

**DSU Council Meeting
March 6th, 2013**

Present: Jamie Arron, Aaron Beale, Edgar Burns, Gavin Jardine, Aaron Wolf, Ryan Hartigan, Kyle DeYoung, Thomas Eaton, Julian Erksine, Alana Fleet, Lenah Kitenge, Katherine LaFortune, Christopher Firth, William Lin, Maggie Lovett, Andrew Mecke, Angel Panag, Taylor Quinn, Zainab Shahtaj, Lauren Haley, Samatha Spencer (via proxy), Kaitlynne Lowe (proxy for Katherine Strynatka), Rianne Wolf, Ben Bisset (via proxy), Martin Miller, Ibrahim (Hima) Merdan, Curtis Johnston

Regrets: Elizabeth Croteau, Matthew Murray, Navid Rahemtulla, Jon Magill

Absent: Kammy Vicaire, Amy Stevens

1. Roll Call

2. Acceptance of the Agenda

Motion: to accept the agenda as presented.

Moved by , seconded by

Motion: amend management to include statement from commerce rep

Moved by , seconded by

Motion CARRIED

Motion CARRIED

3. Consent Agenda

a. Acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting

b. Communications received

- i. President's Report re: levied society
- ii. Overview of SUB renovations consultations
- iii. March/April Master Schedule re: governance

4. Presentations

a. CASA

- Presentation from Zach Dwyer, CASA director
- He is an Acadia alum, graduating from political science, and a Dal alumni, with a Planning masters. He ran a municipal lobby group- HSA (Halifax Student Alliance)
- CASA works primarily on federal issues related to postsecondary education. 60% of student loans are funded by the federal government.
- CASA is a member driven association. All of the asks they put forth have been brought forth through a process, through student councils and unions.
- Vision: accessible, affordable, high-quality education
- They work on policy development, research, awareness campaigns, government relations, partnerships.
- There were lots of cuts to PSE in 1995. Since then, they have been able to ensure there are not more drastic cuts.

- Why focus federally? \$16 billion. Number of different programs are affected.
- CASA meets with government on our behalf. They are registered as federal lobbyists, and registered 51 meetings this year. GM registered 91, for comparison.
- Being a member of CASA provides unions with access to 5 staff to help support, advise, connect.
- Help to coordinate a local message federally. Helps facilitate communication between all members.

CASA and the DSU

- CASA was founded in 1995, and the DSU joined in 1999. They have 24 member schools.
- The most effective form of advocacy is going to the table with one issue.
- CASA's leadership is all students. The board is made up of students (7), as are all committees. Dal has held leadership positions in 10 of 14 years (chair of board or committee chair)
- Operate on budget of \$580 000, and are therefore always being responsible with \$.
- Membership fees for Dalhousie = \$43 743. This comes down to \$2.58 per student per year.
- They are included on advocacy documents, and testify to federal committees. They have become the group the House of Commons and Senate will come to for youth issues.
- 40% of NS provincial budget is transferred from the federal government.
- Dal represents 42% of full time enrollment in NS. 2230 are federal grant recipients (\$4.6 million); receives 21.2 million in federal students loan. Receives millions for federal granting agencies.
- Federal government invests over \$50 million/year in Dal
- Dal has contributed \$500 000 to CASA since joining, and opened up \$13 billion for students across Canada.
- Easy to see big role government plays in PSE.
- Removed part-time student loan interest, increased in-study income exception to \$100 a week.
- CASA is advocating for a 25% increase to the federal grants program.
- Groups like CASA exist to help support the transition between executives.
- Founded as member-driven, therefore need driven members. Those who participate see a great deal of value.
- ALLIANCE- requires everyone's collective energy.
- Education is a collective national priority at all levels.
- CASA is invited yearly to the House of Commons Finance Committee.
- Recent advocacy points: increasing Canada student grants; open access to publicly funded research; protecting student's intellectual property, student reps on tri-agencies
- Canada student loan program reform; Remove 2% cap on PSSE
- Future focus: renegotiation of transfer payments. NS sees students come in and leave. Want to make sure the money is there to support students. Open data/education resource; mental health
- Documents handed out: strategic plan, advocacy and policy draft updates; bulletin hand-out; record of success
- 1400 points of contact.

Andrew: In the last 8 years, 3 student unions have withdrawn membership. Can you speak to process they took.

Zach: McGill just left. There were some internal issues, things going on on their campus. UBC has had turbulent history with CASA. It was an issue of just not the right time; they also had a number of internal issues at the time. There were a number of internal things

happening on the campus.

