DSU Council Meeting Agenda

Meeting Date and Time: December 3, 2020 – 6:30 pm
Location: Microsoft Teams

Land Acknowledgement

The Dalhousie Student Union acknowledges that Dalhousie University and the Dalhousie Student Union Building are located on traditional, unceded and unsurrendered Mi’kma’ki territory. The Dalhousie Student Union seeks to honour the relational treaty process in its programming, events, and meetings.

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:41PM.

2. Roll Call

Present:

Madeleine Stinson – President
Hanna Stewart - Vice President, Internal
Isa Wright - Vice President, Finance and Operations
Jad Ghiz - Vice President, Student Life
Fatima Beydoun - Board of Governors Representative 1
Aparna Mohan - Board of Governors Representative 2
Robert Larsen - Faculty of Agriculture Representative
Zachariah Scinocca - Faculty of Dentistry Representative
William Luton - Faculty of Engineering Representative
Hariprashanth Deivasigamani - Faculty of Graduate Studies Representative
Aaron Sophocleous - Faculty of Management Representative
Cameron Penny - Faculty of Medicine Representative
Oluchi Duru - Faculty of Science Representative
Nik Isaac-Pictou - Indigenous Students’ Representative
Claudia Castillo-Prentt - Black Students’ Representative
Isabella Paes de Mello de Camargo - International Students’ Representative
Kathrine Guevara - Women Students Representative

Absent with regrets:
Erica Seelemann – Vice President, Academic and External
Shane Isler - Faculty of Law Representative

Absent without regrets:
Hassaan Asif - Students Living in Residence Representative

Vacant:
Faculty of Architecture Representative
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Representative
Faculty of Computer Science Representative
Faculty of Health Professions Representative
LGBTQ+ Students’ Representative
Students with Disabilities Representative

Non-voting Members: (note: non-voting attendees are listed here only if they contributed during the meeting. DSU members who were present to observe the meeting but did not intervene in discussion are not listed)
Lane Harrison – Dal Gazette

3. Approval of the Agenda

MOTION 2020-12-03-3.1
BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda for the present meeting be approved as presented.
Moved by: Board of Governors Representative 1; seconded by: Faculty of Engineering Representative
Motion passes.

MOTION 2020-12-03-3.1.1: Amendment to the agenda
Amendment: adding five motions in Amendments by Council
Moved by: Indigenous Students’ Representative; seconded by: Black Students’ Representative
Motion passes.

4. Business Arising Out of the Minutes
None.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
MOTION 2020-12-05.1
BE IT RESOLVED THAT the minutes for the previous meeting be approved as presented.
Moved by: Faculty of Dentistry Representative; seconded by: Board of Governors 1
Motion passes.

6. Communications Received
Regrets from Faculty of Law Representative and Vice President, Academic & External

7. Appointments by Council
MOTION 2020-12-07.1
BE IT RESOLVED THAT _________ be appointed to the Response Committee.
Aashay Raj, Phoebe Seely, Sameer Mohamed
Nominations: Aashay Raj, Phoebe Seely, Sameer Mohamed
MOTION 2020-12-07.2
BE IT RESOLVED THAT _________ be appointed to the External Committee.
Nominations: Aparna Mohan, Hassaan Asif
MOTION 2020-12-07.3
BE IT RESOLVED THAT _________ be appointed to the Offices Steering Committee.
Nominations: Ken Jacquard
MOTION 2020-12-07.4
BE IT RESOLVED THAT _________ be appointed to the Budget and Finance Committee.
Nominations: Faculty of Management Representative
MOTION 2020-12-07.5
BE IT RESOLVED THAT _________ be appointed to the Society Review Committee.

Nominations: **Eptehal Nashnoush**

*Recommendations to be brought by Oversight Committee*

Moved by: Indigenous Students’ Representative seconded by: Faculty of Science Representative

Motion **passes.**

Motion: Motion to omnibus motions 7.1 to 7.5

Moved by: Faculty of Agriculture Representative; seconded by: Faculty of Engineering Representative

Motion **passes.**

The Indigenous Students’ Representative asks whose responsibility it is to reach out to general members in committees.

President responds that the DSU Policy & Governance Coordinator will take care of it.

8. Presentations

8.1 Updates on Senate Advocacy and Pass/ILL Grading Option

*Presented by the VPAE (given that the VPAE is absent, it was presented by president)*

Faculty of Science Representative asks whether the deadline to apply for a waiver has passed.

President responds that the SPGS met today but won’t be meeting again as the semester ends Monday. The waiver has to come from the Faculty dean. If there is something specific within the Faculty of Science that is a problem with Pass/ILL, President states that it must be brought to the attention of the SPGS chair.

8.2 Presentation of Revised Budget

*Presented by the VPFO*

Board of Governors Representative 1 asks whether there are any plans as to how the community advocacy support will be advertised.

