

## Assembly Meeting (#5): Tuesday, January 18th, 2022

*Assembly is called to order at 7:04 pm, EST.*

### **Motion #1 –Approval of Agenda**

Moved by: Kristen Sutherland

Seconded by: Alyth Roos

Questions: None

*Vote: Motion carries*

### **Motion #2 – Approval of the Minutes**

Moved by: Kristen Sutherland

Seconded by: Alyth Roos

Questions: None

*Vote: Motion carries*

### **Speaker's Business**

**Deputy Speaker Alicia Parker:** Welcome back everyone, it's lovely to see you all. I hope everyone had a wonderful break. Just for a quick introduction, my name is Alicia, I'm usually the Class of 2024 Representative, but as Callum is not here I'll be the Deputy Speaker for today. Thank you all so much and please bare with me as I do this. I'll start with a land acknowledgement. We are currently situated on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. I recognize that this privilege comes only from a history of colonialism in which these lands were stolen from the Indigenous Peoples who first inhabited them. As a settler, it is important to me to acknowledge the privilege that I have to be able to learn, live and meet today on this land here at Queen's. We recognize that ASUS as an institution, in addition to Assembly, have been colonial spaces in the past, and we recognize the importance of using our roles to engage in indigenization and reflection.

### **Breakout Rooms Commence and Conclude**

### **Discussion Period**

Burnout and Student Wellbeing

**President Alyth Roos:** So this is something that's been a recurring conversation with both Council and directly with students. Especially with the current remote semester prior to us returning it's something to focus on. I wanted to bring it up essentially to get your guy's thoughts on how best for us to support especially our volunteers and the student body at large. With the remote semester alongside the seasonal difficulties, I know it can really lower morale. So I wanted to bring it up in assembly for ideas and projects or areas to focus on that we support students with.

**Equity Commissioner Hussein:** I think all of us on call can relate as pretty much all of us are students. So I think it's important that we lead by example with mental wellness along with using social media pages to promote how to sort of practice wellness during times like this. I think that even if it gets repetitive it can inspire a wellness environment in the student body.

**Community Outreach Commissioner Emily Armstrong:** I agree with Yara that it's good to have reminders out there in case people have forgotten. Another related question I'll bring up is that the Outreach Commission has had online Zumba classes and so I was wondering if that was something of interest to people. But also in general to have more activities online to help people remember to stay active even with everything online.

**CESA Representative Lexie Ingoldsby:** I have something else to say, but first to touch on Emily's last point. Last week Con-Ed had a fitness class online, and while we were doubtful that it would really work well, a lot of people showed up to the point where we're planning on running it again. It was also good for people in the Faculty who are into fitness and teach it, as a way to self promote and get more people interested. So I think that it's something that can definitely work and be translated over to ArtSci. We also have had Con-Ed week that had a lot of events and while we were uncertain about turnout, at our last event we had over 70 people show up for a virtual coffee house. Especially for online events we've never really had more than 50 so that was really cool to see. The biggest feedback we got was that it was nice to hear people's peers and not just be in constant Zoom hosting mode. So I'm curious if something like that could be adapted for ArtSci.

**President Roos:** Thank you all so much for sharing. Lexie, it's great to hear about that and it's a wonderful initiative. It's reassuring that people are still interested in online events as the DSC's and communities are planning more. If anyone has more thoughts on wellness or burnout and burnout culture as student leaders feel free to reach out and share.

#### Virtual Class and the Winter Semester

**President Roos:** Thank you all for all the feedback so far. This is mostly to do a check in with people after the first week. I know there's some mixed reviews for more synchronous versus asynchronous courses. The Faculty has said that the plan is still to return to in-person classes on February 28th, of course barring any dramatic changes to the situation. But yeah I wanted to do a check in on what people are doing with virtual classes again and also to see if there are any concerns over the return to campus from students.

**Governance Officer Kristen Sutherland:** Alyth and I have chatted before but I do think this is an important message to get out. Initially when I came back to Kingston I was pretty discouraged because I felt like we couldn't be going back after half a semester online. However, most of the professors are quite anxious to return to in-person. But I think that's something that's important to note especially because I know a lot of people were discouraged over the online aspect.

