

STUDENTS' COUNCIL LATE ADDITIONS

Tuesday August 10, 2004 – 6:00 p.m.
Council Chambers 2-1 University Hall

2004-09/6

REPORTS

2004-09/6f

Lisa McLaughlin, Vice President Academic

Please see document LA 04-09.01

2004-09/6g

Duncan Taylor, Vice President Student Life

Please see document LA 04-09.02

2004-09/7

QUESTION PERIOD

2004-09/7g

KOTOVYCH - "Mr. Speaker, on a recent visit to my office, I was mortified to find that it had been ransacked by pugnacious hooligans. Puppy-hating trouble-makers. Evildoers. Their actions ruined the feng shui, and hurt the positive flow of chi in the Boggpound. Question to the Vice-President Academic: Are you an evildoer, and what did Freedom ever do to make you hate it so much?"

McLAUGHLIN - "Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise a point of personal privilege on the Undergraduate Board of Governors Representative's accusation that I am an evildoer and hate puppies. In fact, I was ordained by God in a past life and even my good name can attest to this. I do no evil, but solely seek to protect those upon which the threat of evil looms. Perhaps the Undergraduate Board of Governors Representative does not recall his own recent acts by which he displayed his disrespect and abhorrence for those with blonde hair and blue eyes, those who are truly angelic and are the epitome of purity and goodness?"

2004-09/14

INFORMATION ITEMS

2004-09/14b

Letter from the Gateway Student Journalism Society

Please see document LA 04-09.03

2004-09/14c

Chris Jones on DFUs

Please see document LA 04-09.04

2004-09/14d

SMITH MOVED THAT the Internal Review Board recommend to Students' Council that

1. it repeal Article VIII of the Students' Union Constitution; and
2. it approve changes to Students' Union legislation subject to the following principles:
 - (a) that Students' Council annually set the level of the Students' Union fee;
 - (b) that there be a register of dedicated fees maintained;
 - (c) that every fee listed in Section 3 of Article VIII of the Students' Union Constitution be included on that register;
 - (d) that Students' Council have the power to amend the register by simple majority vote;
 - (e) that a referendum have the power to amend the register;
 - (f) that any amendment to the register made by referendum not be amendable by Students' Council for a period lasting from its inception to the April 30 occurring not less than four and not more than five years later.
 - (g) that any motion by Students' Council to strike an item from the register must be passed before December 31 of the Council year.

Report to Students' Council, August 10, 2004

Lisa McLaughlin, Vice-President (Academic)

For period July 27-August 10, 2004

Council:

Over the past couple of weeks, I have been up to a lot ... of no good. Just kidding! The Undergraduate Board of Governor's question to me in the Late Additions package may suggest otherwise, however. ☺

Here is a brief rundown of my recent time-gobblers:

Students' Union Undergraduate Survey 2004

The Vice-President (Student Life) and I have been working vigorously with Dan Costigan, our Senior Manager of Marketing and Communications, and Academic Technologies for Learning (ATL) to ensure this survey comes to fruition and is as useful to all stakeholders as possible. We have had numerous meetings to add, delete, re-word, shorten, and generally discuss survey questions. Dan is working on a survey plan (e.g., cost, sampling method, administration method, etc.) and he and I are also putting together a proposal to go through the U of A's formal Ethical Review process. We will be arriving at a more precise idea of the total cost soon and how much we anticipate receiving from the U of A units that are asking questions on the survey. You can likely expect an item on the August 24 Council agenda seeking Council approval for the Exec to take money from the Special Projects Reserve (SPR) to fund this project. We will be giving a presentation at the beginning of the meeting and will have more detailed information available for you at that time.

Faculty Associations

The Associate Vice-President (Academic) has been busy planning a retreat for the Council of Faculty Associations later in August. We have also been working with the Director of Student Groups to attempt to resolve some issues with FA registration and status for the 2004-05 year.

