

SOGS Council Meeting Minutes

Approved

January 28, 2010

6:10 – 8:57 pm

1. **Councillor Presentation** – Chris Hum (History) asked Councillors to support the Haiti Band Aid event at the Grad Club on February 3, 2010 (4-10).

2. **Agenda Changes**

Elections will be held after Announcements.

VP Finance will present Budget after Elections

passed

3. **Reception and Approval of the SOGS Council Minutes of the November 26 Council Meeting**

- **Change - Page 8, point 6.a - President report**

Before the question of B. Sherar (Senator), please propose the following inclusion:

-K. Penev (Engineering) - International students receive significant amounts of their funding through scholarships in order to compensate for their much higher tuition fees. A lack of tax credit on scholarships will significantly decrease the real amount of funding available for international students.

-R. Telfer (President) - the CFS proposal must be viewed in its entirety, it also proposes decreased tuition fees (for international students?)

- **Page 8, point 6.c - VP External & Communications**

Please change from "-K. Penev would like to join Equity Committee" to

- K. Penev (Engineering) - as acting co-chair of the Equity committee - The committee is currently constructing a map of the equity services available on campus in order to facilitate fast resolution of any equity related issues, graduate students may face.

- **Pages 13 and 16, point 9 - New Business/Open Forum**

Please delete "- K. Penev (Engineering) - would like to..." and leave just the motion, with some changes (in italic):

-BIRT Council direct BCC, or *the* Policy Committee, to develop a bylaw, or a policy, that will allow

SOGS Committees to *deliberate and vote on committee business* via email, if required due to time constraints *at the discrepancy of the committee's chair*.

Moved – K. Penev (Engineering)

Seconded – S. Horvath (Earth Sciences)

Motion did not pass due to lack of 2/3

Amended

Moved – Kalin Penev (Engineering)

Seconded – Meaghan Pirie (Media Studies)

Minutes received and approved with changes.

4. Announcements

- a) Welcome to all Councillors to the SOGS January Council Meeting. I would like to extend a special welcome to new Councillors. There are new Councillor packages available .
- b) Quorum is 30.
- c) The **Annual General Meeting** will be on February 11th at 5:30 in this room.
- d) The next Council meeting will be on February 25th in this room.
- e) For new students starting in January the opt out deadline is tomorrow at 4 pm. Presidential nominations will open on February 1 and will close at 5 pm on February 12.
- f) The SOGS office will finally be renovated the week of February 15-19. The office will be closed. Due to this, the Council package will be mailed out on February 22. A number of UWO accounts are over quota. Please be sure to clear some space.
- g) After council tonight, there will be a welcome back at the Grad Club, be sure to pick up your drink ticket from Olga after the meeting.
- h) PLEASE leave your placards at the front when you leave. In order for your presence be counted toward the department grant, you must sign in with your signature and time. If you leave the Council meeting prior to the meeting being adjourned, you must indicate the **correct time** on the sign out Council Attendance Sheet. If you leave once the meeting has been adjourned there is no need to sign out.

5. Elections

Bursary & Subsidy Committee

- Jaidur Rahman (Engineering)
- Mike Burrell (Computer Science)
- Meghan Kleiber (Biology)
- K Cristy ()
- M Reppel ()

Hellmuth Prize Committee

- Philip Baiden (Sociology)

Electoral Appeal Board

- Richard English (Arts/Humanities)
- Jean-Louis Charette (Biological Sciences)
- Stephen Black (Physical Sciences)
- Scott Armstrong (Social Sciences)

6. Orders of the Day

VP Finance

Motion 1:

BIRT Council adopt the 2010-2011 budget.

Moved: D. Sutherland (VP Finance)

Seconded: K. Pisters (Engineering)

Duncan Sutherland (VP Finance) presented the 2010-2011 budget.

Executive found an Endowment Contract. President and VP Finance will meet with Administration to find out how the agreed dollar amount will be covered. It is still to be determined if students funding students is a good idea.

B. Sherar (Senator): Why is there no thesis binding subsidy line? (A – D. Sutherland – It will no longer be required, since hard copies will not be required. N. Szudy – SGPS had planned a pilot to start in January; however, this has now been pushed to March and only for Doctoral students at this time.)

S. Beasley (Biochemistry): Why are departmental grants so low. (R. Rodrigues – this is only a projection, since there is no way to determine Councillor attendance.)

B. Sherar (Senator): What is the recompense program? (D. Sutherland – Grad Club vouchers issued to committee members for their time.)

Motion passes

- a) **Motions Arising from the President**
- b) **Motions Arising from Other Committees**

BCC Motions

Allowing committees to submit motions to Council Meetings

WHEREAS it is important that committees of the Society have the ability to submit motions for Council's consideration; and

WHEREAS it should not be necessary for the official liaison of a committee to sponsor a motion arising from a committee; and

WHEREAS the BCC does not even have a member of the Executive as its liaison; and

WHEREAS not every committee member or committee chair should be expected to be a Councillor; and

WHEREAS a motion submitted for Council's consideration arising from a committee should be approved by that committee, which is currently not required if a liaison brings forward a motion on their behalf; and

WHEREAS while nothing currently prohibits dissenting opinions within a committee from being brought to Council, an explicit procedure for doing so is preferred; and

WHEREAS Bylaw 15.3.5 currently reads:

15.3.5 Members of the Society wishing to submit business for consideration at council must do so through their department representative or the Society Executive and

WHEREAS no other bylaw allows the submission of business to Council; and

WHEREAS the same problem does not arise with General Meetings since any member may submit business to a General Meeting and every member of a committee is necessarily a member of the Society:

BIRT Bylaw 15.3 (Council Meetings) be amended to include 15.3.X, positioned between 15.3.5 and 15.3.6 to read:

15.3.X Committees of the Society wishing to submit business for consideration at Council must approve the business in question as a committee and must have it submitted by the chair of the committee.