Andrew: More concerned with process than with why other organizations left.

Zach: As an organization, CASA asks for 30 days notice of a conversation. Then there's a period to discuss. It's meant to be an easy in, easy out process. Schools drop down to associate status before leaving completely. They then hope we'll do a review. It's about a 24 month period.

Angel: What has CASA down for PSSSE?

Zach: They work with First Nations. It has been a yearly advocacy point. They are always looking for opportunities to meet with MPs about the issue.

Kyle: Can you clarify numbers- the \$500 000 and \$13 billion.

Zach: \$500 000 is the total amount Dalhousie has paid in membership fees to CASA since joining. \$13 billion is the amount of money saved/obtained country wide since then.

Julian: Why does Dal pay more than other schools?

Zach: New fee model is tiered. Schools pay a different amount per student based on how many total students they have.

Kaitlynn: What is the greatest asset of CASA in their advocacy?

Zach: It's important for unions to engage and represent their students; CASA is here to help us do that, to help us refine our asks, and to help us advance our issues in a quicker, more concise way.

Maggie: Going back to the \$13 billion. How can they claim that when they're not the only organization advocating for PSE?

Zach: The documents he's handed out show where those numbers come from. It's not just on CASA, but it's because of groups like CASA.

Kyle: What kind of advocacy do you do that would benefit a professional program?

Zach: Recently, we were one of the only groups talking about fair dealing under copyright law. Open access will benefit anybody. A Professional Council might be something to consider in the future.

Kaitlynn: What are some areas of improvement CASA is trying to tackle and how are they going about that?

Zach: CASA has developed a strategic plan. They are looking at things such as empowering the board, to putting out more research documents. Members have identified putting more time into policy and research as a priority. Gearing up to launch major research project.

b. StudentsNS re: international student paper

- Presentation by Jonathan Williams, director of StudentsNS.
- There are 4 reasons why NS attracts international students and why the province should invest:
 1. Enrollment: International enrollment must double in next 12 years to maintain total university enrollment; international students are currently almost 1/3 of CBU, SMU;
 2. Diversity: Need for global education in global world;
 3. Immigration: The demographic trends in NS are really bad. There's a desperate need to attract and retain immigrants.
 4. Economic impact: The average international student spends \$28500 per year

in NS. Spends \$3 for every \$1 the government spends on them.

- Differential fees. Canada is one of few countries who charges these fees. International students pay more than double. The justification is that their families do not contribute to tax base. Why should the public pay for their education? This is true, except to extent of the public benefitting from them being here.
- Revenue from differential fees is more than \$30 million. Schools also receive \$30 million from the province in support of international students. International students tend to be middle class, upper class.
- Recommendations: there are close to 30 in the paper.
- Develop an international education strategy. Province should provide resources to help with recruitment.
- Cap international student tuition at total funding per domestic student. An international student is currently worth about 50% more than a domestic student. Remove international students from enrolment component of funding formula. Phase in combined need/merit based NS international scholarship, to eliminate differential for 5% of intl students by 2017-2018. Would be at no cost due to increasing fees, increasing enrollment.
- Language acquisition was recognized as a major problem. The rate at which they are completing degrees without adequate language skills is too high. Recommend an English language guarantee. Pay the cost of language exam. If you failed, Dal would pay the costs of courses for 6 months.
- Eliminate cutoff scores at admissions. That should be just one component.
- Language education grant in the funding formula.
- Academic support. There's a correlation between international students having relationships with domestic students and their success.
- International student services grant within the funding formula.
- Cross-cultural communication skills as requirement for hiring counsellors.
- Provide MSI coverage.
- Permanent funding to an enlarged ISIS international graduates pilot project. Need more support to succeed in the job market due to cultural differences and lack of network. Should be accessible to first and second year students.
- We need to do things differently.

Kyle: International students are more privileged. Is the best use of StudentsNS resources to be used on international students, as opposed to aboriginals, blacks, etc.?

Jon: As domestic student numbers go down, the amount of funding won't change, we assume. As international students replace domestic students, it's a good deal for universities. International students are the only reason why enrollment is growing. Intervening at a prime time.

Kaitlynn: When is this to be fully polished plan and submitted? Any indication how it will be received?

Jon: We release reports in a draft one month in advance of board approving. Expect it to be approved April 20th. Not sure when they would release publicly. Late April, May. In terms of government response, there are lots of elements that will receive positive response. Feels quite positive.

