DSU Council Meeting Agenda

Meeting Date and Time: March 11\textsuperscript{th}, 2021 – 7:00pm Atlantic time

Location: Virtual Meeting using 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.

Equity Statement

Student union solidarity is based on the principle that all members should be able to participate equally in their union, recognizing that students have diverse experiences of privilege and marginalization. As members of the students’ union, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding are our goals. We should neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

It is our collective responsibility to create an inclusive space for discussion and dialogue. Any form or forms of discrimination and/or harassment will not be tolerated, nor will hate speech rooted in, but not limited to, sexist, racist, classist, ableist, homophobic or transphobic sentiments and/or remarks. We all have an obligation to ensure that an open and inclusive space, free of hate is established. If you violate this understanding, you will be asked to leave.

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:06PM.

2. Roll Call

Present:

Madeleine Stinson – President
Hanna Stewart - Vice President, Internal
Isa Wright - Vice President, Finance and Operations
Erica Seelemann – Vice President, Academic and External
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
Simon Burns - Faculty of Engineering Representative
Hariprashanth Deivasigamani - Faculty of Graduate Studies Representative
Shane Isler - Faculty of Law 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
Ken Jacquard - Students with Disabilities Representative
Hassaan Asif - Students Living in Residence Representative

Absent with regrets:
Aaron Sophocleous - Faculty of Management Representative
Isabella Paes de Mello de Camargo - International Students’ Representative
Drew Guyan - LGBTQ+ Students’ Representative
Kathrine Guevara - Women Students Representative

Absent without regrets:
Claudia Castillo-Prentt - Black Students’ Representative

Vacant:
Faculty of Architecture Representative
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Representative
Faculty of Computer Science Representative
Faculty of Health Professions Representative
3. Approval of the Agenda

MOTION 2021-03-11-3.1

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda for the present meeting be adopted as presented.

Moved by: Students with Disabilities Representative; seconded by: Board of Governors Representative 1

Motion passes.

MOTION 2021-03-11-3.1.1: Motion to amend the agenda

Amendment: strike Motion 13.2 and add Motion 4.1 information on the e-motion

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

Motion passes.

4. Business Arising Out of the Minutes

MOTION 4.1: e-motion

A motion was passed this week to approve the health plan increases for the fall 2021/2022. The relevant documents, including the motion and motivation, will be available on the website for interested parties.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

MOTION 2021-03-11-5.1

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the minutes of the Council meeting on February 25, 2021 be adopted as circulated.

Moved by: Students with Disabilities Representative; seconded by: Students Living in Residence Representative

Motion passes.

6. Communications Received

Regrets from Faculty of Management Representative

Regrets from International Students’ Representative

Regrets from LGBTQ+ Students’ Representative

Regrets from Women Students Representative
7. Appointments by Council

None.

8. Presentations

8.1. Anti-Oppression Training for 2021-22 Societies

Presented by the Vice President Internal, for feedback.

Documents attached.

Two documents were circulated for this meeting, the anti-O workshop and anti-O workbook. Councillors are asked to make reviews and suggestions where they see fit. Anti-oppression training is for faculty and levy societies and will be provided as a document with text to speech accessibility.

8.2. Update on Dalhousie Accessibility Plan Feedback

Presented by the President, for feedback.

Documents attached.

President states that they’ve been asked to provide information on the accessibility plan. There were recommendations for more gender-neutral, age-inclusive, and accessible washrooms to be built. General feedback on the accessibility center is that it is not accessible and staff are adversarial. Recommendation that staff take training and review policies. Staff should also have a method for accepting feedback, which they currently don’t. There was also a recommendation for students to register their accommodations only once, rather than annually.

8.3. Update on BAC Feedback to Dalhousie & DSU Action

Presented by the VPAE, for information.

Documents attached.

Increasing fees will make education non-accessible. The VPAE emphasizes the toll that international students faced this year with hotels. As follow up steps, governments will be contacted. The minister of advanced education & labour will be contacted about increasing fees.

8.4. Draft 2021-22 Budget

Presented by the VPFO, for feedback.

Documents attached.

9. Committee Reports

None.
10. Old Business

None.

