

# Council on Student Services (COSS)

## Minutes of Meeting #7

Tuesday, February 16, 2021

1:00-2:00 p.m.

Teams Meeting

### AGENDA

#### Voting Members

##### *Present*

- David Newman, Executive Director, Student Experience, Student Life St. George
- Beth Ali, Executive Director, Athletics & Physical Activity, Faculty of Kinesiology & Physical Education
- John Monahan, Warden, Hart House
- Melinda Scott, Director of the Office of the Vice Provost students
- Heather Kelly, Executive Director, Student Life Programs & Services, Student Life St. George
- Mark Overton, Dean of Student Affairs and Assistant Principal, Student Services, UTM
- Desmond Pouyat, Dean of Student Affairs, UTSC
- Dianna Acuna, Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students (APUS)
- Jaime Kearns, Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students (APUS)
- Dermot O'Halloran, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Dhanela Sivaparanr, Graduate Students' Union (GSU)
- Lwanga Musisi, Graduate Students' Union (GSU)
- Tyler Riches, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Muntaka Ahmed, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Paul Kaita, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Eesha Chaudhry, Council on Student Services (CSS)
- Lily Pan (VP External) Quality Service to Students (QSS)

##### *Absent*

#### Nonvoting Members

- Jim Webster, Director of Finance, Faculty of Physical Education and Health
- Serena Persaud, CAO, Office of Student Life
- Sherry Kulman, Chief Administrative Officer at Hart House
- Fran Dobbin, Director, Family Programs & Services

## Guests

- Michelle Brownrigg, (HH)
- Davina Chan (HH)
- Felicity Morgan (UTM)
- Julian Oliveira (APUS)
- Suzanne Macintyre (HH)
- Amy Interior (HH)
- Justin Huyer (Centre for Women and Trans People)
- Rachele (OPIRG)

## Chair

- Susan Froom

## Secretary

- Kim Elias-Cartwright

## Recording Secretary

- Kristin Radley-Jenkins

## AGENDA ITEMS

### 1. Introductions

Chair welcomed the members and guests.

### 2. Meeting Called to Order

Chair called the meeting to order at 1:02.

### 3. Land Acknowledgement

The chair began the meeting with the Land Acknowledgement. Froom invites Dhanela Sivaparanr, Graduate Students' Union (GSU), to read their land acknowledgement.

### 4. Approval of Agenda

Chair sought mover to approve agenda. Riches motioned, Pan seconded. All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions. The motion passed.

### 5. Approval of Minutes from Meeting #6: February 3, 2021

Chair sought mover to approve minutes. Chaundry motioned, Newman seconded. All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions. The motion passed.

### 6. COSS Budget Vote

#### Approval of Hart House Operating Plan

On a motion made by Monahan and seconded by Ali, it was resolved:

*THAT the 2021-2022 operating plans and budget for Hart House as presented in the documentation from John Monahan, Warden, be approved, and that the*

*sessional fee for a full time student on the St George campus be increased to \$107.49 or \$21.50 for a part time student, which represents a year over increase year over year increase of \$2.06 for a full-time student or \$0.41 for a part time student or 1.95%. And that the sessional fee for a full time student at UTM or UTSC be increased to \$3.30 or \$0.67 for a part time student, which represents a year over year increase of \$0.07 for a full time student and \$0.02 for a part time student, or 1.95%.*

Riches began with mentioning that the UTSU folks are going to be supporting the fee increases that are being proposed by the different divisions. He noted it was becoming apparent to them that the services the divisions offer are crucial and students need them to continue to expand. Riches mentioned that he hopes that the recommendations they included about central funding from central administration is used so that over time divisions can receive more funding and less reliance on ancillary fees.

Pan indicated that they will be voting against this motion. Pan continued noting that they have been hearing from students that they would like to see a fee reduction. Pan also noted they appreciate that Hart House is trying to involve a lot more UTM students and bringing forward a lot of new initiatives. Pan also shared the same thoughts on central funding as Riches.

Chaudhry speaks in favour of this motion. Chaudhry continues noting the increase is substantial with the wave of the pandemic having shifted things. She feels there has been a lot more collaboration with UTSC groups and Hart House. Chaudhry offers a recommendation that moving forward post pandemic that Hart House work to be more accessible to UTSC students. The distance and proximity plays a huge role in why students at Scarborough do not engage with Hart House as much. In closing Chaudhry notes that she thinks if more students knew about Hart House a lot more individuals could benefit from collaborating and working with Hart House.

