

1. CALL TO ORDER

Call to Order –10:51 am.

2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that this meeting is being conducted on the unceded territories of the Coast Salish Peoples; which, to the current knowledge of the Society include the Squamish, Musqueam, Stó:lo, and Tsleil-Waututh people.

3. ROLL CALL OF ATTENDANCE

3.1 Committee composition

Vice President External Relations (Chair)	Christine Dyson
Vice President University Relations	Arr Farah
Board of Directors Representative	Blossom Malhan
Board of Directors Representative	Prab Bassi
Board of Directors Representative	Raajan Garcha
Student At-Large	Kiran Binning
Student At Large	Natalia Gretskaia
Student At Large	Darien Lechner
Student At Large	Mark Thompson
Student At-Large	Aarushi Sharma

3.2 Society Staff

Campaigns, Research and Policy Coordinator	Pierre Cassidy
Administrative Assistant	Mandeep Aujla

3.3 Regrets

Vice President University Relations	Arr Farah
Student At Large	Natalia Gretskaia
Student At Large	Aarushi Sharma

4. RATIFICATION OF REGRETS

MOTION ADV 2016-08-17:01

Raajan/Blossom

Be it resolved to ratify regrets from Arr Farah, Natalia Gretskaia, ~~and Aarushi Sharma.~~

CARRIED

5. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOTION ADV 2016-08-17:02

Prab/Blossom

Be it resolved to approve the agenda as presented.

CARRIED

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

MOTION ADV 2016-08-17:03

Raajan/Prab

Be it resolved to ratify the minutes from:

AdvocacyCommittee2016-07-27

CARRIED

**Abstentions: Darien Lechner, Blossom Malhan & Mark Thompson.*

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Summer 2016 Advocacy Survey Results

MOTION ADV 2016-08-17:04

Kiran/Blossom

Whereas the advocacy committee conducted a survey in the summer 2016 semester;

Whereas the survey was used to gain an understanding of students response to student issues, which have been brought forward to the SFSS;

Be it resolved to recommend that the board of directors receive and file the results from the Summer 2016 advocacy survey.

Discussion:

- The intent of this report is to upload it onto the website for individuals to see.
- Note: Personal Responses have been compiled in a separate document due to confidentiality issues, and hard copies can be viewed by committee members.
- **[Action item] Christine:** Forward the personal responses document to the Board of Directors.

→ Motion amended as follows:

7.2 MOTION ADV 2016-08-17:05

Darien/Prab

Be it resolved to recommend that the board of directors receive and file the results from the Summer 2016 advocacy survey and that the individual responses be forwarded to the Board of Directors.

CARRIED AS AMENDED

***Aarushi Sharma arrived at 11:01 am*

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

8.1 Engagement Report

- Still missing some people's responses; will send out survey link again today with a close date of Friday midnight.
- Instead of filling the engagement aspect, the details of it will just be presented to the Engagement committee.

- **[Action item] Christine:** Follow up with Curtis to schedule a presentation on the Engagement committee agenda.

8.2 Research Overview

1. Academic:

- Quality and Consistency of TA's:
 - Went to the TSSU website and looked at the criteria to hire TA's.
 - TSSU has an umbrella of what they want from a TA, and each department then takes this criteria and breaks it into departmental needs.
 - The umbrella requirement outlines that graduate students from each department get to apply, and then applications are open to graduate students outside of the department, and finally to undergraduate students and external members.
 - It was worth noting that the Faculty of Business does not ask for GPA.
 - For the Engineering department, one difference found by the researchers was that a callout for TA's depends on whether or not the instructor feels the need for one.
 - For international studies, an important requirement was assessments from previous employers.
 - The committee was informed that TSSU is not a part of CUPE, therefore they negotiate their own contracts. This could be why TA's go on strike often.
 - TSSU also mentioned that some departments urge graduate students not apply for TA positions, so that undergraduate students with fewer qualifications can be hired at a cheaper price.
 - It was also noted that after a certain amount of semesters, graduate students can not apply for TA positions because they've already gotten their funding for their research.
 - Some committee members agreed that an important recommendation to make would be to ask departments to take graduate students on more.
 - During discussion, the committee agreed that having general criteria for each department would not be feasible as each department has its own unique needs.
 - A committee members suggested that instead of looking at the consistency of the TAs, the committee should focus on researching the needs for TA's for each department.
 - Some members felt that discussing why TSSU is not a part of CUPE is also an important topic of discussion. Blossom Malhan reminded the committee that although they are not a part of CUPE, they still support one another (according to news articles).
 - Pierre Cassidy further informed the committee that TSSU is a different union representing some employees on the university, as well that TSSU and CUPE are two separate organizations with separate processes.
 - Committee members further agreed that it would be highly beneficial to see whether TA's get to see the yearly TA evaluation.
 - Blossom further commented that departments don't have workshops to prepare the TA's, the professors have a meeting with them discussing how the semester will go prior to the start of classes.
 - The two major questions which arose from this discussion were the following:
 - What does each department do to prepare TA's if anything?
 - How do TA's receive evaluations, and what rules do those evaluations follows?