**President Roos:** To quickly jump in again, yeah it is very much looking as though we will be returning for February 28th as long as everything goes to course. A lot of alumni and faculty are really pushing the in-person experience as being crucial for Queen's and it seems like a motivation for the University as well.

**Year Representative Celina Lovisotto:** I just wanted to touch on a conversation I had with Alicia. I know second year students said that the transition to the online period was rough, especially this year. So I think that could be resolved if more people were aware of the resources available to them. So if we advertised those more through social media, or newsletters, at least until February 28th.

**Dan't Vice-President Hamish Hutchison-Poyntz:** One thing in particular I'd like to bring up is with the performing arts students have been having issues getting access to the materials they need to do their degrees with virtual classes. I know music students in particular can't access their instruments when the buildings on campus are locked. We've been trying to work with the faculty who have been quite helpful but it's apparently more of an administrative issue. So if anyone has any contacts that could help that would be great.

**Academic Representative Flynn Eves-Welch:** I was just wondering because I also had no expectation of us going back to in person but if we do go back I'd be concerned for students who are immunocompromised if their classes don't offer an online version. It would make classes a lot less accessible, especially as it will be past the dropping date without a financial penalty date. I think if we get to professors early, and coordinate something just so that there is that option if people don't feel safe to return to in person. We all experienced December and how quickly that turned serious so I think it's realistic for students to not all want to return, and I think we should have a failsafe for them.

**ASUS Representative to the AMS Dante Caloia:** I don't know if this is something we can address but a main thing I've been hearing about is getting a tuition discount. People are being forced to pay for what is definitely not the same experience as in person. So I don't know if there's anyone we can talk to but trying to get a tuition rebate could be good.

**President Roos:** Thank you so much, I've been taking intense notes. Hamish, I'll follow up with you and a few people later to see what we can. I agree with making people more aware of resources and that's definitely something we can amplify over the coming weeks. As well, I fully agree that we need a Plan B and separate avenues for students. I think this pandemic has taught us that we can't always rely on the best case scenario. Accessibility is also definitely more important and something to highlight this semester. We all know that the one size fits all approach doesn't work and is something that we need to be flexible in. If anyone has any more questions, concerns, or thoughts feel free to reach out to me.

[COVID Case Reporting Among Students](#)

**Equity Commissioner Hussein:** This is an open platform for people to have a discussion and hear each other's thoughts. Queen's has released a statement that it will no longer keep track of cases really and will not be informing people of outbreaks and instead it is on the students to inform their close contacts. We all know that it's a challenging thing to tell others and something that can have a lot of anxiety and fear of judgment. Especially with immunocompromised people and people living with their families. I feel as though it could be cultural change within the student body and so I wanted to have a discussion of how we help students with the anxiety and making sure they share and changing the whole culture around sharing being COVID positive.

**Community Outreach Commissioner Armstrong:** I think this is definitely something interesting to bring up, especially with the historic stigma around it. It can definitely be a big topic to bring up to people and I think something should be said to change the stigma around it. Especially with this variant it's so contagious almost anyone can get it. I think with media outreach and making people aware the University is not accounting for cases and just encouraging people to tell others.

**Academics Commissioner Tiffany Yung:** I fully agree with Emily. I think if we normalize it and make people more comfortable talking to each other it could really help. I know Western is going back to in person on the 31st, and so they can be an interesting test run for Queen's with a full month to learn.

**Senator Robert Hughes:** Something I think we can't ignore is that a lot of the stigma revolves around feeling responsible for it and feeling like you get punished for telling people. The fines in Kingston have been colossal and so I know people who were worried that if there were an outbreak within a group of friends they would get hit with fines.

**President Roos:** That's a really interesting point. I'm interested in seeing how policies are going to shift. I know there's been a reduction to a 5 day isolation which might lessen the severity of telling people. It is making me think about second years who are living on their own for the first time and potentially having these conversations with roommates. I know Adam King has some workshops about having positive house dynamics and tips and tricks for having these conversations. So a way we can support students is through giving them that messaging and those resources.