"Transcript Line"

I had a meeting with three representatives from the Office of the Registrar and Student Awards to discuss my idea of a line only for people wanting transcripts or, alternatively, a more general "express" line. It was felt, though, that this solution would not help students to the extent it should, given the extremely high number of transcripts printed on some days or during certain time frames on a given day, and the high variability in terms of when these high volume times occur. When they say that they print a lot of transcripts on some days, they aren't kidding!! I was quite shocked at the numbers, which were well into the thousands on many days. They felt this line could very well end up being the longest. The concern was also raised that a number of students want more than one transcript printed at a time and often want them placed in sealed, stamped envelopes. This service slows down the whole process and defeats the purpose of "express." The Office is seriously looking at enabling students to print off unofficial transcripts through Bear Tracks, since many students only need unofficial ones. It was felt that this might be a better way to decrease line-ups at the Student Access Centre, so only those needing official transcripts or having other

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business to deal with not available online would need to come in person. I will be thinking these issues through in more detail and will evaluate the purpose and value of pursuing this further.

Congress of Canadian Student Associations (CCSA)

As the President mentioned in his Report to Council, the Executive has been trying to deal with some issues that have arisen in the past few weeks surrounding the location for CCSA 2005, as voted on at CCSA 2004 in Winnipeg, Manitoba in May. We wrote a diplomatic letter raising a number of questions that need clarification by certain parties and sent it to Executives of other student associations across Canada and other appropriate people.

Presentation at University Teaching Services' Orientation for New Professors

I was invited to bring a student voice to the session entitled "What Good Teachers Do, What Good Teachers Think, What Students Value" as part of a three-person panel consisting also of two award-winning professors. I gave a brief (well, not that brief) presentation that discussed the major challenges students face today, how these challenges are reflected in students' behaviour, what students look for when they "shop around" for a class, some common complaints students have about their professors, and 11 qualities students value in a good teacher. The take-home message was that a good teacher is someone who genuinely cares about students and shows it. The presentation went over well, I answered some questions, and I met Christopher Knapper, a big wig in the field of teaching and learning in higher education theory. Thanks to AAB for their thoughtful ideas, which formed the basis for this presentation!

Meetings

Academic Planning Committee (APC) - July 28

Introduction to the U of A Budgeting Process - July 29

Academic Affairs Board (AAB) - August 3

What's Next?

- ❑ Meeting with Bear Scat designer and representatives from University Central Admin and Administrative Information Systems (AIS) to discuss some unresolved issues from a meeting held in December 2003.
- ❑ Lunch with SU Service Directors
- ❑ AAB - August 16 @ 5:30 pm, Lower Level Meeting Room, SUB
- ❑ Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) sub-committee on the First-Year Learning Experience (FYLE) daylong retreat
- ❑ Executive meeting with Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA)
- ❑ Lunch with VP (Academic) of Grant MacEwan College Students' Association
- ❑ Council of Faculty Associations (CoFA) Retreat

Duncan Taylor – Vice President Student Life Council Report August 10th

Bar Revitalization: Programming is coming along well, as are renovations in RATT and Plant. Had a discussion about the placement of stand-up-bars and the location of the dance floor on Friday nights, which appears to have been resolved. Currently, we're pursuing a number of different sponsorship opportunities to raise the ass kicking of this project to new heights.

Meeting with UAB: Met with Tawana from UAB regarding Athletics night at RATT. Have come up with a fairly good model for programming, and got a sense for what kind of specials would be liked. Will be getting a concrete 'wish list' today.

Undergraduate Student Survey: Woopy! Doesn't everyone like Surveys? I sure do! Well, we've got the list of questions more or less finalized. Up next is the ethics proposal (to make sure we won't do anything nefarious with the data collected – like demand lower tuition or something), formatting the length and layout of the survey and Dan will be coming up with a sampling plan soon.

WoW: Ahead of the game, all things off to design right now. Activities are being finalized, Arts and Crafts day is booked and Beer Gardens is ready to go. WoW concert is undergoing a different format this year. Instead of having one large concert at the end of the week, we are having 3 on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday in Dinwoodie and looking at doing a larger concert at the end of the month. The artists, confirmed as of Monday afternoon are: Sloan w/ Limblifter, Buck 65 and Wide Mouth Mason. Currently need to finalize movies for sleeping bag drive in. Also if anyone has seen James Knoll or Matt Sadler, please inform Tyler as he misses them oh so much.

