

Council on Student Services (COSS)
Minutes of Meeting – January 20, 2020

Room 313 (Koffler Student Centre), 214 College St.
3:00 – 5:00 pm

ATTENDANCE:

Voting Members:

Present:

- Beth Ali, Executive Director, Athletics & Physical Activity, Faculty of Kinesiology & Physical Education
- Heather Kelly, Executive Director, Student Life Programs & Services, Student Life St. George
- John Monahan, Warden, Hart House
- David Newman, Executive Director, Student Experience, Student Life St. George
- Meredith Strong, Director, Office of the Vice-Provost, Students
- Desmond Pouyat, Dean of Student Affairs, UTSC
- Ameera Karim, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Lwanga Musisi, Graduate Students' Union (GSU)
- Mark Overton, Dean of Student Affairs and Assistant Principal, Student Services, UTM
- Jaime Kearns, Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students (APUS)
- Joshua Bowman, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Richie Pyne, Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students (APUS)
- Avani Singh, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Arjun Kaul, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)

Absent:

- Kai Ng, Quality Service to Students (QSS)
- Tebat Kadhem, Council on Student Services (CSS)
- Sophie McGibbon-Gardner, Graduate Students' Union (GSU)

Non-voting Members:

- Kim Elias (Acting Secretary)

Guests:

- Tiffany Tiu (Co-Chair of CAR)
- Janine Robb
- Mavish Wesley
- Serena Persaud
- Sherry Kulman (HH)
- Davina Chan (HH)
- Paul Handley (KPE)
- Jim Webster (KPE)
- Ira Jacobs (KPE)

- Michelle Brownrigg (HH)
- David Pereira
- Suzanne Macintyre (HH)

Chair:

- Hanie Yousefi

Recording Secretary:

- Sarah Matias

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Introductions

Chair Yousefi welcomed the members and guests, and everyone introduced themselves.

2. Meeting Called to Order

Chair called the meeting to order at 3:23pm.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion to add Protocol presentation to the agenda. Monahan motioned, Singh seconded. All in favour, none opposed. The motion passed. Chair sought mover to approve agenda. Bowman motioned, Ali seconded. All in favour, none opposed. The motion passed.

4. Approval of Minutes from Meeting #5

Chair sought mover to approve the minutes from the Meeting #4. Bowman motioned, Newman seconded. All approved, none opposed. The motion passed.

5. Presentations

Budget Process Overview

Strong presented an overview of the budget protocol including the process and the student fee calculations under the Policy on Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees (campus service fees and student society fees). The "Protocol" includes the establishment of the COSS body, which considers Student Services Fees and provides advice to University Affairs Board (UAB). Decisions of COSS (approval or failure to approve) related to fees are then conveyed to UAB. This protocol is a Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the representative student societies. The Protocol provides for the establishment of bodies to provide a "means by which students will be involved in decisions to increase compulsory non-tuition related fees or to introduce new ones".

If the majority of student members approve the fee increase, the fee increase is brought forward to UAB for approval. If the majority of student members do not approve the fee increase, UAB may approve increases based on two indexes. CPI is the inflation factor equal to the Consumer Price Index, and UTI is the University of Toronto Index, which accounts for changes in salary and benefit costs, revenue from other sources, occupancy costs, and changes to enrolment.

In the event that COSS does not approve the budget, UAB can approve a permanent increase (the lesser of the UTI increase or the CPI increase) and temporary increase of up to 3 years (the greater of the UTI increase or the CPI increase).

Questions & Answers

Strong asked if there were any questions; there were none.

UofT Sport & Recreation at KPE Budget Presentation

Ali begins with a recap from the Sport & Rec at KPE presentation from October. Ali summarized Sport & Rec priorities: in enforcing the commitment Sport and Rec has to the students on all 3 campuses; enhance the student experience through provisions of outstanding programs, facilities and services in sport, recreation and physical activity; encourage participants in U of T Sport and Rec as a strategy to: advance academic success, enhance physical, mental and social wellbeing, build a sense of community and acquire skills for post-university success. Ali reminded everyone that UofT Sport and Rec depends on the student ancillary fee to fund the program and seek alternate funding sources wherever possible.