**Equity Commissioner Hussein:** Thank you everyone for participating. I have been thinking about it a lot and it's great to hear everyone's thoughts. I especially like the Adam King suggestion.

#### Media Outreach of Student Achievements

**Equity Commissioner Hussein:** I wanted to get peoples input on this as a sort of initiative. I'm a Kingstonian and that mix of identity alongside seeing my family react to events at Queen's has been really interesting. Especially with Saint Patrick's coming up soon, it's important to plan and think ahead. There's an oversaturation of Queen's looking bad in the media, especially during the partying season. I think it really deletes the contributions Queen's students make to the community and in general. So I wanted to sort of bring up ways that we can increase messaging about student's achievements, especially in Kingston specific papers.

**Governance Officer Sutherland:** I think Yara raises a really good point here. I've sat back and gotten attacked for some of the bad stuff Queen's students are doing. I think there's lot of incredible things that

students do that deserve recognition. I'm not fully sure the form or way to do it, whether we reach out or if we invite them to events or stuff. But I think positive media coverage is something that is definitely needed. ASUS and the faculty societies do great things that deserve to be highlighted.

**Academic Representative Eves-Welch:** I also think it's really important to show. I think a lot of people in the community get a warped sense of how many students are participating in stuff like street parties. I know at least for HOCO and stuff, there were people from out of town that came in, so stuff like that could be clarified. I know the Biology Department also put out a newsletter of students who have been helping with PCR testing, so something similar for ArtSci could be really helpful to show that there are students who take it seriously and who are putting in the time to help. Sort of highlight that it's not that students don't care about the community, just that some make a poor decision especially with how self contained Queen's is. I think maybe sharing stuff with and from the Queen's Journals would be beneficial to show to the wider community.

**Equity Commissioner Hussein:** I'll quickly wrap this up, thank you Flynn and Kristen. I love the journal plug, but there are some great points overall. I took some notes and will use them to brainstorm. Overall I'd just like to encourage people to promote their own achievements or the achievements of their peers and put it out there more.

## **Executive Reports**

### **President Report**

**President Roos:** I'll kick it off. It's nice to see everyone for the first assembly of the year. It's wild there's only four more, but it's been so great to engage for the past few months with you all. With the transfer to the online semester I've been working closely with the faculty to make sure the process is as smooth as possible. I've also been working to clarify the timelines. There's been a lot of advocacy, and we've really been getting a strong sense of improvements. The SVPR has had a lot of the groundwork finished, as well, working with Tiffany and Yara we've created a task force specific for the SVPR that will work with the DSC's. In addition we are finalizing the steps towards getting the painting from Portia Chapman, who was a former contributor to the Queen's Journal. There's lots of fun things coming up this term and as always feel free to send any thoughts or questions to me. We could not be running without our teams and volunteers.

### **Vice-President Report**

**Vice-President Brandon Aldworth:** I'll keep it quick, Alyth has covered all the right points already. A lot of work has happened in getting things up and running. I'll do a quick thank you to Sean and to Danielle for all the help they've been, truly instrumental. I will say that efforts have been centered on the operations of the house and working with the AMS to figure out events. I will keep the Assembly updated on that. I will also say that the office is currently closed and there is no reception team available to the public. There is a curbside pickup for DSC's. As we navigate possible restrictions and changes I'll keep the Assembly updated on how the office and events are going. Thank you all.

## Society Reports

### Business of the ASUS Council

**Governance Officer Sutherland:** This is a final plug for elections. Tomorrow is when the nomination period closes and there are currently several positions open for nominations. All positions of those in call who ran for them are up to call. We're also especially looking for class of 2025 and 2023 representatives, representatives to the AMS, Senators, and International Representatives. If you enjoyed your time at Assembly then it's not too late to get involved. Any questions or anything feel welcome to reach out, it's not too late.

