



STUDENTS' COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT TASK FORCE MINUTES

2013 – 2014

Date: January 13th 2014

Time: 5.02 pm

In Attendance:

NATALIA BINCZYK (Chair)

PETROS KUSMU

KELSEY MILLS

LOK TO

JESSICA NGUYEN

MARINA BANISTER (Left at 5.26 pm)

Excused Absence:

Others in Attendance:

SACHITHA KUSALADHARMA

**1. CALL TO
ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by BINCZYK at 5.02 pm.

**2. APPROVAL OF
AGENDA**

BINCZYK moved to approve the agenda for *January 13, 2014* as tabled.

The motion was seconded by NGUYEN.

Vote 6/0/0

CARRIED

**3. APPROVAL OF
MINUTES**

BINCZYK moved to approve the minutes for *November 28, 2013* as tabled.

The motion was seconded by MILLS.

Vote 6/0/0

CARRIED

**4.
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

BINCZYK: I would like to say thank you for the muffins.

We will only have 2 meetings left. The last one will be held 2 weeks from

now.

5. DISCUSSION

SCET Recommendations Document: Content

BINCZYK: President KUSMU sent in several changes to the recommendations document.

KUSMU: I have done some editorial changes and included some additional stuff. I put in several bullet points to make it coherent. I added an appendix, and roughly added 2 recommendations.

BINCZYK: I really like the bullet points. However, at some points, it seems repetitive with the recommended steps.

KUSMU: We may have to revisit the bullet points. It will also be good to have a summary.

BINCZYK: Would you like to have bullet points under the recommended steps or the entire document in bullet points?

KUSMU: Bullet points under the recommended steps.

MILLS: Action items should be bullet points. It's better to have bullets for those instead of explaining.

KUSMU: The block of text you had under the recommended steps should be transformed into bullet points.

TO: We should not let bullet points become paragraphs either.

BINCZYK: I wrote paragraphs because it shows the thought process and reasoning for a particular item.

KUSMU: We can keep the text. I understand the point of having that. Maybe we can break the recommended steps into 2 different sections, and have a summary of the steps.

BINCZYK: So, we can have 2 summary portions. Those will be a summary of the reasoning, and a summary of actions to be taken in short bullet points.

KUSMU: The intro and exit interviews were my own idea. I also believe we discussed council pay.

BINCZYK: The council pay was turned down by the committee.

KUSMU: For organizations, there are intro and exit interviews. Information is gained about a person's experience, and how the organization could improve. That could be applied for the Students' Council to assess where councilors are at when they leave. It can be an online survey. Ultimately, we want to make the Students' Council more engaging.

MILLS: There's a one-on-one by the president with councilors already in summer. That can be taken as an intro interview I guess.

KUSMU: Personally, my own preference is for exit interviews. We can see how the expectations of councilors were met. The president meeting with councilors is more of a relationship building exercise.

The Council Administration Committee (CAC) can draft some good questions. The Students' Union's Human Resources (HR) person can help in drafting good questions.

BANISTER: Another advantage of the online survey is that it can be made

anonymous. Also, open ended questions give great feedback, but the data analysis is difficult.

BINCZYK: So, CAC can develop the questions with the help of the HR person. It will most likely be an online anonymous survey filled out by members of council. What do you think about the intro interviews?

KUSMU: There may be benefit in having that test for incoming councilors. The talk with the president should be separate.

BINCZYK: We can have this for councilors coming mid-way too.

BANISTER: Also, there is no point in having the survey till they have gone to at least 1 or 2 meetings.

KUSMU: We can say that SCET thinks this is a good idea, and ask *Discover Governance* to come up with details.

BINCZYK: I think we must provide at least some details. We can say that *Discover Governance* is creating the survey. For the exit survey, CAC can provide feedback.

KUSMU: We can reach out to *Discover Governance*, the General Manager, and CAC about our recommendations before we go to council. Then, we would know which initiatives are possible.

BINCZYK: My initial plan was to have this draft agreed upon, and present it to council. I don't think the recommendations we give to *Discover Governance* are controversial.

KUSMU: It relates to the workload. I don't want to have resistance to the recommendations once we are finished.

MILLS: Even though we put forward a motion, we can still meet with them on Monday and Tuesday.

KUSMU: We can ask them to send written feedback or to come to our meetings.

BINCZYK: Petros, you are sometimes using direct language in the bullet points.

KUSMU: If you want, you can remove them. Having the bullet points helps in figuring out who we should talk to.

MILLS: We can have a disclaimer saying that these are all recommendations, and that nobody *has* to do them.

BINCZYK: Such a disclaimer is stated in the introduction. I would like to restate that in a shorter form before the summary of the recommended steps.

NGUYEN: What was the rationale behind the speaker reading out the oath regarding technology?

MILLS: This is the compromise solution. Technology can be helpful. This is a reminder that you shouldn't misuse it during meetings.

NGUYEN: Don't you think that a reminder every meeting is repetitive?

KUSMU: Having the speaker reading the oath every meeting is excessive. I think reminding it is enough. Regarding technology, I think that we have found a nice compromise.

NGUYEN: The reminder should not be said in a negative way.

KUSMU: It's really hard to legislate a reminder as well.

BINCZYK: If we don't have full confidence, should we remove this?

MILLS: We are only getting recommendations. We can include it.