Monahan thanked Riches, Pan and Chaudhry for their comments. Monahan wanted to assure Chaudhry that he has noted and has been making a significant increased effort to engage students of all three campuses in their work in the development, delivery and assessment in their work. Hart House is committed to ensuring a significant virtual presence as well as an in person presence with students both from UTSC and UTM once that is an option again.

### **Voting Results**

- Students in favour (6)
- Students opposed (3)
- Students abstained (0)
- Administrators in favour (6)
- Administrators opposed (0)
- Administrators abstained (0)

Total: 12 in favour / 3 opposed MOTION PASSED

Approval of U of T Sport & Rec at KPE Operating Plan

On a motion made by Ali and seconded by Riches, it was resolved:

*THAT the 2021-22 operating plans and budget for the U of T Sport and Rec Programs, Services and Facilities at the Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education, as presented in the documentation from Beth Ali (Executive Director, Athletics and Co-curricular Physical Activity) be approved; and that the sessional fee for a full-time student on the St. George campus be decreased to \$196.71 or \$39.34 for a part-time student, which represents a year over year decrease of \$1.57 for a full time student or \$0.31 for a part-time student, or -0.79%. And that the sessional fee for a full-time student at UTM or UTSC be decreased to \$22.82 or \$4.56 for a part-time student, which represents a year over year decrease of \$0.18 for a full-time student or \$0.04 for a part-time student, or -0.79%.*

Riches spoke in favour of the motion. Riches notes he recognizes that there is a complicated operation that happened and that resulted in a decrease being proposed, however was nice to see.

**Voting Results**

Students in favour (9)  
Students opposed (0)  
Students abstained (0)  
Administrators in favour (6)  
Administrators opposed (0)  
Administrators abstained (0)

Total: 15 in favour/ MOTION PASSED

Approval of Student Life Operating Plan

On a motion made by Newman and seconded by Monahan, it was resolved:

*THAT the 2021-22 operating plans and budget for Student Life recommending an increase in the Student Services Fees for a full time student on the St. George Campus to be increased to \$100.79 or \$20.16 for a part time student, which represents a year over year increase of \$1.92 for full time or \$0.38 for a part time student, or 1.92%.*

Kearn begins noting that at APUS there has been some discussions and concerns about this increase. They have seen some improvements around student involvement in Student Life, the decision making still appears to be somewhat superficial and the process of getting involved on different councils has been a bit challenging. Kearns asked for some clarity to ensure that student involvement on the budget committee and student's voices are heard.

Newman assured Kearns that Student Life has a Student Advisory Committee for each service, which run differently, and some are more a framework about student engagement in all levels of programming. Newman mentioned that they do want to build on this and are building a broader Student Life Student Advisory Committee, and have reached out to Hart House and Sports & Rec for information on their structures.

Kelly added she would like to reiterate that Student Life do have Student Advisory groups at a unit level for every program and services and ask for some clarification on if Kearns questions was more with respect to the budget or programs & service delivery. In addition to the budget moving forward, building on the budget subcommittee that has already been launched, Kelly also noted that they engage students in other ways outside of advisory committees. A few examples that Kelly gave include: involving students in hiring committees, planning days, focus groups and steering committees to name a few. In closing Kelly mentioned that it is a piece that Student Life is committed to working with students on.

Newman highlighted that as Student Life moves towards creating a strategic plan, in it, there is language that is very clear, and coming out of the consultations is the articulation of a commitment of working with students in the development of programs and services.

Acuna thanked everyone for their answers. Continuing on from Kearns' point, Acuna continued that the budget is obviously geared toward programs and initiatives in the Student Life sector. Acuna was seeking clarification on how much weight Student Advisory Committees have on decision making in programs and initiatives. If student voices are to be heard there needs to be some sort of integrated decision making process when it comes to programs and initiatives and where the budget gets steered to. Acuna thanked everyone again.

Kearns thanked Newman and Kelly for clarification, noting that APUS is speaking in favour of this with the idea and the notion that Student Life will be building a Student Advisory Committee that looks to other examples like Hart House and the Council on Athletics and Recreation.

### **Voting Results**

- Students in favour (6)
- Students opposed (2)
- Students abstained (1)
- Administrators in favour (6)
- Administrators opposed (0)
- Administrators abstained (0)

Total: 12 in favour/ MOTION PASSED

### Approval of Health & Wellness Operating Plan

On a motion made by Newman and seconded by Riches, it was resolved:

*THAT the 2021-2022 Operating plans & budget for Student Life, Health & Wellness recommends an increase to the student services. For full time students on the St George campus to be increased to \$83.92 and \$16.78 for a part time student. This represents a year, over a year, increase of \$3.01 for full time or \$0.49 for a part time student.*

Riches began stating that they will be voting in favour of this budget because there is a mental health crisis at U of T, and students need support and this is one of the quickest ways to ensure that support can continuously be built. Riches wanted to thank Newman and the staff at Student Life for explaining the budget. He is happy to hear of the initiative being taken to hire counselors that target specific marginalized communities. Riches wanted to reiterate that the solution to the mental health crisis is not going to be based off of the ancillary fee alone. That this is a multi-faceted issue that touches on almost every aspect of a student's life adding reforms in the academic forgiveness policies.

