Meeting of the Students’ Union Executive Committee
Thursday, September 12, 2002  11:30 am

1. Call to Order
President Mike HUDEMA called the meeting to “order” at 11:43 am. Attendance at Call to Order:
- Mike HUDEMA, President
- Mat BRECHTEL, Vice President (Academic)
- Steve SMITH, Vice President (Operations and Finance), Acting Recording Secretary
- Kail ROSS, Vice President (Student Life)
Absent:
- Anand SHARMA, Vice President (External)
- Bill SMITH, General Manager
- Catherine VAN DE BRAAK, Executive Assistant, Recording Secretary

2. Approval of the Agenda
ROSS/SMITH move that the Executive Committee approve the following Agenda:
1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes of the September 9, 2002 meeting
4. Reports
5. Items of Business:
   a) Pi Kappa Alpha Tuition Pull (Discussion Item)
   b) Presidential Address (Discussion Item)
   c) University of Alberta Annual General Meeting (Discussion Item)
   d) Executive Policy and Information Officer (Discussion Item)
   e) Residential Property Tax Levy (Discussion Item)
   f) Political Policy: Homelessness (Action Item)
   g) Political Policy: Minimum Wage (Action Item)
   h) Conference Request: Council of Alberta University Students (Action Item)
   i) Conference Request: Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (Action Item)
6. Announcements
7. Adjournment
Vote on the motion to approve the Agenda:
- BRECHTEL: For
- SMITH: For
- ROSS: For
Carried: 3/0/0

3. Approval of the Minutes of the September 9, 2002 meeting
ROSS/SMITH move that the Executive Committee approve the minutes of the September 9, 2002 meeting, as attached.
ROSS/BRECHTEL move to amend 5b from reading “Mike, Kail, and Anand will organize an event to highlight homelessness on September 25” to read “Mike and
Anand will organize an event to highlight homelessness on September 25. Kail will draft a political policy on homelessness."

Vote on the motion to amend the motion to approve the Minutes:
- BRECHTEL: For
- SMITH: For
- ROSS: For

Carried: 3/0/0

At this point, ROSS left the meeting

HUDEMA: Okay, time to move on.
SMITH: We haven’t approved the minutes yet.
HUDEMA: Okay, all in favour of approving the minutes?
SMITH: We’re not quorate. We can’t vote on this.
HUDEMA: If ROSS were here, he’d vote yes. We don’t need quorum.
SMITH: What kind of Commie-pinko-consensus version of Robert’s Rules of Order is HUDEMA following?

At this point, ROSS returned to the meeting.

Vote on the motion to approve the Minutes, as amended:
- BRECHTEL: For
- SMITH: For
- ROSS: For

Carried: 3/0/0

4. Reports
Nobody wished to present a report at this meeting.

5. Items of Business
a) Pi Kappa Alpha Tuition Pull
ROSS: The Pi Kappa Alpha men’s fraternity wants to raise money for Compassion House, a cancer-related charity, by holding a tuition pull, which is described in the attached letter [ROSS proceeds to read the letter aloud, on the (possibly correct) assumption that some members of the Executive Committee are illiterate.] They are requesting from us the use of a lottery license or related necessary documentation.
HUDEMA: Is this within our powers?
ROSS: Unsure.
SMITH: Also unsure. Suspects not.
HUDEMA: If it is within our powers, this should be done.
BRECHTEL: Agreed.
ROSS: At what point do we draw the line in providing assistance to Student Groups.
SMITH: That depends on exactly what is meant by “legal help.”
ROSS: Presumably, this would mean use of a lawyer at the Students’ Union’s expense.
HUDEMA: This would not be acceptable, but anything less than that would be.
BRECHTEL: It is important to find out exactly how much money from this fundraiser will actually go to Compassion House.

b) Presidential Address
HUDEMA: This arises out of the motion that Councilor Kyle Kawanami is moving at the next Students’ Council meeting.

SMITH: The motion is being moved by Councilor Chris Bolivar, and seconded by Councilor Kawanami.

HUDEMA: Whatever. Are there any thoughts on this motion, and how we should deal with it?

