

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE — 2023-2024 #41

November 20, 2023

12:10 PM

ATTENDANCE

Christian Fotang	<i>President</i>
Chris Beasley	<i>Vice President (External)</i>
Pedro Almeida	<i>Vice President (Academic)</i>
Levi Flaman	<i>Vice President (Operations and Finance)</i>
Michael Griffiths	<i>Vice President (Student Life)</i>
Marc Dumouchel	<i>General Manager</i>
Juliana du Pree	<i>Director of Marketing and Communications</i>
Jonathan Olfert	<i>Director of Research and Advocacy</i>
Ari Campbell	<i>External Relations Specialist</i>

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

BEASLEY/GRIFFITHS MOVED TO approve the Executive Committee agenda as presented.
4/0/0 CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

GRIFFITHS/ALMEIDA MOVED TO approve the Executive Committee minutes from November
16, 2023 as presented.
5/0/0 CARRIED

REPORTS

TABLED

STUDENTS' COUNCIL

- Indications are that some students may wish to visit Students' Council to push for specific UASU positions on the Israel/Gaza conflict. The Executives discussed space bookings, scheduling options, and logistical support to ensure the meeting business (including urgent presentations) can move forward, and that students who wish to participate in Open Forum will have the opportunity. Open Forum is only for students.
- Counterparts at some other student associations have reported significant safety-related situations while holding comparable meetings.
- One possibility that was extensively discussed was asking Council to suspend Standing Orders to change the order of meeting items so Open Forum could take place at different potential points in the meeting. There is also a risk that the discussion of whether to do so could become an additional time sink.
- The Executives discussed options for rearranging or consolidating their reports to make room.
- The Executives discussed the importance of preparing Councilors to engage in this kind of environment; ensuring the Speaker feels empowered and prepared to support this meeting and clearly, proactively explain all relevant rules for participation; and proactively communicating with scheduled presenters.
- The Executives discussed the importance of a 'listen and learn' approach as opposed to potential initiatives to make reactive decisions on the floor.

ACTION ITEMS

NO ITEMS

DISCUSSION PERIOD

Requests for Comment

- Reporters asked for comment on a number of potential developing stories. The Executives reviewed a variety of potential responses, primarily a draft comment to the Edmonton Journal about the University's termination of the director of the Sexual Assault Centre.

Potential Statement on Discrimination

- Concerns about discrimination and racism against Palestinian students, Jewish students, and other equity-seeking groups have been escalating across Canada and locally.

- FOTANG met with a Palestinian student and interested others, and is in contact with Hillel Edmonton.
- The local branch of Students for Justice in Palestine has put out a letter toward the University and the UASU, and has organized a rally tomorrow. The University has put out a brief statement in response to the planned rally. When the University posted the statement, FOTANG contacted University administration and pointed out that the tone and content of the statement could have significant safety impacts for students. Student reactions toward the University's statement have included serious concerns about over-policing based on protected grounds.
- The Executives discussed the University's responsibilities toward safety, equity, and free expression.
- In this context, and due to escalating experiences of racism and fear for student safety, the Muslim Students' Association has now requested a UASU statement condemning discrimination and supporting students' right to peaceful protest.
- The Executives discussed a range of input across social media, email, in-person contacts, and other venues, showing a wide variety of opinions and personal impacts among students.
- A small number of individuals have escalated contact with staff in several departments in ways that have caused severe stress.
- The Executives discussed safety concerns for various sites and services.
- The Executives worked toward a consensus on whether to issue a statement in the context of the University's responsibilities, the UASU's mandate and scope, escalating discrimination, available resources, service access for all students, and students' rights.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 1:23 PM.