



AMS Special Assembly Minutes

December 15th, 2022

Queen's University, Kingston

Minutes are tentative until approved at Assembly.

The meeting was convened at 6:32 EST.

Secretary Golrokhian-Sani: Alright, thank you everyone for being here on short notice! Welcome and let's get started.

Speaker's Business

Speaker Golrokhian-Sani: I'll do our land acknowledgement:

Cataraqui or Kingston, as we understand it today, is abundant in history and modern-day traditions of many First Nations and Metis. In particular, the Alma Mater Society would like to acknowledge that it's Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territory which Queen's University resides on. These lands surrounding the Great Lakes are immersed in thousands of generations of indigenous history, including language, art, celebrations, and resilience. We recognize that it was within the Crawford purchase of 1783 that these lands were made available for settlements, and the agreements made were upheld by the First Peoples, but not the British crown or later the Canadian government. While we work on these lands as uninvited guests we actively benefit from the oppression of indigenous peoples. Because of our settler positionality, we have an obligation to listen to indigenous voices, and we must act in ways that will condemn past and ongoing violence against indigenous peoples and support positive change.

As a branch of the Society that strives to connect student leaders and facilitate positive change and student advocacy on Turtle Island, we strive to maintain the core values and teachings from indigenous peoples. We are incredibly grateful for the ability to do so. As the Secretariat Office facilitates Assembly, elections and Judicial Affairs, it is our duty to ensure the voices of indigenous and marginalized peoples are amplified, as well as provide resources on how we can facilitate and help in advocacy that is important. We encourage all members of the Office as student leaders, to reflect on privileges that they have been afforded on this land, and use it to ensure campus safety, accessibility, and impact for all students. As settlers on this stolen land of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples, we must continue to educate ourselves and

strive to decolonize every layer of our governance system and curricula, and to indigenize our learning. The resilience of indigenous peoples and their traditions should be applauded and inspire strength and kindness in us all. The Wampum belt covenant should be used as our compass as we navigate our journey of reconciliation with indigenous people of Canada. The Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee people had a mutual understanding of how to share the land and resources peacefully with one another. By living on this land, we must also abide by these values.

Secretary Golrokhian-Sani: And as the last part of my Speaker Business, I would encourage everyone to please turn on their cameras if they're comfortable, and remember that only Voting Members can raise their hands on this. I'll probably send a recording out and hopefully the minutes if we can make that work with our timeline. If not, I'm going to send the recording for everyone to see before the vote so they have a chance to also feel present. Now if anyone wants to give a report, they may of course but this is not an actual schedule Assembly so no one needs to.

Statements by Students

Secretary Golrokhian-Sani: Any statements from students? No? Okay, let's move on.

Business Arising from the Minutes

Speaker Golrokhian-Sani: So this is not the main thing but I thought it's good to just bring it up now and we'll bring it up again in January. I would like to change the Annual General Meeting date from our April date to our March date and the actual motion will be brought forward at the next Assembly, to change the date of the 2023 AGM from April 6th to March 9. The reasoning for this is because according to our current Constitution, ideally AGMs should be in March or sooner. Do we have any questions on this right now? No? All right, great stuff. On to New Business.

New Business

Motion # – Moved by Secretary Golrokhian-Sani , Seconded by AMS President Sikich.

Motion that Assembly approve the changes to Elections Policy as seen in the appendix.

Motion carries.

Speaker Golrokhian-Sani: There have been a few housekeeping changes on elections. Firstly, we also made the fonts and the logo comply with branding guidelines, but that's just normal. The main thing we're changing is this transparency thing. Hopefully all the voting members should remember this from our early e-mail which I sent just to make sure we're going to make quorum. In the email, I give a brief intro, I'll give a more through one now. Basically we were debating on the specific accountability and transparency requirements that a candidate has to meet in running for office, and how much their voter base should know about them basically. For example, with Assembly there is a policy that if an executive wants takes more than three courses, Assembly would need to approve it. And, you know, it makes sense. The intent behind that was to make sure, you know, that they have enough time to come into their role, but also that they don't get burned out or stressed out if they are taking on more in terms of academics. Overall we're trying to make sure the amount of overall time commitment is something that normal human can reasonably provide. Also we want make sure we're maintaining privacy for candidates, so that challenge eventually led to this idea that we would request candidates, as part of their ballot blurb, estimate their hourly commitment per week. Just an average over the semester in three categories, those being extracurriculars, academics and work. Of course these are all external to the job they're doing with the AMS. We see this as like a test of fitness to see if people are shooting for the role, if they're capable of fulfilling the duties and maintaining their mental health and not being overworked. It is also for students to know so they have a better idea and they're allowed to ask questions on it. Of course candidates are totally not obligated to answer anything further than just the numbers. That is for their privacy. That's up to their discretion if they want to share anything more. We thought this would promote transparency. This would apply, of course, to all operations that are specifically run by us. Mainly that will be Rector, trustees and the executive. Any questions on this? VP Farrell?