SMITH: I would like to speak once to this motion in Council, and oppose it on three grounds. First of all, that the judgment we executed was sound. There is no need to apologize to anybody for bringing attention to issues facing students in any available venue; however, I don’t want to dwell on this argument, since Councilors will have formed their own judgments on this already. Secondly, even if what we did was in poor taste and showed poor judgment, there is no way that we owe an apology to Rod Fraser, because the substance of what was said was true – the University is misspending tuition dollars, is planning to differentiate, and is lobbying the provincial government to deregulate. Last, there is no evidence as yet that first year students even want an apology. Presumably, Messieurs Bolivar and Kawanami will have plenty of anecdotal evidence, and we have a fair amount of our own leading to the opposite conclusion. However, I’m not overly concerned, as I would bet heavily against this motion being carried.

BRECHTEL: In fact, it is unlikely to even be a fight.

HUDEMA: What were SMITH’s arguments, again?

SMITH: If HUDEMA wants to know these, he can read the minutes when they come out.

ROSS: That we didn’t owe an apology to the University Administration, that first years don’t even want an apology, and I have forgotten the third one.

SMITH: That our judgment wasn’t bad in the first place.

HUDEMA: We should come out of this okay, but we should speak against the motion in Council.

SMITH: Agreed.

c) University of Alberta Annual General Meeting

HUDEMA: The University has asked us to provide volunteers to this, possibly including Executive members. If possible, all members of the Executive Committee should be present.

BRECHTEL: Why?

HUDEMA: All significant forces within the University community will be there.

BRECHTEL: How many volunteers are required?

ROSS: Upon examining the letter, this is not specified.

HUDEMA: We could check with Councilors to see if any were interested in being these.

ROSS: Upon examining the letter more closely, it says that there are fifteen to twenty-five volunteers required from us.

HUDEMA: If all five members of the Executive Committee are present, we can solicit Councilors for the remainder.

d) Executive Policy and Information Officer
BRECHTEL: Given the importance of this position, perhaps a professional headhunter should be hired to help fill it. This idea has been discussed with SHARMA, and he did not view it as a good one.

HUDEMA: This position has already been shortlisted, and interviews have been scheduled. The idea is not necessarily a bad one, but it is too late for it to be implemented.

BRECHTEL: I wish that I had had the chance to comment earlier in the process.

ROSS: Verbal judo.

HUDEMA: The position has been posted in the Gateway, and has been sent to all individuals with Students’ Union e-mail addresses.

ROSS: As vibewatcher, I must observe that there are negative vibes afoot.

   e) Residential Property Tax Levy Levy

HUDEMA: ROSS and I went to the last meeting of the Executive Committee of City Council to protest against the City of Edmonton’s decision to levy property taxes on University residences, making it nearly unique among Canadian jurisdictions. Bill Smith, Jane Batty, and one other Councilor voted against allowing us to speak, with only Dave Thiele supporting us. My question is what should be our next step? There should be a story in the Gateway about this next week, and I will be taking this up with David Brutch, Director of housing and Food Services.

SMITH: Our next step should be to make an impassioned speech about this to first year students.

HUDEMA: We should go to the next City council meeting, where they will be reviewing the Universities Act.

SMITH: City Council is reviewing the Universities Act?

HUDEMA: Correct. Also, we should co-ordinate meetings with the various Residence Halls Associations, and present a front on this. I would also like to pass on my congratulations to ROSS for an impressive performance on this issue thus far.

   f) Political Policy: Homelessness

ROSS/SMITH move that the Executive Committee recommend to Council that it adopt the proposed political policy regarding homelessness.

ROSS: There is, at present, a major housing crisis in Canada, and this is an attempt to address this. If the federal government were to devote one percent of its budget to the provision of affordable housing, the crisis would essentially be alleviated.

SMITH: I’m not totally comfortable with the 1% solution, as the number seems somewhat arbitrary. Also, I’m not sure to what extent this is a student issue, and to what extent it is a wider social issue.

At this point, Students’ Union Graphic Designer Chul-Ahn “Jimmy” JEONG entered the meeting.

JEONG: HUDEMA needs to provide additional information on the desired appearance of design projects.

HUDEMA: JEONG can exercise his discretion.

At this point, JEONG left the meeting.

HUDEMA: This is a student issue, because many students are homeless.