11. New Business

MOTION 2021-03-11-11.1

WHEREAS the Dalhousie Student Union mitigated the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic by keeping expenses low while maintaining or improving the majority of student supports and services, and;

WHEREAS responsible financial planning and spending has prevented the DSU from incurring significant deficits for the 2020-21 fiscal year, and;

WHEREAS the DSU’s year-end financial review identified that it is highly likely the DSU budget will have a significant surplus at the end of the 2020-21 fiscal year, and;

WHEREAS it is important that revenue is used effectively and efficiently, and that projects identified by the membership are undertaken rather than put to the side or extended over many years, and;

WHEREAS capital projects such as the purchase of furniture for the T-Room, updating SUB signage to include Mi’kmaq language, adding study space, and ensuring the SUB fulfills the Accessibility Act of Nova Scotia have all been requested by the membership, and;

WHEREAS upwards of $100,000.00 in additional funds have recently been allocated to the Mental Health Fund, Student Emergency Fun, and Student Accessibility Bursary;

THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED that any and all remaining budget surplus monies from the 2020-21 fiscal year be moved to the capital projects line instead of retained earnings to allow for projects to be undertaken.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any remaining funds in the capital projects line at the end of the 2021-22 fiscal year be moved to retained earnings, as per usual.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any projects undertaken with a budget of over $10,000.00 be approved by Council before the project begins, as per policy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that councillors and members at large are encouraged to contact the DSU executive with ideas for capital projects in DSU spaces that could be undertaken.

Moved by the President; seconded by: Board of Governors Representative 2

Motion passes.

MOTION 2021-03-11-11.2

WHEREAS there is currently $204,082.00 in the Accessibility Bursary Reserve Fund, and;
WHEREAS the Accessibility Bursary Committee has exhausted all funds collected in the 2020-21 fiscal year, including previous amounts approved for use from the reserve fund, and;

WHEREAS the Fund was created to establish a source of funding for students with accessibility needs, and the COVID-19 pandemic and online learning has created exceptional strain, including financial distress, for many disabled students and students with accessibility needs, and;

WHEREAS the Student Accessibility Fund Committee has requested additional funding totaling $30,000, in order to fulfill all urgent bursary requests received by the committee, and;

WHEREAS $35,675 is estimated to be collected for this fund in the 2021-22 fiscal year, allowing the proposed amount to be replenished relatively quickly if necessary;

THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT $30,000 from the Accessibility Reserve Fund be approved for use by the Accessibility Bursary Committee, at a rate of approximately $10,000 per month for the months of March 2021, April 2021, and May 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT if $10,000 per month is not required to meet demand, the committee may use the remaining amounts in summer 2021.

Moved by Vice-President Finance and Operations; seconded by: Vice President, Internal

Motion passes.

Vice President, Internal, states that they have seen increased bursary applications so they have requested extra funding.

MOTION 2021-03-11-11.3

WHEREAS the DSU Council has already passed a motion to task Faculty Representatives on Council to compile a report on student issues faced within their respective Faculties, and;

WHEREAS students have expressed frustration with 2021-22 academic year tuition and fee increases proposed by the Budget Advisory Committee, and;

WHEREAS it is important all students’ voices are heard and listened to regarding fee increases, and;

WHEREAS fee increases impact students in different ways depending on many factors, including the Faculty they study in, and;

WHEREAS Faculty representatives and societies have the unique ability to connect on a deeper level with students in the Faculty they represent;

THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Faculty Representatives on the DSU Council are to consult with their Faculty Society and as many students as possible to determine the unique impact of tuition and fee increases on students in their Faculty.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT consultation is encouraged to include data collection on the following topics:

- Specific impact of International Student Fees
- Access to scholarships, bursaries, and grants within your Faculty
- Access and ability to find and hold employment, co-ops, and/or work-study programs
- Average course load & length of degree
- Additional Faculty-specific costs required of students
- Reliance on and ability to seek financial assistance from family
- Expected average salary upon graduation
- Food security
- Housing security
- Additional Faculty-specific issues exacerbated by increases in fees

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this consultation may occur in whatever format the Faculty Representative deems most feasible for their Faculty Society and constituents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the results of these consultations be sent to the DSU President no later than April 11th, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Faculty Representatives requiring aid in meeting this deadline reach out to the DSU President for support.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the DSU President must deliver a comprehensive report identifying aggregate and disaggregate results of these consultations no later than the last meeting of the DSU Council, and that the data also be included in communications to the Board of Governors.

Moved by the Board of Governors Representative #2; seconded by: Board of Governors Representative 1

Motion passes.

President states that the reason for the deadline is because the board votes on tuition on the 20th of April.

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

13.1. A motion to approve the 2021-22 budget will be raised at the next meeting of Council, in accordance with the budget process, approved by the Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) and as presented today by the VPFO.

13.2. A motion to approve amendments to the Bursary Policy, as approved by the Bylaw and Policy Review Committee (BPRC), will be raised at the next meeting of Council.

14. Announcements
None.

15. Adjournment
Meeting adjourned at 8:30PM.