



**Minutes for the Students' Council Meeting of the
Students' Association of MacEwan University
March 20, 2024 at 6:00pm in the Council Chamber**

Voting Members:

Gabriel Ambutong, President
Abby Beka, Councillor
Jakob Cardinal, Vice President External (Absent)
Delaney Huhtala, Councillor
Cierra Jacobs, Vice President Student Life
Ian Kamenwa, Councillor
Mayank Kaushik, Councillor
Joseph A. La Torre, Vice President Governance
and Finance
Katherine MacDonald, Councillor
Maade Okai, Councillor
Nhi Phan, Councillor
Nathan Poon, Councillor
Inder Singh, Councillor
Alem Tesfay, Councillor

Joehn Torres, Councillor
Chioma Uzor, Councillor
Stephan Vasquez, Vice President Academic
Sonia Yusuf, Councillor
Layal Zidan, Councillor

SAMU Officials and Council Support:

Timothy Jobs, Chair
Darryl Kostash, General Manager
Alan Honey, Governance Advisor
Collin Adoma, Admin Support

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 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 MARCH 20, 2024

ZIDAN/VPSL

CARRIED

2.2 MOTION

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 21, 2024

KAUSHIK/UZOR

CARRIED

3. Presentations

3.1. 2024-2025 SAMU Budget

*Phan arrives at 6:06pm.

4. For Information

4.1. Reports

4.1.1. President

PVP update. MacEwan budget presentation process. Attended Donor event re. SAMU Cares. CASA conference.

4.1.2. Vice President Academic

4.1.3. Vice President External

4.1.4. Vice President Governance & Finance

4.1.5. Vice President Student Life

4.2. Executive Committee Minutes

Minutes of February 14, 15, 21, and March 6, 2024 provided.

5. Question Period

5.1. Written Questions

Tesfay - For the President: In the 2023-2024 Executive Committee Work Plan, you mentioned increase in student awareness of SAMU through strong communications and engaging marketing materials. Will there be any changes in the way SAMU engages with students to increase student awareness, considering the low engagement the Executive election had?

Pres – Great question. I assume you're referring to the "Governance Engagement" initiative which ties to item 1.2 on the Strategic Plan "Increase student awareness of SAMU and its opportunities through strong communications and engaging marketing materials." Evidently, low engagement during SAMU's 2024 Executive Elections is problematic. Part of the initial conversations include looking into putting more onus onto SAMU's operations team to increase voter turnout rather than primarily relying on candidates. Currently, highly contested elections incentivise competition which typically equates to increased voter turnout. However, SAMU itself should play a more active role in engaging with the student body. Some initial ideas include volunteers doing classroom visits, marketing rebranding, and highlighting SAMU's value to students by communicating our wins through marketing. A reminder that these initial conversations are ongoing and suggested changes are not yet confirmed.

Tesfay - For VPGF: In your report, you mentioned you met with the School of Continuing Education (SCE) to come up with a service agreement. My question is, what does a service agreement with SCE entail?

Vpgf – There are two things this service agreement will do: first is to create an agreement that formalizes EAL (English as an Additional Language) and UP (University Prep) students receive the U-PASS; and second is to come up with a fee for SCE international students because they are frequent users of our programs and services.

Huhtala – VPGF: I noticed that the new budget proposes to remove funding for volunteer training - what would be the implications of this in reference to volunteer quality?"

Vpgf – We aren't eliminating volunteer training. With our new SAMUed training platform, training has moved virtually. In the past training was done in person and needed a budget to cover expenses – such as food, training material, and an external facilitator if needed – but given that it's online now, we don't have the same financial needs.

Zidan – VPGF: SSJOC: What semester are these changes will be effective and go live?

Vpgf – Currently, they are looking at implementing the changes for September 15th

Zidan – President: Is there any updates on the advocacy for students who are effected by what you call “Global Conflict”? Was there any discussion with macewan regarding them acknowledging and offering support and help for the students that have been affected by the genocide that is happening in Gaza?

Pres – Thank for following-up on that initiative. Our advocacy towards the institution has been ongoing. For context, the “Global Conflicts Impact Survey” intended to identify supports needed by all SAMU members impacted by any and all global conflicts that impacted their student experience. As SAMU values inclusiveness, the survey was not intended to only support students with ties to Gaza. Having said that, here’s a list of EC leads along with status updates of our advocacy efforts:

1. Advocacy: Advocating for a temporary removal on the cap for therapy/counseling sessions made available to students through WPS. (ongoing, VPSL has met with WPS as per her report)
2. Advocacy: To investigate immediate relief for students in need. Investigate the feasibility of SAMU partnering with MacEwan by subsidizing deferred exam fees in the short-term (Winter 2024 Semester) while working on the advocacy of the permanent removal of the deferred exam fee. (ongoing, VPA is undergoing ongoing consultation with the Registrar)
3. Connecting students to faith-based and culture-based supports in the broader community, as relevant to personal identity by seeking out relevant services, programming, supports, and student groups. Compiling these found resources in one webpage or document, for easy access by students seeking supportive identity-based spaces. (VPSL, ongoing)
4. Advocacy: The provision of additional mental health supports from the community or MacEwan offerings, and advocacy for more culturally relevant supports on campus for students. (VPSL, ongoing)
5. Advocacy: Advocacy and education for professors on the topic of accommodations and grief/loss, with an eye to building further supports or leniency for students seeking accommodations outside an ADR context. (ongoing, VPA, this is a long-term project that will likely be taken on by the new VPA elect)

Action: More communication of where students can go for support (operationally).

In short, yes, there are ongoing conversations with MacEwan regarding supporting students.

5.2. Oral Questions

Topics Include: EC elections & engagement; Inclusive Access for textbooks; WPS & mental health supports; SCE meeting; deferred exam fee; student voice on MacEwan committees;

6. In Camera Period

7. Motions & Business Orders of the Day

7.1. 2024-2025 SAMU Budget

MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2024-2025 SAMU BUDGET ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

VPGF/MACDONALD

*Torres arrives at 6:48pm

Favour: Zidan, MacDonald, Uzor, Kamenwa, Phan, Huhtala, Singh, Tesfay, Poon, Yusuf, Kaushik, Okai, Vpoa, Beka, Pres, Vpsl, Vpgf, Torres

CARRIED

7.2. Unbudgeted Expenditure

MOTION TO APPROVE AN UNBUDGETED EXPENDITURE OF UP TO \$12, 763.35 FROM G/L 563500 (OILER TICKET PURCHASES)

VPGF/VPSL

Favour: Zidan, MacDonald, Uzor, Kamenwa, Phan, Huhtala, Singh, Tesfay, Poon, Yusuf, Kaushik, Okai, Vpa, Beka, Pres, Vpsl, Vpgf, Torres

CARRIED

8. Consultation

9. Evaluation

10. Recognition

11. Adjournment

MOTION TO ADJOURN

ZIDAN

CARRIED

Next Meeting Date: April 17, 2024

Meeting adjourned at 6:57pm