SMITH: Do we have any statistics on this?

HUDEMA: We have no statistics in terms of numbers, but we do have plenty of anecdotal evidence. The 1% solution is just means that if the federal and provincial
governments were to allocate on percent of their budgets to affordable housing, homelessness would essentially be eradicated.

BRECHTEL: Since when was the Students’ Union concerned with saving the entire world?

SMITH: May 1, 2002.

BRECHTEL: Is the portion of this policy which reads “both student and non-student” necessary?

HUDEMA: If we limit ourselves to the student aspect, the government will not move on this.

BRECHTEL: Disagree. In fact, if anything, narrowing our focus will make the government more likely to act.

HUDEMA: Also, we must remember that “non students” are potential students; having a home makes it possible for students to get loans, etc., thereby improving educational accessibility. Finally, for coalition-building purposes it is important that we be on the same page as everybody else lobbying on this, so we must include both students and non-students.

BRECHTEL: We must make our own decisions, and not take our cues from others.

ROSS: How could affordable housing not be a student issue? It is obviously a student issue.

BRECHTEL: In the same way that, say, saving the whales is a student issue.

HUDEMA: Whales aren’t students.

BRECHTEL: The scope of this policy must be narrowed. Also, the link between affordable housing for the community at large and accessibility of education is tenuous at best.

HUDEMA: Morally, we have to lobby for everybody. We could also view this as an extension of our property tax policy; as housing costs go down, whether through government subsidy or lowered property taxes, accessibility goes up. We have already established this through our lobbying on the municipal levying of property tax. Also, in response to the suggestion made by BRECHTEL that our chances of success are increased through narrowing the focus, it’s important to note that if we narrow our focus to only students, we will be lobbying alone. If we adopt the policy as is, we will be able to join our voices with literally dozens of other organizations.

SMITH moves that whereas the motion on the floor is of a very external nature; whereas the Vice President (External) is charged with overseeing matters of an external nature; and whereas the Vice President (External) is absent from this meeting; be it resolved that the Executive Committee postpone dealing with the motion until such time as the Vice President (External) is available to participate in debate on the motion.

SMITH’s motion is not seconded and dies.

BRECHTEL: Why not give this to EAB?

HUDEMA: While this would be a good idea in principle, time does not allow for this if we wish to have the policy adopted by Council in time for the September 21st week against homelessness.

SMITH: Does HUDEMA want to see this go to Council as a late addition?
HUDEMA: It would not be a late addition. The Agendas haven’t gone out yet, and Students’ Union Administrative Assistant (Executive) Margaret STASIUK assures me that there is time to slip this in.

BRECHTEL/SMITH move to strike the words “and non student” from the policy. BRECHTEL: This amendment would allow us to be part of a larger campaign, while lobbying ourselves only on more specific student issues.

HUDEMA: Disagree. Only by lobbying on affordable housing in general can we be assured that students are covered. The more voices we can bring together the better.

Vote on the motion to amend the policy:
- BRECHTEL: For
- SMITH: For
- ROSS: Opposed
- HUDEMA: Opposed

Defeated: 2/2/0

BRECHTEL: Is there any change that would narrow the policy that HUDEMA would accept? We shouldn’t be using our resources to save the world.

HUDEMA: It is in fact more work to lobby on an entirely different, narrower issue, since we can’t make use of all of the lobbying activities and materials other groups are doing.

SMITH: I’m still somewhat concerned about the 1% solution. For example, if we were told that it would take 15% of the federal and provincial budgets to alleviate homelessness, would we support that? What about 50%? Where is the line drawn?

HUDEMA: We could pass the policy now, without reference to the 1% solution, and add it in later, once SMITH is satisfied that he has been satisfactorily informed on this issue.

BRECHTEL: Following the logic espoused by HUDEMA, why are we only lobbying the city to stop taxing campus residences? Why not demand that the city stop taxing all residences, since this would benefit off-campus students? Or why not ask that all governments stop taxing everybody, since even all non-students are potential students? Where does it stop?

HUDEMA: We could amend the preamble to make it more student-centric. In the meantime, however, the only way our voice will count is if it’s in unison with a larger whole.

SMITH: If any sub-committee of Council is going to recommend a policy such as this to Council, it should be the External Affairs Board, not the Executive Committee.