Kearns echoed Riches, and was thrilled to hear that the initiative being taken to hire counselors. Kearns mentioned that she hoped that it wasn't just a BIPOC counselor and being able to expand access for their marginalized students needing that. Also wanted to note that she hoped that Student Life was reaching out to other groups like SBA.

Pan mentioned that the fee doesn't necessarily affect QSS, however Pan also noted that they also see mental health crisis happening at UofT in general and that it is important to put lots of effort in advocating for mental illness, and support. Pan continued that they support this motion, and they really appreciate all of the new initiatives. Pan would like to also put an emphasis on the fact that they should also look into which students were using the services, that increasing fees should bring new services. It is also important to make the services more of a safe space for students, so that students are feeling comfortable to use the services.

Chaudhry shared that she feels it's very valuable to have more diverse counselors, especially at the downtown campus and hopes that by supporting this motion that the work of resolving this mental health crisis and supporting students more, doesn't come out of student pockets only. Chaudhry would like to see the University take more initiative and a sustainable approach in implementing long term solutions to really support students. Also moving forward, they can continue working with the student body to propose solutions that everyone can benefit from. Overall Chaudhry supported this motion.

Acuna noted she would definitely like to see that the services that are already in place be safe spaces and also implementing program and more spaces that contribute to mental health. Acuna is very happy to see that they are getting different counselors.

Newman agreed that these are priority areas that need growth, and they have grown adding that Student Life wants to continue to grow and also aligned with that, they want to find alternate sources of funding to allow this growth to happen, because it is critically important. The pandemic has just highlighted things that students need and maybe didn't know before or accentuated it more.

Acuna added creating safe spaces for students to be in as well as places that don't close early. This has been a difficult situation as a commuter student. Acuna has always found it hard to find good places to stay and feel more comfortable in not just large libraries, but somewhere with welcoming areas.

Riches wanted to ask Student Life about the two funding announcements regarding mental health and how that will impact the student budget going forward.

Newman responded that the funding that came in the fall was very similar to funding that actually has been given but never really be firmly committed to. These are pockets of funding from the province every once in a while that they only get for that year. Newman shared that it has helped with the number of counselors that they have on campus. However, the new one is different it seems, but Student Life is looking into it.

Kearns mentioned that maybe working with student unions and developing a database of counselors as student union health insurance plans offer mental health and counseling, might be a good option.

Froom thanked Kearns for raising this as she also agrees. Froom continues noting that most student unions have health & dental insurance coverage, and it also covers some degree of counselling as well.

### **Voting Results**

- Students in favour (7)
- Students opposed (2)
- Students abstained (0)
- Administrators in favour (6)
- Administrators opposed (0)
- Administrators abstained (0)

Total: 13 in favour/ MOTION PASSED

## **7. Other Business**

Froom moves onto other business and invites Scott to give an update on the Centre for Women and Trans people.

Scott begins with not much has changed since the last meeting but that they have been in touch with OPIRG and the Centre for Women & Trans People. They have been able to negotiate with the project manager for a moving date of March 30th.

Rachele added that they did meet with Scott and a few others and appreciate that they have been given two months for the move. The group expressed concerns, particularly around how all of this was communicated. Rachele says that there has been a lack of communication between the administrative end and service groups and the Center for Women and Trans People. The Centre is incorporated and a nonprofit and have operated out of North Borden for 25 years. The organization has been on campus for almost 40 years, and they rely on certain stable kind of structure in order to provide services for students. They are thankful to the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students and the Faculty of Arts and Sciences for working with them and negotiating a new space. They have been given a new tenancy agreement for the temporary space.

Justice from the Centre for Women & Trans People began that they are looking forward to a meeting with Scott in the coming weeks, and they are looking forward to moving on March 30th.

Froom noted that she would like to remind the members that part of the duty of COSS is to consider and make recommendations to the appropriate body regarding the allocation of space for student services, and student's society. Froom was quite glad that the COSS table was able to use this forum to address some of the concerns and it sounds like largely resolved the concerns that were raised. Froom thanked, Scott for having addressed these concerns in a productive manner.

## 8. Adjournment

Froom asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Riches motioned to adjourn. Pan seconded, all in favour. Meeting was adjourned at 1:59.