- Increased study space on campus:
 - It was noted that this issue is greater at the Surrey campus.
 - The SFSS has previously advocated for increased study space on campus through the extension of library hours on all campuses, a space expansion program in 2013, and another space expansion project in Surrey and Vancouver which has been held up.
 - Through research it was found that the University does not want to advocate on this issue as they feel there is plenty of study space which students are not aware of.
 - Committee members brainstormed that the SFSS can do a contest where students tweet their favourite study spot and they could possibly win something.
 - The committee agreed to continue to advocate for increased library hours as well as the space expansion project at the Surrey campus.
 - An issue that was brought to the attention of the committee was some or many instances where non-SFU students ask students they know from SFU to book study rooms at the Surrey campus for them. The committee felt that it's time to dissuade students from doing this.
 - Members also discussed possibilities of keeping tutorial rooms which are not in use open for students to study in.
 - The committee was reminded that these rooms used to be kept open, however there was a lot of theft which resulted in facilities locking them down.
 - Pierre Cassidy suggested to the committee to continue to push for these suggestions.
 - The major questions from this discussion were:
 - Does the Vancouver campus need increased study space?
 - Will the Surrey campus' library hours be longer?
 - What is the status on the space expansion pilot at the Surrey campus?
 - Which campuses would be willing to open up some tutorial rooms for students to study in?
 - Are team study rooms a possibility for all campuses?

2. **Financial:**

- Open educational resources:
 - Through research it was found that SFU does not have official OER's on the bookstore website.
 - A big issue is that students want professors to start adopting these additional textbooks into the classroom.
 - The committee recommends to run an awareness campaign during the fall semester regarding the use OER's.
 - Arr Farah noted that the committee could do a presentation and a proposal targeted towards SFU faculty.
 - Members further suggested speaking with individual professors as well.
 - Christine stated that she had spoken to the VP external at the University of Victoria, and they are open to collaborating with the SFSS. There is also a subsequent conversation to be held with them tomorrow.

- Members further stated that for professors who do decide to provide OER's, they should also ensure that they are structuring the course outlines based on what's available in the resources.
- It was suggested that committee members further consult with department heads and professors to get more information on the use or lack of use of open educational resources.
- A committee member further suggested that the committee advocate for the use of OER's at the bookstore. This could be in the form of handing out informational pamphlets to students.
- Lower tuition:
 - International students are not protected against increases to tuition.
 - It was noted that several post-secondary schools across the province do have a grandfathering plan for tuition.
 - A committee member recommended to create a proposal presentation to the SFU Board of Governors regarding this issue.
 - A committee member stated it would also be beneficial to look into the regulations surrounding the increase of additional course fees.
- 3. Health and well-being:**
- Sexual Assault Support and Prevention:
 - Members suggested targeting first year students to spread awareness on mental health and well-being.
 - SFU is currently working on establishing a sexual assault policy.
 - The committee commented that there should be efforts made to encourage student participation at sexual assault consultations.
 - A suggestion made was to have information campaigns during club days to get the word out surrounding these consultations. In addition, it was suggested that the committee interact with 'The Peak' to spread further awareness on this.
 - Members collectively decided that an informational video should be shown at orientation events to get conversations surrounding this issue started.
- Mental health and well-being:
 - There is an apparent need for more activities rather than campaigns surround these concerns.
 - Having more events will be beneficial for students.
 - Members further suggested setting up classroom study spaces during exam time
 - In addition to de-stressing events, also explore if facilities that target mental health are sufficient.
 - Pierre said that the Health and Counseling department is always looking for more funding; there are big waitlist numbers for students to receive help.
 - Pierre further suggested that the committee speak with John Flipse (FBS manager) in terms of what kind of event can get hosted in the pub.
 - The committee was informed that at yesterday's Sexual Assault Policy consultation (August 16th meeting), Health and Counseling stated that at the beginning of the semester, they want to provide information to students regarding consent.

- **[Action Item] Christine:** Follow up with Health and Counseling in regards to a possible collaboration surround the informational video presentation.
 - **[Action Item] Christine:** Ask Health and Counseling for their waitlist numbers.
 - **[Action Item] Christine:** Ask Leah when the Policy consultation committee is going until.
- 4. Social:**
- Translink
 - Not much interest on Translink side to extend the U-Pass agreement.
 - The U-Pass fees are expected to increase from \$158.00 per term to \$164.00 per term.
 - It was noted that in the previous year there were a total of eighty- five changes to the agreement which affected students.
 - The members found during their research that students felt the appeals process to opt out of the U-Pass is too long.
 - Recommendation from the committee is to look further into the proposed changes and see if they were taken into affect and how they impacted students.
 - There was a discussion held with regards to the possible SFU gondola; the research team noted that they could not find much verifiable information on this subject.
 - Christine noted that a letter of proposal had been developed and there are plans to prepare a lobby plan for the U-Pass. There will be a meeting today where a discussion about this lobby plan will be held.
 - A committee member suggested making the U-Pass agreement an election issue for current or new students.
 - Accessible SFSS:
 - Committee members questioned if anything came out of the SFU accessibility dialogue from last year; Pierre suggested to speak with Antonio Daling (Student Union Organiser) about this as there was a report done which he has access to.
 - Members felt that is highly important for students to be aware that accessibility funds exist.
 - Feedback received from the members:
 - Broadcast meetings.
 - Have brail at the Surrey SFSS offices, as well as on the SFSS information pamphlets.
 - Sign language at the SFSS Annual general meetings.
 - Pierre further suggested that the committee consult with SUDS or Antonio regarding their thoughts on creating an accessible SFSS.

8.3 MOTION ADV 2016-08-17:06

Aarushi/Blossom

Be it resolved to reconsider 'Motion ADV 2016-08-17:01'.

CARRIED

8.4 MOTION ADV 2016-08-17:07

Raajan/Blossom

Be it resolved to remove Aarushi Sharma from the 'Ratification of Regrets' list.

CARRIED

8.5 MOTION ADV 2016-08-17:08

Raajan/Blossom

Be it resolved to ratify regrets from Arr Farah & Natalia Gretskaia.

CARRIED

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION ADV 2016-08-17:09

Blossom/Prab

Be it resolved to adjourn the meeting at 12:47 pm.

CARRIED