Alumni Happy Fun Times: Had a meeting with Heike from Alumni and Mr. Alex Abboud about the possibility of a Senate task Force on the Student Experience. Came up with a number of goals and arguments in favour of such a project, so we're now refining our proposal and coming up with a list of people to talk to about getting endorsements from different groups.

Alumni Happy Fun Times... MARK 2: had a meeting regard an vent to replace/modify Zero Year Reunion as some issues arose around last years event. Alumni has in mind some kind of formal w/ speakers and a DJ-Dance and Live Band at the PowerPlant. Currently working with a number of SU types to find a suitable event, however due to more pressing matters (WoW) this is on the back burner.

Movie Nights: Came up with schedule for 1st Term's movie nights. A fairly difficult process, as what you enjoy watching in your basement may not float well on the big screen. This is especially the case if your name is Roman Kotovych Things going well here.

Pam Wilson and the Fantastic Student Groups Night: Much like the meeting with Tawana, talked about support for a "Student Groups Night", and the opportunity for certain groups to host live sows as fundraising.

APRC: Alcohol Policy Review Committee. Had proposals from the BSA (Octoberfest, April Beer Gardens Post Mortem), LHSA (ResFest), The Alumni (reunion) and our very own Beer Gardens.

CCSA: A number of issues have arisen lately with respect to the location of CCSA next year, resulting in many rhetoric filled emails being thrown over the mailing list to last year's delegates. Had a meeting with rest of the exec to develop a rational and levelheaded response.

Meeting w/ Housing and Food: Jordan and I had the pleasure of having a sit down meeting with Dima and Tracy from Housing and Food to talk about some of our initiatives for the year, and some things coming down the pipe from their

end. Brought up the Bar Revitalization Plan, The Health Plan, the Survey and the Stress Busters Program. Seemed to get some interest from their end and had got a few suggestions for making these things work.

Meeting w/ Fac: Met with members of AUFJ and La Fac to discuss opportunities for having a WoW event out at Fac. Unfortunately, their idea of a larger scale bbq w/ a band isn't feasible in WoW's current budget and due to time constraints wasn't possible. We have decided to attempt to run an AntiFreeze event out their way in the winter term.

Stayed Sane: No, wait.. I didn't do that

Up and Coming!

Finish up WoW

Bar Revitalization continues

More Survey Meetings

TRAC Meeting

Meeting w/ NASA

She will never let your spirits down once you get her off the street.



gateway student journalism society

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WITHOUT PREJUDICE

August 9, 2004

Jordan Blatz
U of A Students' Union President
2-900 SUB
Edmonton, AB T6G 2J7

Re: the dedicated fees motion on your August 10 Council agenda

Dear Jordan,

As I'm sure you must understand, the Gateway is gravely concerned to find this motion on council's agenda. Recognizing that council's itinerary is not under your control, it is still deeply troubling for us to discover that members of the SU's legislative wing would even consider measures as utterly ridiculous as those proposed.

Never mind the obviously anti-democratic implications of setting aside your constituents' lawfully recorded directives to collect fees for our various fellow DFUs, we feel it necessary to specifically voice our profound disappointment that this matter has come to light on such short notice. We appreciate and thank Vice President Law for doing us the courtesy of notifying us; however, for an issue of this magnitude to surface with all of 72 hours notice (said notice arriving on a weekend no less) is an act of egregious bad faith.

This bad faith is troublingly compounded by the fact that nobody at any point has formally consulted us about the impact any changes to the fees would have on our operations. To proceed in such ignorance constitutes a major breach of diligence, even negligence, on the part of any councilors initiating and supporting this initiative.

We trust that your guidance and councilors' own good sense will combine to lead council to decline to even consider this malicious and ill-conceived initiative. Even so, we ask that council, in doing so, consider reaffirming the sanctity of dedicated fees as a legitimate and democratic aspect of providing U of A students with services; we ask for such a reaffirmation in the hopes it might serve to discourage rogue elements from further damaging the otherwise positive relationship existing between our organizations.