SMITH/BRECHTEL move to call the previous question.
- BRECHTEL: For
- SMITH: For
- ROSS: Opposed
- HUDEMA: Opposed

Defeated: 2/2/0

ROSS: Off campus housing is an issue for students, because thousands of students live off campus, and these students face the same housing cost issues as those who live on campus. This is clearly a student issue. It affects students.

SMITH: Is ROSS aware that he sounds an alarming amount like SHARMA?

ROSS: God forbid. But I still fail to see how this is not a student issue.
BRECHTEL: It is, but the policy is too broad to reflect this adequately.

Vote on the main motion:
- BRECHTEL: Opposed
- SMITH: Opposed
- ROSS: For

Defeated: 1/2/0

HUDEMA: We should at least have sent this Council, where it would require a 2/3 majority anyway.

SMITH: I don’t believe that political policies require a 2/3 majority.

HUDEMA: Yes they do.

At this point, conveniently, Students’ Union Ombuds Director and Speaker of Students’ Council Gregory HARLOW entered the meeting.

HUDEMA: Do political policies require a 2/3 majority in Council?

HARLOW: Yes.

SMITH: Damn.

HARLOW: So, who’s coming to my poker game on Saturday?

HUDEMA: HARLOW is having a poker game Saturday? He’s an ass! There’s an Eco-Conference party Saturday night.

HARLOW: I’m sorry, it’s the only night this month that would work for me.

HUDEMA: Does HARLOW consider the political policy that was just defeated to be on a student issue?

HARLOW: Yes, though to the best of my knowledge the 1% called for is not specifically directed towards students.

SMITH calls for the orders of the day.

g) Political Policy: Minimum Wage

ROSS/SMITH move that the Executive Committee recommend to Students’ Council that it approve the proposed political policy regarding the minimum wage.

ROSS: A lot of students earn less than a livable wage. This policy requests that the government raise the minimum wage to $8.50/hour.

HARLOW: A concern would be the fact that there are probably a fair number of people who work within the Students’ Union who make less than $8.50 per hour.

SMITH: I would actually prefer that HUDEMA not realize this.

HUDEMA: Current minimum wage of $5.90 per hour does not allow an individual working full time to attain the poverty line. This needs to be changed, and the Students’ Union needs to take a leadership role.

ROSS: What about the hypocrisy-related points brought forth by HARLOW?

SMITH: Are the time constraints on this policy less than the ones on the homelessness policy?

HUDEMA: No, as both campaigns are being run concurrently during the week of September 21st.

BRECHTEL: What are HARLOW’s thoughts on this?

HARLOW: Minimum wage is a joke.

SMITH: An unfunny joke?

HARLOW: However, I’m not sure that $8.50 is the right number. How do we define the poverty line? Whose definition do we use?

SMITH: Do we have any statistics on the number of students earning less than $8.50?
HUDEMA: It’s probably fair to say that a large majority of students who work fulltime make between $5.90 per hour and $8.50 per hour. The poverty line, in this case, is defined by the federal government, hence the $8.50. We do need to address the issue of our own employees making less than $8.50; this can be done during the salary review.

SMITH: How can we pass this policy without adhering to it ourselves?
HUDEMA: This shouldn’t be a problem, as long as we put mechanisms in place to ensure that we do adhere to it at the earliest possible opportunity.

HARLOW: Does BRECHTEL always relieve stress by squeezing tacks?
[Before BRECHTEL has a chance to answer, ROSS is wounded by an elastic which he had been stretching in front of his face, and which has just broken.]
ROSS attempts to withdraw his motion; HUDEMA does not give his consent.

Vote on the motion to adopt the policy:
- BRECHTEL: Opposed
- SMITH: Opposed
- ROSS: Opposed

Defeated: 0/3/0

HARLOW: This Executive is getting better at Robert’s Rules than I am.
SMITH: The way that HUDEMA has become a Robert’s Rules fascist, I sometime think that it’s HARLOW sitting in the President’s chair.