5. Items for Decision

a. Elections Policy

- When we passed society policy, we didn't make the according changes in

- elections policy.
- Clarified what it means to be a member in good standing.
- Defined faculty society reps
- Appoint DRO for faculty elections
- Further defined role of poll clerks
- Existing DSU exec cannot endorse candidates.
- Clarifications around sending emails
- Before, there was no policy/process for referendum questions to be disqualified.

Andrew: Re: exec endorsements- what if the executive is running again?

Jamie: If you're an exec, you're first and foremost an exec. This will keep elections more civil and focused on the issues.

Alana: Think it's weird, and doesn't agree with the idea. Can we clarify and say you can't endorse someone as an executive?

Gavin: It's a little difficult to define the distinction between personal and professional lives.

Julian: Thinks it's too difficult to separate the individual from the executive. Can't control how other people represent your endorsement.

Kyle: This would create situations of whisper campaigns of endorsement. Doesn't know how the CRO can police this.

Kaitlynne: There's a distinction between endorsing a candidate, and endorsing a referendum question.

Jamie: Our main goal is to align Elections Policy with Society Policy. We can remove all references to exec endorsements for now, and discuss this later.

Andrew: re: disqualification of referendum question: you can present the best intentions, but could secretly have goal to have question disqualified. This leaves too much room for sleazy motives.

Sagar: We could limit it to one yes campaign?

Andrew: Council has ability to deratify, or to move members into not-good-standing. It seems unnecessary to have this at all.

Motion: remove any reference to changes to referendum question disqualification and exec endorsements

Moved by Jamie, seconded by Chris

Motion CARRIED

Motion: approve Election Policy

Moved by Jamie, seconded by Chris

Motion CARRIED

Angel, Thomas, Andrew Kyle abstain

b. Rowe School of Management rep

Andrew: Changing from Faculty of Management to Rowe School of Business- just changing the naming to reflect the change. There are currently 1800 students in the Rowe School of Business- about 1000 commerce, 700 management, 80 MBA. MBA is the only group not represented by DAGS. Currently, the faculty switches the rep for council every year, and the other school is ignored for a year. Engineering has about 1300-1400 students.

Danny: This would clear up the inefficiency that exists by having to alternate the voting member.

Kyle: If you're in a Master of Arts, are you represented by both DASSS and DAGS? There used to just be a commerce rep, and management was totally neglected. Thinks switching back and forth is fine. Doesn't like that they'd get 2 reps. Overweighting, double the voting power. Comparing to engineering is different- split across campuses, diploma degree.

Wolf: Doesn't agree with the idea of over-representation. We can't do absolute representation. Thinks one representative is too little.

Jamie: We're only motioning to send to AGM. It's a decision students at large should make.

Kyle: Doesn't think the issues facing commerce and management are that different. Understands it should go to students, but students have no idea how council functions. Council keeps growing, and it's becoming unwieldy.

Jamie: As part of AGM, we can include a presentation about council representation to provide some context.

Motion: send the question regarding adding an addition rep from the Rowe School of Business to AGM

Moved by Andrew, seconded by Hima

Motion CARRIED
Kyle opposed
Edgar, Curtis abstain

c. Health Professions council rep

Andrew: Currently, the Health Professions rep(s) have to be appointed by HSSA, not an umbrella society. Additionally, saying they can't come from a different faculty is redundant. There are about 2500 students in Health Professions.

Kyle: All other reps report back to an umbrella society. How would they represent everyone else (the departments they don't belong to)?

Andrew: HSSA gets no levies at all. They run a Speaker Series, and send students to conferences. No one is elected.

Jamie: It's not an ideal situation, but better than the alternative. We've had trouble getting representation in the past. Council next year would be appointing the representatives.

Motion: send the question regarding the Health Professions council rep to send to AGM
Moved by Andrew, seconded by Wolf

Motion CARRIED
Jamie, Edgar abstain
Kyle opposed

6. Items for Discussion

a. Board of Governor's

- Jamie expressed intention to put forward motions. Met with Dr. Traves yesterday about the motions.
 1. Want to begin live-streaming BoGs meetings. Expression of transparency. Already do audio recordings. They're going to cost out. Alternatively, post the audio recording online.
 2. Reps on any university working group be appointed in consultation with the DSU. Questions as to what consultation means. Do we have the right to veto?
 3. Offering diversity training. Not just about who can speak the most and the loudest. Voluntary attendance.
 4. Any ancillary fee approved through student referendum. Lots of contention about this one.
 5. Donor agreements. Things that are publicly available (via FOI). Make it accessible. There's relative consent - just looking into logistics.
 6. Making investments transparent. The University does not control investments; they go through portfolio managers, and it changes daily. There's logistical issues.