KUSMU: We can say that we haven't really figured out our position, and ask them what they think.

BINCZYK: So, we will not be saying the oath. Only a reminder of the oath will be mentioned. I will also mention in the presentation that we are unsure about it ourselves.

NGUYEN: For some of the solutions, there are too many people working on them. Some instances of this include class talks and the facebook page.

BINCZYK: For the facebook page, the CAC chair overlooks the whole process. The Administration Assistant cannot create the facebook page. The Speaker said he can do that.

NGUYEN: Can't the CAC chair do that?

BINCZYK: There is so much stuff for the CAC chair to do.

NGUYEN: Okay. I'm cool with it.

KUSMU: One idea I had was for the greater inclusion of student-at-large positions on committees. Student-at-large positions on committees existed previously. There was a report done about it.

TO: For me, the biggest point was to stay involved while not running an election.

BINCZYK: The report painted a negative light on student-at-large positions. It says that students who got involved with student-at-large positions were not average students.

TO: A barrier for me running for the Students' Union was that I do not feel strongly for any faculty.

MILLS: It would be cool to have student-at-large positions on certain committees. However, there are in-camera discussions which may occur. What should happen in those cases?

KUSMU: The criticism that they end up running anyway is a good point. However, that's not a bad thing. It's what we want. Even if we get another similar student to councilors, it will still be an additional brain for the committee.

MILLS: Would they have voting power? There may be issues which can occur.

TO: I don't think I would mind if I didn't have voting power. I just want to get my voice heard. A lot of average students don't feel too much about the faculty.

MILLS: Why don't we hold a focus group for students-at-large before a certain issue comes up?

BINCZYK: I like this idea better than having student-at-large positions in the committees. There may be a lot of logistical issues with that. You will get the same input from consultations.

KUSMU: If we have non-voting members in committees, it wouldn't

necessarily create quorum issues. Anyway, this is something to ponder about.
BINCZYK: Any student is allowed to come to committee meetings. However, many students don't know about it.

KUSMU: I agree with you. However, there is no incentive or recognition if you don't actually have a seat. One advantage of being in the committee for a student-at-large is that you are involved in the conversation of actually shaping a change.

MILLS: I don't think students-at-large should be on the committees in the first place. However, if they are, they should have a vote.

BINCZYK: If we do decide on doing this, we could simply recommend the committees to re-evaluate the possibility of having a student-at-large positions, and whether they would have voting power or not.

MILLS: Can we include this in the presentation as a further discussion item? We can say that it's something we came up in the last minute, and haven't really decided on it. It would open up the topic for discussion.

KUSMU: Some points were brought up by Vice-president Chelen. He personally likes Faculty Association members sitting on council.

BINCZYK: We already had a long conversation about it.

KUSMU: The other thing that he brought up was finding ways to increase accountability for councilors. If I were a student, I would want to see how my councilor voted on issues.

BINCZYK: On the summary of each meeting, there's the attendance. That's somewhat of an accountability feature. When there is a call for division, I believe we have a record of that. If we implemented this, we would have more bureaucracy and paperwork. When students would search about how their councilor voted, it would be for a very controversial issue. In such a case, someone will be calling for a division.

NGUYEN: They could just talk with the councilor directly too.

BINCZYK: I will fix the things we talked about. For the ones we are unsure, I will not be putting them in the document. Instead, we will be raising them in the presentation.

KUSMU: It will be helpful to send the presentation ahead of time.

BINCZYK: I like to have presentations with very short bullet points in order to prevent the students from just reading off it.

KUSMU: It will also be good to cite pages off the document. For the document, it's a good idea to have the summary on the second page.

BINCZYK: I will change the document as President Kusmu said. This document, a letter of explanation, and an email will be sent out to council.

Presentation of the Draft Document to Council: Logistics of Presenting

BINCZYK: We need to discuss about who will be giving the presentation, how we will be creating it, and for how long it will go on.

MILLS: AT the most we should spend 20 minutes lecturing to council, and a similar time for questioning. We should extend the time allowed for a presentation.

BINCZYK: How should the presentation be done?

MILLS: As chair, you (BINCZYK) should do bulk of the talking.

KUSMU: I would even go to the extreme of 10 minutes for the presentation. You don't want people sleeping through the presentation. The conversation is the rich part.

BINCZYK: It will be challenging. However, I can do that. The merit for a longer presentation is the ability to sell some concepts to the audience.

KUSMU: We should note that we want to get recommendations from council.

BINCZYK: We need to submit the draft document by the 17th. I'm hoping to have everything revised by then. We will start consulting the stakeholders right now. On the 21st, we will get the feedback from council. We will work on it till our next meeting on the 27th of January. After that, we have 4 days to release the final document.

KUSMU: We may want to consult the stakeholders as much as possible before sending the document.

BINCZYK: Yes. However, it is unrealistic to expect a reply within the next 3 days. As Councilor Mills mentioned, I can continue consulting them till Tuesday. The document will stay more or less the same unless a big red flag comes from our discussions with the stakeholders.

6. REPORTS *None*

7. CLOSED SESSION *NIL*

8. NEXT MEETING *January 27, 2014 at 5.00 pm*

9. ADJOURNMENT NGUYEN moved to adjourn the meeting.
The motion was seconded by MILLS.

The meeting was adjourned at 6.36 pm.