



STUDENTS' COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT TASK FORCE MINUTES

2013 – 2014

Date: October 31st 2013

Time: 6.17 pm

In Attendance:

NATALIA BINCZYK (Chair)

PETROS KUSMU

MARINA BANISTER

SEAMUS WU

JESSICA NGUYEN

LOK TO

Excused Absence:

KELSEY MILLS

DAWSON ZENG

FABIAN EISMAN

Others in Attendance:

SACHITHA KUSALADHARMA

**1. CALL TO
ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by BINCZYK at 6.17 pm.

**2. APPROVAL OF
AGENDA**

NGUYEN moved to approve the agenda for *October 31, 2013* as tabled.

The motion was seconded by KUSMU.

Vote 6/0/0

CARRIED

**3. APPROVAL OF
MINUTES**

BANISTER moved to approve the minutes for *October 17, 2013* as tabled.

The motion was seconded by NGUYEN.

Vote 5/0/1 (Abstention by KUSMU)

CARRIED

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

BINCZYK: Initially, I changed the terms of reference. However, I was informed by the Speaker Craig Turner that I shouldn't have done that. Therefore, I have created a separate document named Standing Orders. It has a single entry, which is about quorum.

I have been in touch with Catherine Orydzuk of *Discover Governance* and Speaker Craig Turner about the email accounts for councilors. The Students' Union's (SU's) IT department said that they updated the emails. However, they are still not working. Therefore, the emails will be set-up from scratch, and updated each year by *Discover Governance* or the speaker instead of the IT department.

I contacted councilor Borden regarding the jackets, and she told me that the jackets will be ordered once the necessary business is done. My hope is that councilor Banister and councilor Mills can put it on the agenda of CAC (Council Administration Committee).

We also discussed about council's presence on campus-wide events. An event calendar is being created. Vice-president Le is in charge of that.

The website/facebook page is the biggest item. I haven't got any feedback from Catherine of *Discover Governance*, Speaker Turner, and councilor Borden about it yet. This issue will require a lot more preparation. So, we will discuss international student issues at the next meeting, and postpone discussion about the facebook page to the meeting after that.

KUSMU: I got confused about the facebook page. Was it the idea to create a facebook page such that councilors can engage with constituents?

BINCZYK: Yes. There are a lot of unanswered questions regarding it though. However, people see value in it, and therefore it has been brought up repeatedly. The meeting will be for us to discuss the possibilities and the logistics.

5. NEW BUSINESS

BINCZYK: We identified the council's lack of visibility between the orientation and the elections. What makes orientation and elections so successful? Is it the posters, the student excitement, or the excitement of the people who are conducting those events? Why do we not have those aspects after those events? Is it because orientation targets first year students, and that audience disappears after it is concluded? So, how can we target specific student groups on campus? What is making council go into the shadow?

BANISTER: Keen people go to orientation. We need to reach out to the demographic which didn't attend it. A lot of the events we conducted are directed towards the keen people. We need to have events to attract people who are not keen.

BINCZYK: We do have events such as the beer garden or movie nights. Do you think there is a particular type of event we are missing? We do have quite a few events going on. Do you think there should be more advertizing?

WU: Yes. There should be more advertising.

TO: The "Week of Welcome" was well advertized. But, not much after that.

BINCZYK: What do you think is the most effective advertizing method? What makes the “Week of Welcome” good?

BANISTER: It is directed at all the students. There are no restrictions.

TO: There are a lot of volunteers behind that ensuring it goes well.

BINCZYK: We don’t have many volunteers when it comes to council. Do you think we should have more fun events as opposed to informative events? There wasn’t a lot of interest for the event on budget cuts.

Do you think there are groups who could get involved with us to co-host events?

WU: I would prefer the informative events. If there were only fun events, there may be a bad impression for some people. Those people may think that the SU holds only fun events, and that they are not able to learn anything. If we can do informative events, there will be a better impression.

BINCZYK: As long as we have the network/collaboration with student groups, we will be able to get more people.

NGUYEN: For example, when working with Faculty Associations (FAs), they may want to have their own events. So, there should be a balance. However, it would be cool to have one big event where the student groups work together.

BINCZYK: I’m not sure how much we can influence the events. Is introducing an event something we should be discussing?

KUSMU: It could be brought up. This is a mid-term goal. The Vice-president Student-life can bring it to the programming and venue department. SCET has to make a set of recommendations. Once it is published, we can use it to influence staff to get things done.

BINCZYK: When thinking about events, we already have quite a lot of events going on. For example, we have the Students’ Cup.

TO: Are we talking about Students’ Union events or Students’ Council led events? There’s a big difference.

