

Council Meeting – September 19, 2023 – 6:00pm MT
Microsoft Teams

Present:

Russell Rupok	Chair	Voting Member
Brittany Hollett	Vice-Chair	Voting Member
Kyra Johnston	Council Member	Voting Member
Rayees Kahan	Council Member	Voting Member
Jason Kauenhofen	Council Member	Voting Member
Lindsay McNena	Council Member	Voting Member
Skyler Todd	Council Member	Voting Member
Meaghan Sullivan	Executive Director	Non-Voting
Nicole Baker	Member	Non-Voting
Kelly DeCoste	Member	Non-Voting
Carson Flockhart	Member	Non-Voting

Regrets:

Khagendra Bhandari	Council Member	Voting Member
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Agenda Item

- 1.0 Call to Order:**
R. Rupok called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- 2.0 Acknowledgement of Traditional Indigenous Territories:**
R. Rupok gave the Acknowledgement of Traditional Indigenous Territories.
- 3.0 Conflict of Interest Check:**
R. Rupok inquired if any Council Members had any real or perceived conflict of interest. No conflicts were declared.
- 4.0 Approval of the Agenda:**

Motion:
To approve the agenda as presented.

J. Kauenhofen/L. McNena
6-0-0
Motion Carries

The motion was approved by general consent.

- 5.0 Adotion of Previous Minutes:**
 - 5.1 Regular Minutes of the Council from August 15, 2023.**

Motion:



To approve the minutes as circulated.

R. Khan/J. Kauenhofen
6-0-0
Motion Carries

The motion was approved by general consent.

6.0 Required Approvals:

Council conducted a by-election with three candidates for the Faculty of Health Disciplines Council Member seat. This included Carson Flockhart, Nicole Baker, and Kelly DeCoste. Each candidate was provided 2 minutes to express their interests in the role. A secret ballot was then cast. The Council thanked all candidates for their interest in AUGSA and encouraged everyone, no matter the election outcome, to stay involved and watch for more opportunities in the future.

Motion:

To approve the elected appointment of Kelly DeCoste to the Faculty of Health Disciplines Council Member seat on AUGSA Council.

J. Kauenhofen/L. McNena
6-0-0
Motion Carries

The motion was approved by general consent.

7.0 Items for Discussion:

7.1 Ends

The Council discussed AUGSAs readiness to submit the three Ends policies to A. Bergen at My Governance Coach. M. Sullivan shared A. Bergen's feedback:

"Just a point of clarification the Global End is only the largest, overarching policy. The three themes that you find are emerging would then be considered Ends, rather than "Global" Ends. The Global End should encompass the entirety of what Council believes the organization must achieve. Any Ends underneath that would be further, more specific definitions of what Council means by the Global End – and as such, then becomes subordinate to the Global End."

The Council agreed to send what they have at this point to A. Bergen for review.

7.2 Executive Limitations

No business was conducted in the current meeting.

7.3 Governance Process

No business was conducted in the current meeting.

7.4 Board-Executive Director Relationship

No business was conducted in the current meeting.

8.0 Ownership Linkage:



8.1 Council Member Reports

No further discussion on monthly reports.

8.2 abGPAC Advocacy Update & Review

J. Kauenhofen expressed a shared level of concern regarding the productivity to date with abGPAC felt across multiple Graduate Students' Associations. J. Kauenhofen noted that he is drafting a proposal with options to consider regarding steps to move forward.

J. Kauenhofen and L. McNena shared with Council that over the past five months there has been no coordination, meaningful progress, or work to date, despite the normal abGPAC annual schedule would have accomplished many things by this point. L. McNena gave examples, including a transition meeting, policy and strategy multi-day session, a board meeting per month, submitting pre-budget submissions to the Government, preparation for advocacy week at the end of November, meeting with the advanced education minister at least once, if not quarterly, and participation in advocacy training. None of the above have transpired this year, raising cause for concern. It was also noted that the financial performance of abGPAC has raised additional red flags, with notable invoices and financial responsibilities in arrears.

AUGSAs advocacy representatives hope to meet with all member groups of abGPAC to discuss these concerns, with the conversation looking for resolution. Resolution could be in the form of coming up with a plan at abGPAC or considering other lobby groups such as CAUS or ASEC. The Council discussed the importance of all GSAs to stay together, no matter the outcome, to uphold the strength in graduate advocacy that GSAs have when we advocate together.

The Council agreed to hold a separate meeting to discuss abGPAC, which will take place on Tuesday, September 26th at 6:00 p.m..

Motion:

To conduct a feasibility analysis on abGPAC.

J. Kauenhofen/L. McNena
6-0-0
Motion Carries

The motion was approved by general consent.

8.3 Membership Feedback

The Council is actively listening to membership in response to the open collective agreement with Athabasca University (AU). Currently, 60 graduate students have responded to Council's survey regarding Research Assistantships and overall the students are in favour and appreciative of the advocacy Council is doing for higher wage rates for academically employed graduate students at AU. The survey closes at the end of the month and the data will be used in the upcoming bargaining meeting.

The Annual Membership Satisfaction survey has closed with 542 respondents. Given the size of the survey and the feedback received, the data will be analyzed and collated into a report over the upcoming months.



The Graduate Student Awards & Bursaries survey data was provided to the Faculty of Graduate Studies to be used in support of AUGSAs advocacy efforts to date surrounding funding. In addition to this, Council had a meeting with AU Executive on August 17th, 2023 expressing the feedback of graduate students to the University that funding application processes (awards, bursaries, scholarships) must change to remove barriers for graduate students. Considering the need for graduate student funding, the steering committee for the Graduate Student Research Conference (GSRC) responded to the feedback by marketing two sources of funding on the GSRC website, which were marketed together: The Graduate Student Research Fund (GSRF) (offered by AU) and the AUGSA Travel Fund (offered by AUGSA). M. Sullivan shared an update with the Council that, to date, the GSRF received 1 application and the AUGSA Travel Fund received 24. As a result of sharing these follow up statistics with the University, we have received written notice that the University has heard AUGSA in respect to barriers to applying for funding at AU, and has now seen those barrier in play with the GSRF. They have inquired on if we can work together on a proposal to make the changes to the application process for the GSRF. AUGSA has agreed.

9.0 Monitoring Executive Director Performance:

M. Sullivan expressed Monitoring Reports will come in due course. M. Sullivan shared a brief informational update on two items with the Council.

- The new service of Health & Dental will be ready by end of month and rolling out with a strong marketing campaign before end of year.
- AUGSA is in budget planning season. M. Sullivan will share the 2024 budget at the next Council meeting.

10.0 Self-Evaluation & Governance Process

No business was conducted in the current meeting.

11.0 Information Requested by the Board

No business was conducted in the current meeting.

12.0 In-Camera Session

Council moved in-camera at 6:46 p.m. Council moved out-of-camera at 7:03 p.m.

13.0 Questions/Adjournment

Motion:

To adjourn the meeting.

J. Kauenhofen/L. McNena
7-0-0
Motion Carries

The meeting was adjourned by general consent.