The Council of Athletics and Recreation (CAR) Budget Committee is annually tasked with the responsibility of reviewing the Sport and Rec (KPE) budget as prepared by the staff. The preparation of the program, facilities and services plan and budget begins each May after a thorough review of the budget actuals of the previous year and the results of the program evaluations and surveys, and information gathered through focus groups and meetings. Compensation and occupancy costs are the primary cost drivers in the Sport & Rec budget.

Once the review is complete, staff prepare the budget and plans for each program area facility and services. This process continues until the final plans and budgets are approved by directors. Once this approval has been confirmed, the budget is presented to the CAR Budget Committee; which is made up of students (representatives from all 3 student governments, UTM, UTSC and staff from different areas).

The CAR Budget Committee approved the draft Sport and Rec (KPE) 2020-21 budget unanimously and sent it to CAR for consideration and approval. CAR approved the 2020-21 Sport and Rec (KPE) budget as presented on January 13, 2020. It was carried with the support of CAR with the exception of one opposed vote.

Ali provided an overview of the Sport and Rec budget and the proposed 2020-21 budget plan.

The most significant increases in the proposed 2019-20 budget result from:

- The increase in net operating budget from 2019-20 to 2020-21 is 5.5%
- The increase is a result of rising compensation and occupancy costs and a return to the customary practice of including the annual facility renewal amount at \$1,769,000. In 2019-20, we reduced the facility renewal amount by \$500,000 to keep the increase to student fees below 3% and reduced the number of renewal projects.
- The amount of non-student revenue in the 2020-21 budget is \$9,406,564, which is \$386,006 more than 2019-20 budget.
- Restricted Funds (non-operational budget) contribute an additional \$648,000 directly to student accounts in the form of athletic scholarships. These funds are generated through alumni donations & fundraising and can only be used for athletic scholarships.
- Proposed 2020-21 student ancillary fee increase is 2.89%.

Ali notes that the proposed increase is a 2.89%. St. George full-time students \$5.60, St. George part-time students \$1.12/per term, UTM/UTSC full-time student \$0.65, UTM/UTSC part-time \$0.13.

Questions & Answers

Bowman: What do the athletic scholarships look like and who is eligible to apply?

Ali clarifies that the students must be athletes – an individual is chosen based on academics and athletics. These stipulations are subject to the donor agreement.

Ali also notes that if any of the student governments would like her to go to them to present, she is more than happy to do so.

Student Life Budget Presentation

Newman provided an overview of the Student Life presentation given in November; including an overview of the programs and services in Student Life; areas of current strategic priority including: student development and engagement, internationalization, health and wellness, programs and services for graduate students, academic support, and divisional and university support services. Newman noted that Student Life is working on a new Strategic Plan including a new vision and mission but noted that the commitment to students remains the same.

Newman highlighted the importance of planning alignment, primarily through student and community feedback but also through the University's response on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, Mental Health framework, Experiential Learning, Institutional Priorities, Strategic Mandate Agreement, and the International Strategic Plan. Newman highlighted that Student Life revised its terms of references for all of its Student Advisory Groups, including the new Student Life Budget Review Committee, to reflect representation from diverse student populations.

Budget Highlights:

- New fee Structure
 - Student Life moved from 1 omnibus fee to 11 fees currently
- Prioritized Resources in Health and Counselling Fee Services
 - Redirected resources to continue services where grant funding was ending
- Resiliency Program in Academic Success
 - Additional resources being requested at COSS to build program
 - Proposal requires COSS approval to bring forward to UAB
- Fixed Cost
 - 87% fixed costs across compensation, occupancy, and non-salary expenses

Newman invited Heather Kelly to provide COSS with a brief proposal on a new resiliency program. Kelly explained the need for U of T to have a resiliency program. [It is noted at 4:10pm that Karim, Bowman, and Kaul leave meeting and we no longer have quorum.]

Benefits for UofT:

- Non-clinical interventions are needed to help low-risk students develop coping skills and take agency in their lives.
- Support other on mental health resources campus by serving as an early alert and screening.
- Provide an integrated model of support by including other existing well-being programs & resources and on location supports.

- Free up Health & Wellness to work with our most unwell students with intensive mental health conditions.
- A continuum of mental health care is needed to support students.