VPFO responds that they will be working with the grant committee as well as the executive committee to receive input on it. They state that as of right now, they only have a small sum of funds available and don’t know if they should be advertising opportunities or, instead, letting council representatives come to them with concerns from their constituents. They state that they are open to feedback.
Faculty of Management Representative asks, in terms of the statement that Campus Copy is not seeing demand, where has this feedback come from? They state that they have heard from their constituents that there is demand for printing services.

VPFO responds that, to the best of their knowledge, there hasn’t been demand that has been reported to full-time staff. If in fact there has been demand, this is a great place to voice that. They state that they can do consultation in the winter semester to assess whether they can reopen Campus Copy.

Faculty of Agriculture Representative asks whether the Budget & Finance committee will be meeting again or whether questions should be brought to the VPFO directly.

VPFO responds that the committee won’t be meeting again; however, if they receive feedback that suggests that significant alterations to the budget be done, a meeting can be called.

Faculty of Agriculture Representative states that if consultations on Campus Copy are going to be done in the winter semester, it means that it won’t be open to students. Can a meeting be called to discuss this?

VPFO responds that they have sent out a consultation on student priorities. As per the feedback, there wasn’t great interest in Campus Copy. Perhaps there are some low-cost solutions that can be implemented, and a small pilot project can be run on this. If Campus Copy were to reopen next semester, we could implement reduced hours as an interim solution.

9. Committee Reports

None.

10. Old Business

None.

11. New Business

MOTION 2020-12-03-11.1

WHEREAS the DSU recognizes that students doing online schooling are struggling with excessive workloads and/or unreasonable behaviour from professors;

WHEREAS the DSU recognizes that without effective feedback, professors & faculty admin cannot correct the behaviour;

WHEREAS graduate students have found success in formally addressing professors as students on a united front and demanding the change they needed; THEREFORE
BE IT RESOLVED THAT faculty representatives on Council are tasked to contact constituents to compile a report on issues that students in their faculty are facing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT these reports will be presented by the first council meeting of 2021 on January 7th

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the VPSL will work with each faculty representative over the winter semester to develop faculty-level advocacy about the issues raised, including submitting formal complaints to official body/ies in each faculty where appropriate.

Moved by: Vice President, Student Life; seconded by: President

Motion passes.

Indigenous Students’ Representative asks, given that there is no Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences representative, who will obtain information from that Faculty?

VPSL responds that this motion came from an extensive conversation around mental health put out earlier last month. The context around this motion was to address workload with online learning. They state that one of the individuals who attended the forum was a master’s student and they mentioned that they solved this problem by speaking to their professor to resolve issues relating to their course. This motion is asking Faculty representatives to reach out to their constituents and address specific points around workload and what is or isn’t working and bringing this feedback to the appropriate party in their Faculty before the start of next semester. VPSL states that if there is no Faculty representative present, the issue can be resolved outside this motion.

Indigenous Students’ Representative states that they are able to obtain information from FASS if need be.

VPSL responds that they can have this discussion sometime in the next few weeks.

Faculty of Agriculture Representative states that the timeline is tight and that there isn’t enough time given to councillors to conduct proper consultation with their constituents and make a report.

VPSL states that they understand if there isn’t enough time and that they can discuss pushing the timeline up. VPSL asks what a better timeline would look like.

Faculty of Agriculture Representative states that the holidays is not a good time for consultation because students are preoccupied. Perhaps the first week of winter semester would work better. They are looking for consensus form other councillors.

Faculty of Engineering agrees with this sentiment. They state that in order to be able to compile an accurate report, the timeline should be pushed to the second or third meeting of winter semester.

VPSL states that by the 4th of February, classes will have been going for four weeks which should give plenty of time for consultation.

**MOTION 2020-12-03-11.1.1:** Amendment to motion
Amendment: change the second last paragraph of Motion 11.1 to:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT these reports will be presented by the third council meeting of 2021 on February 4th.

Moved by: Vice President, Student Life; seconded by: President

Motion passes.

MOTION 2020-12-03-11.2

WHEREAS the Winter General Election timeline has been prepared by the CRO and recommended for approval by the Elections Committee; THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the timeline for the DSU Winter General Election be approved as presented.

Moved by: President; seconded by: Faculty of Engineering Representative

Motion passes.

MOTION 2020-12-03-11.3

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic means that many students are studying from outside the HRM, and that those who are within the HRM must limit their close contacts, and therefore soliciting nominations signatures in person is not feasible; AND

WHEREAS requiring hard copy forms during this pandemic is unfair to those students studying outside HRM; THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED THAT for the purposes of the winter 2020 general election, the Elections and Referenda Policy be interpreted such that all forms and questionnaires will be submitted using web forms instead of paper forms; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT for the purposes of the winter general election in 2021, the requirement for nomination forms to include “Full names, student numbers, and signatures of at least twenty-five (25) current students who support the candidacy of a nominee” (Elections and Referenda Policy s.8.2.2.1) be interpreted to allow for the following process:

Nominees will collect the names, student numbers, and @dal.ca email addresses from at least twenty-five (25) current students who support their candidacy and will submit this information to the Chief Returning Officer using a standardized template. The CRO will email all submitted signatories for a particular nominee to ensure that they do in fact support that individual’s candidacy.

