardinal, Councillor
Freja Cartujano, Councillor
Jayden Depeel, Councillor
Myles Dykes, President
Cierra Jacobs, Councillor
Joseph A. La Torre, Councillor
Nhi Phan, Councillor
Rayyah Sempala, Councillor
Justine Tan, Councillor
Alem Tesfay, Councillor
Elaine Tran, Vice President Student Life
Stephan Vasquez, Vice President Academic
Larissa Williams, Vice President Operations

and Finance
Matt Yanish, Vice President External
Sonia Yusuf, Councillor
Layal Zidan, Councillor

SAMU Officials and Council Support:
Timothy Jobs, Chair
Darryl Kostash, General Manager
Alan Honey, Governance Advisor
Grace Tsang, Admin Support

Absent:

Abby Beka, Councillor
Mary-Excel Okey-Nwaka, Councillor

Meeting called to order at 6:00pm.

<Intros>

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 Amiskwaciy 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 FEBRUARY 15, 2023

PHAN/TAN

MOTION

TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO ADD "7.5 REMUNERATION OF ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES POLICY"

VPO/PRES

CARRIED

CARRIED

2.2 MOTION

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 18, 2023

JACOBS/AMBUTONG

CARRIED

3. Presentations

4. For Information

4.1. Reports

4.1.1. President

As presented.

4.1.2. Vice President Academic

As presented.

4.1.3. Vice President External

Speaking tomorrow at 11am on GOA announcement in advance of budget.

4.1.4. Vice President Operations & Finance

Reminder of budgeting orientation on Friday. Bylaws submission went out today.

4.1.5. Vice President Student Life

Focus group reminder for Friday. Resource warehouse reminder.

4.1.6. Town Hall (VP Operations & Finance)

As presented.

4.2. Executive Committee Minutes

Minutes of January 11, 16, & 25, 2023 provided.

5. Question Period

5.1. Written Questions

Tesfay - In the report, you mentioned your conversation regarding AI, specifically ChatGPT. What resulted from the discussion on how the university can integrate something like ChatGPT into our curriculum? Thank you

Vpa – The conversation revolved around how algorithms, like ChatGPT, are affecting academic participation by students through essay writing. After attending a virtual symposium in Australia, Most universities globally are in the early stages of choosing which path they want to take towards either accepting, ignoring, or combating AI plagiarism and research assistance. Most instructors highlighted how students are being robbed of essay writing skills by relying on algorithms to generate text. However, the AI research assistant website “[elicit.org](https://www.elicit.org)” was also presented as a possible addition to student tools for success. Some speculated that websites like ChatGPT could soon cost money, thus requiring policy on AI plagiarism or moving away from essays in-favour of spoken exams. I countered that AI assisted research and text generation is “out of the bottle” and should be integrated into our pedagogy. How exactly this can be done in a fair, balanced manner is still under discussion with the Committee on Teaching & Learning. Thank you.

Ambutong - How will the budget reallocation affect the other departments?

Vpsl – The budget reallocation will have no effect on other SAMU departments. In other departments, money has been saved/not spent, so reallocation is only occurring within SAMU's total budget.

La Torre – Vpe: From your meeting with the ministry and their agreement, that affordability is still a paramount concern for students, what, then, is expected to come in the budget drop on February 28th?

Vpe - Well, we do not know as of yet, but we are hoping to see the ministry announce financial supports for students in light of the affordability crisis we are in the middle of right now, and how students are very hard hit by that. Specifically, we would want to see more up-front needs-based grants, an increase to the Alberta Grant for Full Time Students (the grant that ran out last year), and

some reductions in interest rates on Alberta student loans. Hopefully we will see those come through on the 28th.

La Torre – Vpo: Is the School of Continuing Education open to the SAMU affiliate status change? And further, have any preliminary goals or ends been discussed, or at the very least, been alluded to?

Vpo - The School of Continuing Education has been consulted and informed of the change. I will not speak for them but I will say that at the end of the day, we as an organization have the duty to ensure that we are abiding by all legislation and therefore the matter of whether they are open to the change or not is not of concern. We are working with them to ensure we continue to provide our in-house programs, services and events to the students within the programs affected.

La Torre – Vpo: From the building feedback form, the results were very insightful; however, that said, what will SAMU do with this information other than space optimization? And will there be more opportunities for students to fill out feedback forms in the future pertaining to the SAMU building and how it can be optimized for students?

Vpo - As stated in the town hall report the feedback form was used to get a pulse on the student perspective on the building now that students have been on campus for a full term. There wasn't much in regards to feedback based on the second question asked that would have been where we could potentially make more movement. In regards to future feedback forms there will not be one within the remainder of my term.

La Torre – Vpo: Does the allocation of funds from the savings of other departments to the Pantry and Breakfast club have any potential risks?

Vpo – As stated in the submissions there are no potential risks to the allocation of funds. We are underspending on some budget lines in other departments, so the reallocation is only occurring within the total budget.

Phan - Vpe: I believe Francis Widdowson gave some controversial remarks on BLM movements and residential schools, would that hypothetically make affordability less critical in the planning for post-se education (which gladly is not the case this time)? and why?