Benefits for Students:

- Develop stress management and coping skills.
- Help combat loneliness and build a sense of belonging through group support.
- Increased wayfinding to other wellness supports (e.g. health promotions, mindfulness)
- Grounded in learning strategy. Support academic success - “learn how to learn” (to be a U of T student) and develop healthy habits.

Resiliency Program Components

- Referral
- Assessment
- Intake
- Individual Consultation
- Group Sessions
- Evaluation

Kelly went on to explain that this is considered a resiliency program, with a learning strategies component, which helps students build coping skills and learn how to bounce back from academic setbacks. As such, it is best fit for students who are feeling overwhelmed and in need support:

1. Students could self-refer or be referred by Registrar’s Offices, Health & Wellness, Accessibility Services, Student Crisis and Academic Progress or Sexual Violence & Prevention Centre.
2. All students benefit from learning more about themselves and how they learn. Therefore, assessments measuring personality type preferences, strengths, academic skills, executive functioning, stress and social-emotional adjustment may be used.
3. An intake will be conducted.
4. Students will receive individual consultations to ensure that they are receiving personalized learning strategy support. Group advising and workshops will establish a peer community of support.
5. Students will receive a post assessment evaluation to track their progress. This will also enable us to conduct research in the form of program evaluation.

Program Delivery: In person, the adoption of an on-line course as an alternative to in-person delivery will also be explored.

Enhanced program component: 1:1 appointments with U of T Social Work interns. Through a practicum, interns are offered an encouraging environment to explore and refine their clinical skills while providing a needed service to the U of T student population.

This resiliency program builds on the review of the “Fresh Start conference” which had the goal of an integrated approach to building and recognizing resiliency in students who had experienced academic

setback. It was recommended during a review of the Fresh Start Conference that Academic Success support students who are experiencing academic setbacks in a 6 week cohort model. Such a model would support students in cultivating good learning habits and allow for longer termed learning and greater community building than a one day conference.

The program was also informed by the successful “FITA pilot program” (2015-2017) offered in Academic Success. Kelly explained that the research found that this model helped U of T students develop better coping skills, improved academic functioning and a greater sense of well-being. However, only working one-on-one was resource intensive. A key recommendation from the final pilot report was to introduce a group component.

Resiliency Program Staffing Model:

Kelly explained that in this model, supports are offered through both centrally (Academic Success Centre) and On Location. Proposed staffing includes:

- a full time Program Coordinator (with ability to supervise interns)
- a full-time Educational Psychologist
- a full-time Administrative Assistant
- 6.0 FTE Resiliency Skills Strategists

It is envisioned that up to 500 students per year could be served in this model.

Such an initiative is poised to become an innovative flagship student success program spanning across departments to make a significant impact in the lives of our most vulnerable students who are struggling academically. Kelly enforced that our purpose is to help students feel a sense of support on campus, to better appreciate the connections between academic success and other elements of well-being, and, primarily, to help students develop capacities for thriving that will serve them throughout their lives.

Kelly stated she would be happy to further discuss at the end of the meeting, if any one had any questions.

Newman then continued with a detailed 2020-21 budget. Newman noted that some numbers have changed given the new organizational structure and unit changes.

In the proposed 2020-21 budget student fees make up 66% and University contributions make up 25%. Newman noted that we are always looking for grant funding and other sources so that the impact on students are minimal.

In overviewing operating expenses for 2020-21, non-salary expenses decreased to 19% from 20%, Space and Occupancy decreased from 6% to 5%, and compensation increased to 76% from 74%, from 2019-20. These are typically all fixed costs as certain programs and licenses that fall into this category for students.

Hart House, KPE and Student Life all have different percentages applied to the average merit/steps due to the different staff agreements – Student Life is at 4.0%.

The proposed increase is 9.8% across all 11 fees for St. George full-time students totalling \$16.12/per term, St. George part-time students \$3.22/per term. These fees are not assessed for UTM and UTSC students as these are local and determined at each campus.

Questions & Answers

Newman encouraged any student societies to reach out to him should they require clarification or want to speak to further.

Pyne: What were the steps that took place to create the resiliency program?