SMITH: Calls for orders of the day.
  h) Conference Request: Council of Alberta University Students
ROSS/SMITH move that the Executive Committee send Anand Sharma, Vice President (External) and Scott Winder, Council of Alberta University Students co-ordinator, to the CAUS Conference in Lethbridge for as long as possible for a budgeted $445.36.
BRECHTEL: What the hell is CAUS?
SMITH: “Council of Alberta University Students.”
HUDEMA: It’s our provincial lobbying group.
SMITH: Is HUDEMA not going to this conference?
HUDEMA: No, I will still be in Waterloo when this conference begins.
ROSS: Why are there $136 per day budgeted for accommodations?
ROSS/BRECHTEL move to amend the attached budget in such a way as to remove any reference to a specific amount for accommodations in favour of the phrase “the going rate for a hostel.”
SMITH: We should either pass the main motion unamended or postpone this until we can hear from SHARMA.
HARLOW: If this amendment is carried, it will be rehashed in Council, and ultimately probably amended back.
HUDEMA: The amendment is good, as SHARMA has previously elected to stay in a hotel rather than be billeted, in case his billets turned out to be “freaky deaky,” even though they would have been, like SHARMA, elected student leaders.
SMITH: We should postpone the whole thing until the return of SHARMA.
HUDEMA: Somebody should move to amend the amendment to read $60 instead of “the going rate for a hostel.”
BRECHTEL: Or we could carry the main motion unamended.
SMITH: I don’t feel comfortable amending this budget until we hear from SHARMA. At this point, conveniently, SHARMA enters the meeting.
HUDEMA: Just an update for SHARMA: the affordable housing policy was defeated.
SHARMA: What?
BRECHTEL: SMITH felt is was too broad.
SMITH: BRECHTEL spearheaded opposition to it.
HARLOW: It must be hard for BRECHTEL to be the only moderate on this Executive.
HUDEMA: BRECHTEL is not a moderate, he is extremely right of centre.
SHARMA: This is correct. BRECHTEL is a right-wing asshole.
HUDEMA: BRECHTEL is like Margaret THATCHER.
SHARMA: I want to engage in sexual relations with THATCHER.
ROSS rises on a point of order, claiming that SHARMA had not been granted the floor by the chair.
HUDEMA rules the point not well taken.
ROSS/SMITH challenge the chair
Vote on the question “shall the ruling of the chair be upheld?”
  - SHARMA: For
  - BRECHTEL: For
  - SMITH: Opposed
  - ROSS: Opposed
The Chair’s ruling is upheld (2/2/0)
SHARMA: This is a reasonable hotel rate. I don’t even know if there is a hostel in Lethbridge. I have no desire to stay in Betty SUE’s Bed and Breakfast.
BRECHTEL: SUE’s Bed and Breakfast makes good apple pie.
SMITH/ROSS move that the Executive Committee recess for two (2) minutes at 13:22 to allow the Recording Secretary to catch up on his minutes.
Vote on the motion to recess:
  - SHARMA: Abstain
  - BRECHTEL: Abstain
  - SMITH: For
  - ROSS: For
Carried: 2/0/2
The meeting reconvened at 12:54
SHARMA: With three people going (the new Executive Research and Policy Officer is likely to go once hired) this would only work out to be $45 per person per night.
SMITH: What if the new EPIO is female and therefore cannot share a room?
SHARMA: The $135 if for a family suite, which includes a separate room. If the EPIO is female, we will obviously lock her in this room. This is reasonable and cost-effective, and no different from what has always been done.
HUDEMA: Then the amount budgeted for accommodation would be “the going rate for a hostel.” SHARMA could allocate this amount however he chose.
SMITH: This amendment is still irresponsible.
ROSS: Who decided in the first place that this is cost-effective?
HUDEMA: The same people SHARMA criticized last year for not being cost-effective.
SHARMA: I have no desire to go if the Executive Committee is going to make me tent up.
SMITH: Let the record show that no member of this committee has any desire to make SHARMA “tent up.”
Vote on the amendment to the motion
- SHARMA: Opposed
- BRECHTEL: Opposed
- SMITH: Opposed
- ROSS: For
Defeated: 1/3/0
Vote on the main motion:
- SHARMA: For
- BRECHTEL: For
- SMITH: For
- ROSS: For
Carried: 4/0/0
[At this point, SHARMA snaps himself with an elastic band.]
   i) Conference Request: Canadian Alliance of Student Associations
