Board of Governor’s Student Caucus Report

Reporting Period: June 14th – July 13th 2022

Aparna Mohan, DSU President
Murray Lyu, DSU BoG Representative #1
Jonathon Frontain, DSU BoG Representative #2

BoG Caucus Meeting | June 27th 2022, 5 PM – 6:30 PM | Minutes

1. General Discussion – Aparna asked BoG representatives Murray & Jonathon for general insights and comments about the 2021-2022 year within the Board of Governors especially with respect to the treatment of student BoG reps. The main concern shared was regarding the Chair’s tendency to speed through meetings and be dismissive of student comments. Aparna proposed flagging this during her lunch scheduled with the Board of Governors Chair the next day.

2. Notes on Consent Agenda

The motion to pass the consent agenda is essentially an omni-bus motion to pass several items contained within the consent agenda. These items usually comprise routine and relatively low-stakes policy updates deemed appropriate to be bundled together by the BoG. They are still worth scrutinizing but are lower priority.

   a. Governors’ Awards Terms of Reference - It was noted that all the changes proposed in the Terms of Reference are student-centric and promote more equitable access to the top student award. Aparna noted that comments from her discussion with the former Vice Provost of Student Affairs Verity Turpin were reflected in these changes. The main change in the Terms of Reference to the Board of Governors’ Award is the removal of a minimum CGPA requirement in recognition of the varying levels of difficulty in achieving the same. Murray noted that GPAs should still

   b. Grading Practices Policy – The change proposed is the addition of a Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR) grade option to provide a GPA-neutral grading option for
students experiencing extenuating circumstances when other solutions are not appropriate. Aparna noted that this initiative received national acclaim for this and this initiative was inspired by the demand for the PASS/ILL option that the DSU advocated for in 2020-2021.

3. Notes on President’s Report

At every Board of Governors Meeting, the University President provides a report to summarize the state of university affairs since the last meeting. These reports usually include comments on recruitment, enrolment, and retention activity within the university.

a. Murray noted that the President had mentioned forming a Student Advisory Council at a previous Board of Governors meeting and wanted to bring this up during the discussion period for this agenda item.

b. Jonathon noted the decline in enrolment from within Nova Scotia and the increase in enrolment from Ontario. He wanted to ask if there is a similar trend in reduced Nova Scotia admission within other universities in the province as well. Jonathon also noted that he is aware of Dalhousie having a reputation as an “Ontario school in Halifax” so these enrolment and recruitment trends appear to support that reputation.

4. Notes on Items for Decision – the Caucus team agreed on reviewing these independently to allow time for discussion on the In-Camera agenda items.

5. Notes on In-Camera Session

Items that are In-Camera tend to either be related to Capital Projects or Human Resources (e.g. contract negotiations). All Board of Governors members are not allowed to disclose the agenda specifics of In-Camera sessions so these minutes are redacted accordingly. There was general discussion about policies and practices of Facilities Management and how they can better promote transparency and accountability. Aparna made note of a question to ask about whether or not Facilities Management has a stakeholder consultation policy. At the Board of Governors Meeting, it was revealed they do not.