Vpe – Hypothetically, yes, the media (and by extension, the ministry), has the potential to focus on Francis and her inflammatory actions, rather than the students who are struggling to make ends meet. Why? Well, because the idea that “free speech” is under attack makes for a more interesting news story than yet another group of people adversely impacted by inflation.

Phan - Vpe: It seems like International students won't be able to work beyond 20h/week next year, do you have any update on that?

Vpe – While I do not have an update, this is not abnormal: the federal government has told us that they are testing this right now, and they hope to see this lifted cap on work hours reap benefits for Canada. Unless there is some major problem encountered with the program, I imagine we will see an update after this semester is over. Last I heard, they were waiting to see how a year of it goes, and so we will have to wait 'till around May at the earliest.

Phan - Vpo: SCE student: What are some of the concerns regarding the legal authority to represent SCE students? How do other schools such as UofT support their SCE students? Even though SCE students are not undergraduate students, they pay full tuition fee and utilize the facility 5 days per week, isn't it under the scope of inclusivity and diversity pillars that SAMU stands for?

Vpo - Based on our lawyer's feedback after they reviewed our Bylaws, MacEwan's related policies and most importantly the Post-Secondary Learning Act, it was deemed that we do not have the legal authority to represent students who are enrolled in non-credit classes:

"93(2) Each students association is a corporation and consists of the students of the public post- secondary institution, other than students enrolled only in non-credit courses"

They may pay MacEwan tuition but they do not pay SAMU fees to the same extent that General Members do and remember, we are a separate entity from the University.

Please consider that this is not about how we feel, though I understand where Council is coming from, this change is solely about the legality of the status. We intend to continue to provide programming, events and services for these students, which does not contradict the pillars of our organization, we are just ensuring that we are aligning with the law.

UofT is not a great comparison as they are four times our size, and do not have legislation ensuring their existence like we do here in Alberta. I will instead discuss how Mount Royal University / SAMRU supports their SCE students as they are our sister school of sorts. And the answer is: they don't (really). At Mount Royal the SCE students are not Members, they are affiliates. They do not pay fees but also don't have unrestricted access to SAMRU programs, events, and services.

5.2. Oral Questions

Topics include: SAMU ED platform; Pizza & portfolios event; AI symposium & ChatGBT; Resource warehouse; Focus group on Friday; EC election; Healthy Relationships Week; CASA & their EDI strategic plan; University Design for Learning(UDL); budget reallocation; transit safety and students; Edmonton city budgeting; ConEd students & representation; student affordability & MacEwan tuition; SAMU events; SAMU building investments; SAMU relationships with other SA/SUs; exec reports accountability; disadvantaged community people on campus;

6. In Camera Period

6.1

7. Motions & Business Orders of the Day

7.1. Breakfast Club – Request for Additional Funds

MOTION TO APPROVE AN UNBUDGETED EXPENDITURE OF AN ADDITIONAL \$12,000.00 TO G/L 534100 FOR BREAKFAST CLUB

VPSL/PHAN

Favour: Zidan, La Torre, Ambutong, Tan, Cartujano, Sempala, Yusuf, Depeel, Phan, Jacobs, Cardinal, Tesfay, Vpo, Vpsl, Vpa, Pres, Vpe

CARRIED

7.2. The Pantry – Request for Additional Funds

MOTION TO APPROVE AN UNBUDGETED EXPENDITURE OF AN ADDITIONAL \$12000.00 TO G/L 535540 FOR THE PANTRY

VPSL/VPO

Favour: Zidan, La Torre, Ambutong, Tan, Cartujano, Sempala, Yusuf, Depeel, Phan, Jacobs, Cardinal, Tesfay, Vpo, Vpsl, Vpa, Pres, Vpe

CARRIED

7.3. Student Representation Policy

MOTION TO APPROVE THE STUDENT REPRESENTATION POLICY ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE BYLAWS AND POLICY COMMITTEE

VPO/AMBUTONG

Favour: Zidan, La Torre, Ambutong, Tan, Cartujano, Sempala, Yusuf, Depeel, Phan, Jacobs, Cardinal, Tesfay, Vpo, Vpsl, Vpa, Pres, Vpe

CARRIED

7.4. Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Governors Student Representative Policy

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

VPO/TAN

Favour: Zidan, La Torre, Ambutong, Tan, Cartujano, Sempala, Yusuf, Depeel, Phan, Jacobs, Cardinal, Tesfay, Vpo, Vpsl, Vpa, Pres, Vpe

Oppose:

CARRIED

7.5. Remuneration of Elected Representatives policy

MOTION TO STRIKE APPENDIX C OF THE REMUNERATION OF ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES POLICY ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE GOVERNANCE REMUNERATION

VPO/JACOBS

Favour: Zidan, La Torre, Ambutong, Tan, Cartujano, Sempala, Yusuf, Depeel, Phan, Jacobs, Cardinal, Tesfay, Vpo, Vpsl, Vpa, Pres, Vpe

CARRIED

8. Consultation

9. Evaluation

10. Recognition

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11. Adjournment

MOTION TO ADJOURN

CARTUJANO

CARRIED

Next Meeting Date: March 15, 2023

Meeting adjourned at 7:11pm.