KUSMU: We have a lot of events where a lot of councilors don’t show up. Why should we create new events when the councilors don’t show up to the existing events which are successful?

BINCZYK: Would you be in favour of me making a short presentation to council, and asking about the reasons for why they are unable to come to many events.

NGUYEN: It may be hard for councilors to speak. Also, some people don’t have the time. The reasons may be very personal.

KUSMU: You have to phrase it in a way such that it doesn’t sound offensive.

BANISTER: A lot of councilors do go for events, but they don’t go as individuals, and not as councilors.

BINCZYK: I think the lack of council’s presence is due to the lack of class talks and one to one communications.

NGUYEN: Some people don’t feel much connected to being a councilor. We should help find what each councilor is passionate about. However, some will still not be as involved.

KUSMU: Some councilors don’t feel a sense of ownership, and feel

dispirited. A lot of people do have goals. But, they don't know how to materialize them. Mandating councilor goals will not only force councilors to think about it, they will be able to work with executives and staff in order to accomplish the goal.

BANISTER: We should have team goals as well, with similar goals and different people per team.

KUSMU: Once we get the councilors themselves engaged with council, that'll get them to involve other people with council.

BINCZYK: In the council retreat, we made individual goals, group goals, and general SU goals. Do you think that process is good, or do you see another way of doing it?

TO: If you put people with common interests to a group, they can make more specific goals.

BANISTER: The goals for councilors should be specific. A lot of councilors would like that.

NGUYEN: Natalya, can you do a paper ballot during the meeting, so that councilors have to respond?

KUSMU: You don't have to make it very formal.

Forming goals for councilors should take time. It's also important to ask people what their goals are before the retreat. It gives them more freedom to give an answer, whereas councilors tend to tone down their answers after the retreat.

BINCZYK: It made me realize that no matter what events we talk about, it comes back to the councilor, how much he/she is involved, and how much he/she feels ownership.

BANISTER: Some councilors don't pay attention at council. It would be nice to try one meeting where no computers or phones are allowed. We can make councilors more engaged during the meeting that way.

NGUYEN: We did that at Interdepartmental Science Students' Society (ISSS). It worked pretty well. However, it's difficult to enforce.

It would also be nice to have councilors identify themselves with different portfolios.

TO: This also depends on each individual's personality. Some like things very specific whereas others like to have a big picture. Introverts and extroverts engage in different ways. If this is understood in council, they could be able to work much better together.

BINCZYK: That is a very good idea.

KUSMU: If FAs or other large student groups had a rotating seat for councilors, or a non-voting member, councilors would be better able to perform an ambassadorial role. It would also enable the councilor to identify FA issues, and bring it back to council. This may be difficult to implement though. We would still not be identifying issues of the average student in a non-leadership position. However, it's a start.

TO: With *Student Connect*, there were a lot of councilors to start with, but most dropped out later.

KUSMU: It would get better if there was a monthly reporting mechanism for

councilors.

BANISTER: A lot of groups such as Dedicated Fee Units (DFUs) don't expect councilors to come.

TO: Do councilors not go because the meetings are very specific?

KUSMU: For DFUs, we have to have someone from council to attend their meetings.

WU: Regarding what President Kusmu was saying, if we have a councilor for each student group, the situation will still remain the same if they are not engaged enough. We will also be having new duties for each councilor, and they may not have enough time. It will be better to have a liaison officer from each student group. This person would report to the council about the proceedings of each group.

KUSMU: Will this person have a seat in the Students' Council?

WU: No. He/she will just report to it.

KUSMU: For the reports, it would be good to have a maximum page limit.

BINCZYK: It's also better to have oral reports as opposed to written reports.

NGUYEN: For ISSS, it was exciting for us to present to council. We were in contact with the Vice-president Academic regularly.

KUSMU: We already have CoFA (Council of Faculty Associations). It's important not to duplicate. Furthermore, it's important to hear the general student issues as opposed to issues of the FA.

Regarding reports, all the reports can also be in the webpage for councilors. That will make the councilors more accountable.

BANISTER: Would it be appropriate to have a very brief presentation in CoFA about our task force.

KUSMU: You should contact Vice-president Chelen about it.

BINCZYK: I would see value in contacting Vice-president Chelen in order to inform him about our discussions, and also get any recommendations from him.

I will go with the idea of the paper ballot on Tuesday, and will update council on our progress.

6. REPORTS *None*

7. CLOSED SESSION *NIL*

8. NEXT MEETING *November 14, 2013 at 6 pm.*

9. ADJOURNMENT BANISTER moved to adjourn the meeting.
The motion was seconded by NGUYEN.
Vote 6/0/0
CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 7.11 pm.