SHARMA/ROSS move that that the Executive Committee approve a budgeted expenditure not to exceed $2,220 to send Anand Sharma, Vice President (External) to the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations National Conference in Ottawa from October 25 to November 2.
HUDEMA: Does SHARMA have some sort of budgetary breakdown for this?
SHARMA: I gave it to BRECHTEL.
ROSS: BRECHTEL has been dropping the ball on a lot of things lately.
SHARMA: It’s okay, I have all the numbers in my head. They’re quite high.
HUDEMA: Is HARLOW even coming to the Eco Conference?
HARLOW: No.
HUDEMA: Why not?
HARLOW: I’m just not sure that I care enough.
HUDEMA: I’ve signed up for HARLOW’s Dance Club twice.
SMITH: HUDEMA was in the Dance Club?
HUDEMA: Yes.
SMITH: Is HUDEMA aware of the patriarchal symbolism of ballroom dancing?
HARLOW: Well, the eco-conference costs $40.
HUDEMA: Which is less than I have spent on the Dance Club.
HARLOW: That is incorrect; Dance Club costs $15 for the membership and $15 for the classes.
HUDEMA: But I was in it for two years, meaning I had to pay the membership fee twice, for a total of $45.
HARLOW: This is true.
SHARMA: The hotel is quite posh. CASA National Director Liam ARBUCKLE feels that it’s important to have all delegates in the same hotel.
At this point, BRECHTEL left the meeting.
ROSS: Council has made it clear that it expects SHARMA to put at least equivalent effort forward in his activities with CASA as he has with the Canadian Federation of Students. At this point, BRECHTEL returned to the meeting.
HUDEMA: BRECHTEL should be going to speak to a group of first year Engineers in my stead, as he’d agreed to do.
BRECHTEL: Only if HUDEMA concretely agrees to go speak to a group of first year Science students in my stead next week.
HUDEMA: Will BRECHTEL do his fucking job for once?
BRECHTEL: What HUDEMA is actually asking is will I do *his* job.
HUDEMA: Talking to students isn’t BRECHTEL’s job?
At this point in the meeting, both BRECHTEL and HARLOW left.
SHARMA: There is another CFS conference coming up which I would like to attend, but I’m not going because I don’t think that Council would let me. I don’t anticipate that this CASA conference will be useful, but I’m going anyway because I think Council wants me to.
HUDEMA: While I would have liked to see the report that SHARMA promised Council by now, even without it I oppose the motion on the table. Early indicators from both the External Affairs Board and the Executive Committee are that we should pull out of CASA, making this a waste of $2,200.
SMITH: The crux of the defenses of CASA that we have heard from individuals such as Kory ZWACK are that it lobbies effectively, and that people who matter in Ottawa listen to it. It would be irresponsible not to see CASA lobbying first hand.
HUDEMA: Everything that’s being lobbied on at this conference is something that the government is prepared to move on anyway, so success will prove nothing. Our objections to CASA have not been lobbying-related at all, but internal and policy-related, and were covered at the conference attended by both BRECHTEL and SHARMA in June.
SHARMA: If it were up to me, I wouldn’t go to this conference, because from my high (nearly highest among all participants) participation on the CASA online discussion forums, I see no hope for change in CASA, though it may be useful to observe the lobby process firsthand. Council, however, would burn me at the stake if I didn’t go. The reason I have not yet brought the report forward is that it will likely include a recommendation to pull out of CASA, and at this point Council would crucify me for such a recommendation. That last part shouldn’t be minced.
SMITH: then SHARMA should not have said while ex-camera in an open meeting of a Council sub committee with minutes being taken by Steve “Diligatron” SMITH. Vote on the motion:
- SHARMA: Abstain
- SMITH: For
- ROSS: Opposed
- HUDEMA: For
Carried: 2/1/1

6. Announcements
Due to an excessive amount of interaction between members of the Executive Committee, there was nothing to announce that was not already widely known to all.

7. Adjournment
SMITH/ROSS move that the meeting of the Executive Committee adjourn at 13:13. Vote on the motion to adjourn:
   - SHARMA: Opposed
   - SMITH: For
   - ROSS: For
Carried: 2/1/0