Taylor: re: concerns raised by the university. Do students often vote no to unpopular fees?

Beale: Halfway through a report, and seems to think fees that are necessary are generally approved.

Alana: It forces the university to make a campaign and educate the students.

Maggie: Thinks it's awesome, bold and aggressive. Seven may be a lot to ask for. Are you looking to put more effort into some?

Jamie: Most motions don't actually require a vote. They're operational policy decisions.

They're things he's been working on, but have had no movement. Trying to speed things up.

The ones considered to be critical- student reps, donor agreements, auxiliary and ancillary fees (further research needed)

Kyle: Really like this. Regarding the donor issue: should clarify what the threshold is, or other criteria. Thinks diversity is really, really good. Presumptuous that everyone needs it. Likes the idea of getting reps to meet students.

Beale: In last government MOU, there's a clause saying universities couldn't use ancillary fees to get around tuition caps. It happened at NSCAD though, and there were no consequences.

Rianne: Just because someone is from diverse community x doesn't mean they understand the means of diverse community y.

Kyle: Just don't want to antagonize people needlessly. In 2006, the athletics referendum failed miserably. There's a history and context to remember.

7. Business of the Executive

a. Vice President (Internal)

- Elections website is up and running.
- Impact awards, has been working on the evening program.
- Society discipline things- DCS, Model UN

b. Vice President (Finance and Operations)

- Has only spent 4 working days in the country since last report. Working on budget.

c. Vice President (Academic and External)

- Got a response from minister about their grants proposal. She told them to go talk to finance (that's who does grad rebate). Attended the government roundtables. All groups came out with same idea. Asked minister to go to finance herself. Next big thing will be the budget. Say they will have a balanced budget. Pre-budget action. Working on getting in the budget lockdown.
- University budget consultations next week. Will be meeting at the SUB to talk about things to bring up. If you can't make it, encourage you to email BAC.
- Had lots of canvasses in the SUB today. Still a couple left.
- Teaching awards close tonight. Meeting set for this Friday. Also, there are university committees that need help.

d. Vice President (Student Life)

- Switch Open Streets. University Ave. will be closed on March 20th. Exception of the bus loop

e. President

- AGM is March 18th. 6pm.
- Sub renos, CASA, mental health campaign is kicking off. Free sessions at 10:30 every day in the Wellness room.
- Stan Kutcher talking next Wednesday. Working towards a peer support program.

8. Notices of Motion

9. Question & Answer Period

Andrew: The newsletters sent out by CASA that were mentioned by Zach- what happened to them?

Jamie: We get member updates regularly, but haven't received anything else.

Andrew: Regarding the student on the BAC- could there be a motion to change his title?

Jamie: Seems unnecessarily antagonistic. It's not his fault. It's about the process going forward.

Thomas: (to Beale) What's your opinion on the BAC report?

Beale: Had long discussion about it at the Academic Committee. There's a lot of numbers, and he hasn't had time to go through it all. There's lots of new fees at the back; new program fees. The way the report is laid out is weird. Don't know enough to come up with alternative proposal. Feels it's important to go to these consultations. Go and say something.

Jamie: At one point, the report refers to the long term picture. This year, they aren't crippling, but if you look at 3 year trend, we're in tricky waters. 6 million dollars came out of reserve fund- that money won't be there next year.

William: What are the dates for campaigning and voting? DSS wants to host a debate.

Wolf: Campaigning is March 9th – 17th, and voting is March 18th – 20th

10. Announcements

Andrew: Is organizing a beer garden crawl for Friday. About half the stops will be grad student events.

Rianne: Friday March 15th, SoHo will formally take over at a Company House event.

Thomas: Geekbeer will be the last stop on Andrew's tour. There will be food, and it's \$2.50 for everything.

Taylor: re: Soapbox contest. A document will be sent out- please review before next meeting. The DASSS national undergrad conference this weekend, and TEDx is on Sunday.

Wolf: Tuesday March 26th is the Impact Awards, to celebrate students. Anyone who is up for an award automatically gets tickets. All tables are sponsored.

11. Adjournment

Motion: to adjourn the meeting

Moved by Chris, seconded by Zainab

Motion CARRIED