On behalf of the Gateway Student Journalism Society,

Adam Rozenhart
Editor-in-Chief

Don Iveson
Business Manager

cc. Students' Council, University of Alberta
Alvin Law, VP Ops/Fi and UASU Exec rep to the GSJS Board
Steve Smith, UASU Council rep to the GSJS Board
Student Legal Services
WUSC
Eugene L Brody Fund
Student Involvement Endowment Fund
CJSR
Legacy Fund
Campus Recreation Enhancement Fund
Access Fund
Student Legal Services Fund
APIRG
Chris Dinn, Canadian University Press President

Chris Jones' on DFUs

I haven't seen anything except what APIRG sent out (I've been making a point of not keeping up with Council). There big problem with DFUs is this: how can we ensure that students still support a DFU, while simultaneously providing some assurance of stable funding for DFUs, not overburdening the ballot with re-approving them en masse, and ensuring that they have independence of action if applicable.

IMO, it makes no sense to use the current approach, which is basically "once a DFU, always a DFU" (unless an angry mob of 2500 signatures, or Steve, intervenes). I think there's a lot of merit in re-legitimizing DFUs every few years (for example --- when was CJSR's last referendum? I haven't had an opportunity to vote on the fee, or even on changing it up or down a bit, in the six years I've been here). Even beside that point, 2500 signatures (or Steve) is rather a lot to ask in order to ensure that students still support a DFU's fee.

One way to do this re-legitimization would be to have Council set DFU levies each year (which some DFUs oppose for obvious, and good, reason), or have the fees go to referendum each year (which would burden a lot of the smaller, less well-known DFUs; make election costs skyrocket; and unduly burden voters). Both of these methods suck. In addition, DFUs wouldn't have any ability to engage in long-term planning.

On the other hand, I think it's entirely too easy to establish DFUs. All you need is 2500 signatures, and it's not all that hard to get, especially for trendy (okay, I'm going to come out and say it, 'progressive' leftie) causes. Say, APIRG. It's a lot easier to get the sigs to start a group than it is to get the sigs to kill one, let alone comparing the difficulties of the respective campaigns (compare establishing APIRG, at what, \$3 / term? against killing the Campus Rec heresy at about the same amount). In addition, you run into the problem that some DFUs end up looking rather different than what you might imagine, given the campaigns. As an arbitrary example, I'm going to pick APIRG. There's no way on Cthulu's green earth that you can possibly claim that APIRG doesn't have an institutional political bias, but this was one of the claims made during the campaign.

So: my proposal (ripped off in large part from Kyle's) is something like this. In order to establish a DFU, you would need a referendum which would provide you with provisional funding for one year. As that year elapses, you get to go automatically (if you want) to referendum to become a permanent DFU. In short, you have to pass two referenda, back-to-back.

If you're a reasonably competent group and are doing what you said you were doing, the second referendum should be a cakewalk. If you're neither of these, you will hopefully get shot down, as you should be.

Next, I would suggest that DFUs authorizations have terms of between two and four years. You could structure it so that the terms get longer, the longer a DFU exists, or you could structure it so that it's based on how controversial it is, or something. As the authorization terms come up for renewal, the fee goes automatically to referendum. I would be very tempted to prevent the DFU's resources from being used on either side of the question, although I wouldn't prevent the people involved in the DFU from campaigning. If the referendum to retain passes, the fee gets another term. If it fails, then you get a one-year period of provisional funding, and another referendum if you want it. If that referendum fails, the fee dies. I'd also impose a waiting period (which could be waived with Council consent) of a year or two, to prevent continuous referenda.

Is this perfect? No. But I think it makes DFUs substantially more responsible to students for the money that they're collecting from students.

Oh --- and I would require that all DFUs offer an opt-out. The obvious way to do this is via the SU, which could do a central point of opt-out so that you could opt out of specific ones or all of them, if you really wanted to.