VP Farrell: Yeah, just one quick question. Will there be anyone verifying these numbers or is it just kind of at the discretion of those putting it down?

Speaker Golrokhian-Sani: It really is their discretion because how would we verify that? I mean, Assembly has powers for certain things around that right? So it's a matter of "ohh like if you tell me I'm taking like 20 hours of academics for the Winter semester on average" and we find out you have like seven courses that on their syllabi they added to 50 hours then we can

bring that up and lying about something like that is grounds for like sanctioning or removal of the individual. So there is like a risk of punishment more so rather than us verifying. It's just like, you know, if you really are doing double the work you're telling us you're doing, you're putting yourself at risk at that point. We're hoping that everyone is honest, and if they're not, ultimately, they're the ones who suffer for it, which is unfortunate, but we can only do so much as Internal Affairs to find out what they're doing. Any more questions?

VP Farrell: Just one more question. Will there be any information given out to students who are voting in terms of what the normal amount of extracurriculars, academics and work would be just because if one person has significantly less, maybe people would vote for them just because they think they have less commitments. But perhaps the standard is at a higher threshold if that makes any sense.

Speaker Golrokhian-Sani: I mean, I don't think there's anything wrong with giving a standard. I don't know if it needs to be on the policy as well, but if someone like can provably provide a standard that we could base everything off of, then they can put down their blurb and we can talk about that further. I don't believe there is a standard though to be honest. I can't say what the baseline is, the expectation is for someone who's running for, let's say, one of the VP positions. Generally I think it's fair to say that an executive, when they take on this role, does not take on another paid role, but I think they could take on part time work and we understand that, especially if they need to support any dependents or their family.

AMS President Sikich: The baseline that we'd be looking at, Amir, is so that we have an idea of what their extracurricular commitment and courses might look like, Executives are supposed to be taking one course with a maximum of three courses. So the minimum that we could have of an expectation would be about a three-course load, which I believe is about 8 hours of courses.

VP Farrell: I think that helps. I just think it might be useful to have a reference point so students can actually know what to do with these numbers rather than just seeing them, because I think they would be valuable if they had kind of more knowledge of the scope of the role.

Speaker Golrokhian-Sani: That's fair. Yeah, I was a little worried about the specificity but if can come up with an average system and people feel confident with the numbers we bring, that would be what we use. We could hopefully incorporate it for this election as long as it gets approved next Assembly. Alright. Yeah. So that's basically it. And just to clarify, a reminder that the candidates are allowed to speak on their hours if they so choose. So if they feel like something is going to be misrepresented, they have the privilege of being able to explain themselves. Alright, onto the Discussion Period, does anyone want to discuss anything?

Discussion Period

Speaker Golrokhian-Sani: All right, I will bring up one thing and I'll be brief because I did say 30 minutes, I don't want to keep you all longer than that. Really quick thing for Faculty Societies who are here: we thought there's been a cool idea of something to do for our Executive election this year. Basically, we're going to do this type of give away/ donation for the Faculty Society that has the highest voter turnout. We're going to have a question on the ballot that asks which Faculty Society people are from and if your Society gets the highest percentage, we will donate \$500.00 to a charity of your choosing. We thought this would be a nice way to try to bring up the lower turn out. Anyone have any questions on this? Okay, well then can I have a motion to adjourn? I know this is weird because we don't have a quorum. OK, all in favor? The motion passes. Thank you everyone for coming here for this special meeting and you'll all get the recording in your inboxes. Thanks everyone, have a good break!

Adjournment

Moved by AMS President Sikich, Seconded by Secretary Golrokhian-Sani.

Motion carries.

Assembly is adjourned at 6:20 EST.