Kelly explained that the program came from a successful pilot that started at Carlton University and training with Thriving in Action workshop at Ryerson University. Kelly also noted that this work has been informed by our “Fresh Start” conference – but it is hard to form new habits after a one day conference. Conference has also been renamed to “Study Smart”. The goal would be to offer this across campus, on location so we can partner and expand our reach.

[Hart House Budget Presentation](#)

John Monahan introduced colleagues from Hart House, in particular Suzanne Macintyre (Director of Finance, Hart House) who he noted was going to present the Hart House budget. Monahan also noted that much like Student Life and Sport & Rec, Hart House has been working on their budget for an extended period of time with their Finance Committee. Monahan overviewed the Hart House Finance Committee and mentioned that it is comprised of a number of students and has been one of the largest and most active standing committees at Hart House. Monahan noted the Committee passed the proposed Hart House budget for 2020-21 with only one vote against. A few days later, the budget was presented to the Hart House Board of Stewards, where it was passed with no one opposed. On January 29th this budget will be presented to the Service Ancillaries Review Group (SARG) and reviewed and hopefully approved by COSS during the vote on February 3rd.

Macintyre provided an overview of Hart House’s operating revenue which for 2020-2021 is projected to be \$21.3 million; fixed costs of 89%. Hart House is anticipating that 55% of its 2020-2021 budget will come from student fees, with the other 45% coming from revenue.

Hart House operates on a social enterprise model, wherein revenue generated from operations helps to offset the reliance on student fees. Hart House also provides students with access to free space for events/meetings, free audio visual equipment/tech support, common spaces, use of the Hart House farm, and access to drop-in fitness classes. Hart House also produces and supports a wide range of student-centred services programming on all three campuses. Macintyre noted 76% of Hart House facility usage during the course of the year is by students, which leaves a 24% window for revenue generation from external clients. Other UofT departments (which pay near-market rental rates) constitute 8% of the usage, while outside clients (which pay full market rates) constitute 16% of the usage of the facility.

In 2020-21, 58% of expenses will be comprised of salaries/wages/benefits and UofT overhead charge. The budget also includes 29% for utilities, equipment, maintenance, and capital renewal, and 2% for Hart House Committee and Club-related programming. Hart House is not charged an occupancy cost by the central University; rather, it is responsible for the direct payment of its own utilities and other facility-related costs. 89% of the expenses in the Hart House budget are fixed; those that are not include the cost of food sold in Hart House’s catering and restaurant businesses, general office costs, software, laundry, and other sundry expenses, etc.

Macintyre noted that Hart House is committed to reducing costs and increasing business revenue, and has already instituted a number of measures to do so on the “business” side of the House.

Under the Protocol, Hart House is asking for a 7.63% increase to the student fee. Monahan noted that for St. George full-time students the increase would be \$7.47, St. George part-time students \$1.48, UTM/UTSC full-time student \$0.22, UTM/UTSC part-time \$0.05. Historically, Hart House has always tried to come under the Protocol, but it has become increasingly more difficult due to critical infrastructure renewal requirements and other capital costs.

Hart House has many facility and capital requirements in an aging 100 year old building. Monahan added that they are undergoing a decade long building renovation project and are required to keep a healthy amount of money in its capital reserves for collateral. Due to the infrastructure and capital improvements occurring at the House, Macintyre noted that room rentals have been restricted and not generating as much revenue as it has in the past. Hart House also received a donation from the estate of Donald Burwash. Monahan noted that upon his passing, Donald Burwash (once the acting Warden of Hart House), left Hart House a sizable donation as his principle beneficiary, but with very specific purposes – which will be used for furnishings and capital in limited areas of the House, as per Burwash’s wishes.

Monahan noted that Hart House has also established some new revenue generating business lines such as: kosher catering events, off premises catering, summer picnic series, winter weddings, and a marketing strategy for both Hospitality and Fitness departments is being developed to increase the customer base. Macintyre also added some cost efficiencies Hart House is implementing; conversion to high efficiency lighting LED, low flow shower heads in fitness locker rooms, and steam management upgrades.

Monahan encourages anyone with further questions to reach out to him and/or Suzanne Macintyre.

Questions & Answers

There were no questions asked.

6. Other Business

Yousefi inquired if anyone had any other business to discuss, none was brought forth.

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:50pm.