## Other Reports [None]

## Statements by Members

**Vice-President Aldworth:** I'll just do a very brief point, you're doing a great job Alicia.

## Question Period [None]

## Old Business [None]

## New Business

**Motion 3: That ASUS Assembly formally approve the changes to the Academics Policy Manual Part 1 as seen in Appendix A: Academics Policy Manual Changes - ASUS Review.**

Moved by: Tiffany Yung

Seconded by: Alicia Parker

**Academics Commissioner Yung:** This is speaking to ASUS review, the idea is to expand the single director position to a co-director. We've received feedback that the job is quite strenuous for one person and so we want to expand it as a way of providing a support system for the directors. This will help in providing more opportunities to reach out to professors and expanding to better courses.

Questions: None

*Vote: Motion carries*

**Motion 4: That ASUS Assembly formally approve the changes to the Academics Policy Manual Part 2 as seen in Appendix B: Academics Policy Manual Changes - ASUS Peer Tutoring.**

Moved by: Tiffany Yung

Seconded by: Alicia Parker

**Academics Commissioner Yung:** This is an update to the ASUS peer tutoring to update the wording. There's some older wording that doesn't work for the currently online platform and so we wanted to ensure policy was up to date.

Questions: None

*Vote: Motion carries*

**Motion 5: That ASUS Assembly formally approve the changes to the Academics Policy Manual Part 3 as seen in Appendix C: Academics Policy Manual Changes - WJ Barnes and TA Excellence Teaching Awards.**

Moved by: Tiffany Yung

Seconded by: Alicia Parker

**Academics Commissioner Yung:** This speaks to the Teaching Awards. It had discrepancies for who could be nominated and we wanted to expand it to incorporate the full scope. So the change allows for anyone who is considered a core instructor, I'm sure we've all had courses where the PhD candidate is great but technically not a professor and so before couldn't be nominated.

Questions: None

*Vote: Motion carries*

**Motion 6: That ASUS Assembly formally approve the changes to the Advisory Board Policy Manual as seen in Appendix D: Advisory Board Policy Manual Changes**

Moved by: Kristen Sutherland

Seconded by: Caitlin Hayes

**Governance Officer Sutherland:** I'm happy to speak to this. For some context this is an idea that's floated around of adding alumni members to the ASUS Advisory Board which serves to hold us accountable. The idea is to add alumni who have been a part of ASUS and bring them back to be more involved with ASUS and retain that passion we all have. We're looking to add more alumni to help with the transition between years as well, so members who are holding one year and two year positions as a way to support policies across different Assemblies.

Questions:

**Vice-President Aldworth:** I just have a quick question on the second point. Are the plans to hire during this academic year, such as mid this semester or next year. If so, then hiring the two year positions hired this year and the one year positions hired next year and they will end at the same time which won't provide that staggering.

**Governance Officer Sutherland:** We're currently reaching out to everyone and we want to hire all positions as soon as possible. The focus is on the two year positions but hopefully we get both. The plan is also to get them hired this semester to hopefully be a part of the end of year meeting so that they can provide some feedback and know what to carry forward into the next year.

*Vote: Motion carries*

### **Motion 7: That ASUS Assembly formally approve the Department Student Council (DSC)**

#### **Election Timeline as seen in Appendix E: DSC Election Timeline**

Moved by: Kristen Sutherland

Seconded by: Tiffany Yung

**Governance Officer Sutherland:** So this is the timeline for the DSC elections to happen. The overview is that it will start on February 14th and run up until the 24th. I chatted with Tiffany and a few of the DSC people and this timing works out pretty good. The ASUS winter election is on the 2nd so this timing allows for new marketing to happen and avoids clashing.

Questions: None

*Vote: Motion carries*

### **Speakers Last Word**

**Deputy Speaker Parker:** Thank you all so much. I'm sorry if I made any mistakes but from how Kristen is shaking her head I think we're good.

### **Motion: To adjourn the meeting**

Moved by: Kristen Sutherland

Seconded By: Alyth Roos

*Vote: Motion carries*