Moved by: President; seconded by: Board of Governors Representative 1

Motion passes.

MOTION 2020-12-03-11.4
WHEREAS Dalhousie students have expressed widespread concern about financial precarity, rising tuition, and their ability to make ends meet during COVID-19; AND

WHEREAS the Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB) ended on August 29, 2020 and the majority of the funds allocated to the Canada Student Service Grant (CSSG) were not distributed, but many students are still without work and unable to access other supports; AND

WHEREAS international students were not covered under the CESB to begin with; AND

WHEREAS the DSU advocates for the rights and needs of international students and all students, and most recently built the NS Needs Students campaign focusing on the need for increased public funding for universities and reduced tuition costs for students; AND

WHEREAS on April 22, 2020, DSU Council voted unanimously in favour of signing on to a petition and open letter by Don’t Forget Students and the Canadian Federation of Students, calling on the Prime Minister to expand CERB to include students and recent graduates, and this petition was a factor in the government’s decision to create the CESB; AND

WHEREAS the April 22, 2020 motion also mandated “THAT the DSU continue to research ways to advocate for better student supports during the COVID-19 pandemic;” THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the executives of DSU sign on to Our Commons petition e-2986 to the Government of Canada, launched by the Canadian Federation of Students and Don’t Forget Students. The petition calls on the Government of Canada “to implement a plan for pandemic relief and stimulus for Canada’s post-secondary sector and students that:

1. Utilizes the funds originally allocated for the CSSG [Canada Student Service Grant] and remaining funds from the $9 billion allocated for post-secondary students in April to extend the CESB while also including International students;

2. Includes newly graduating students and recent graduates (retroactive to Fall 2019) in Employment Insurance and the new CRB program;

3. Extends the moratorium on student debt loan interest and payments until May 1, 2021, with consideration of further extensions based on the public health and economic situation, and commits to significant student debt relief;

4. Expands the Canada Student Grant, returns to 50-50 cost-sharing with provinces and territories, and increases funding for post-secondary institutions.”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Councillors are encouraged to sign on to the petition and to talk about it with their constituents, communities, and peers; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the DSU post about the petition on social media and other official channels to encourage our members to sign on in support.

Moved by: Board of Governors Representative 1; seconded by: Vice President, Internal

Motion passes.

MOTION 2020-12-03-11.5
WHEREAS the DSU Council received a presentation on allegations made against an associate professor in the Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine on the November 19th meeting of Council; and

WHEREAS the DSU is dedicated to supporting all survivors of sexualized violence;

THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED that the DSU Council endorse the attached statement, to be circulated to the membership.

Moved by: Board of Governors Representative 1; seconded by: Black Students’ Representative

Motion passes.

12. Executive Reports

12.1 Report of the President

None.

12.2 Report of the Vice President, Internal

None.

12.3 Report of the Vice President, Finance and Operations

None.

12.4 Report of the Vice President, Academic and External

None.

12.5 Report of the Vice President, Student Life

None.

13. Notice of Motion

The following motions will appear on the agenda for the next Council meeting on December 17, 2020:

13.1: Motion to approve the revised budget

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the revised budget for the 2020-21 fiscal year be adopted.

Moved by the Vice President, Finance and Operations.

13.2: Motion to discipline a councillor
WHEREAS the duties of a DSU councillor, as described in Section 4.4 of the Bylaws, include that they must use reasonable efforts to advance the interests of the constituency they represent, must attend all meetings of Council, and must sit on at least one Union Committee; and

WHEREAS Councillor Sahl Zoor, Computer Science representative, has been absent without regrets from 8 meetings of DSU Council and has not yet joined a Committee; and

WHEREAS Section 4.8 of the DSU Bylaws dictates that councillors may be disciplined for failure to attend Council meetings and/or failure to perform their duties;

THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED that Councillor Sahl Zoor, Computer Science representative, be recalled-to By Election; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council empower the DSU president to formally request that the Dalhousie Computer Science Society nominate a new Computer Science Representative no later than January 31, 2021; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that should Councillor Sahl Zoor provide reasonable explanation for his lack of participation, as well as present a plan to ensure his commitments to the student body are met in the future in his response to this motion, that Council consider his response with empathy for his individual circumstances.

13.2.1: Motion to strike Motion 13.2 from the agenda

Moved by: President; seconded by: Vice President, Student Life

Motion passes.

14. Announcements

None.

15. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:30PM.