15.3.X.1 Committees of the Society wishing to submit a report to Council must approve the report as a committee, clearly marked as a "majority report of the committee", and must have it submitted by the chair of the committee.

15.3.X.2 Members of a committee of the Society wishing to submit a report to Council dissenting the opinion or business of that committee must submit the report, clearly marked as a "minority report of the committee", endorsed by at least one named member of the committee. BIFRT the bylaws be renumbered appropriately.

Moved – D. Dechene (Engineering)

Seconded – R. English (Music)

S. Armstrong (Law) – Could someone summarize the motion

D. Dechene (Engineering) - with this motion, committees, as well as committee members will be able to submit motions. This closes a loop hole.

Motion passes

EAB Hearings

WHEREAS the Election Appeal Board currently does not have the ability to gather information which is vital to an appeal of an election or referendum; and

WHEREAS it is vital that all members of the Election Appeal Board be informed for all votes in which they participate:

BIRT Bylaw 4.9.10 be amended to read as follows [amendment given in bold]:

4.9.10 Appeals regarding sanctions **or disqualifications** levied by the Chief Returning Officer shall be made in writing to the Election Appeal Board, care of the Society's office, within 48 hours of the **announcement**. The Election Appeal Board shall render a decision and make such a decision public within two days following their meeting.

BIFRT Bylaw 4.2 be amended to include 4.2.X, positioned between 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, to read as follows:

4.2.X The Election Appeal Board must abide by the following when making rulings:

4.2.X.1 The onus is on the appellant to demonstrate the charge of impropriety was not correct. Consequently, showing a mere balance of probabilities is insufficient for appeal.

4.2.X.2 The appellant has the right, but not an obligation, to appear before the Election Appeal Board at an Election Appeal Hearing to present argument or evidence.

4.2.X.3 The Election Appeal Board has the right to hold an Election Appeal Hearing of its own initiative for an appeal under consideration.

4.2.X.4 An Election Appeal Hearing is a meeting at which the Election Appeal Board may ask questions pertaining to an appeal of people external to the Election Appeal Board.

4.2.X.4.1 The Election Appeal Board has the right to demand the presence of the Chief Returning Officer and/or the Deputy Chief Returning Officer at an Election Appeal Hearing.

4.2.X.4.2 The Election Appeal Board may request, but not demand, the presence of any person not mentioned in Bylaws 4.2.X.4.1 at an Election Appeal Hearing.

4.2.X.4.3 The procedure and handling of evidence at an Election Appeal Hearing is governed by the Policy Manual of the Society.

BIFRT Bylaw 4.2.5 be amended to include:

4.2.5.1 Should a member of the Election Appeal Board be unable to attend a meeting, the highest ranked member of the Election Appeal Board waiting list of the same division, and who has attended all meetings of the appeal under current consideration, will take his or her place for the duration of the appeal.

BIFRT Bylaw 4.2 be amended to include 4.2.Y, positioned after 4.2.6:

4.2.Y Quorum for a meeting of the Election Appeal Board shall be 5.

4.2.Y.1 Any member on the Election Appeal Board waiting list must attend all meetings of the Election Appeal Board and shall be forbidden to speak or vote during meetings.

BIFRT the Bylaws be renumbered appropriately.

Moved – D. Dechene (Engineering)

Seconded – S. Armstrong (Law)

This will allow EAB to hold hearings and candidates can ask for a hearing.

R. Telfer (President) – for – committees and boards can hold hearings under Roberts Rules of Order.

Motion passes

Email voting

WHEREAS some committees require emergency votes that do not allow for deliberation; and WHEREAS the use of votes over email when deliberation cannot be done should be at the discretion of the committee chair:

BIRT committee chairs be allowed to hold official committee business and votes via email.

BIFRT if any voting member of a committee expresses the need to discuss a particular motion at a meeting, within two business days of the call for the email vote, email voting for that motion be disallowed.

Moved – J. Dechene (Chemistry)

Seconded – S. Black (Engineering)

J. Dechene (Chemistry) – Robert's Rules of Order does not allow for email voting. This motion puts it in our Bylaws which supersedes RRO.

R. Telfer (President) – RRO prohibits email voting unless it is in the Bylaws.

S. Armstrong (Law) – point of information – can this be amended to make it a Bylaw?

Speaker – didn't this come from the BCC?

R. Telfer (President) – yes, but it must be explicitly stated. Move to refer back to BCC.

Currently is not worded properly.

Seconded R. English (Music)

Passes

Motion referred back to BCC

Motion to amend contract signing

WHEREAS the VP Finance is required to sign all cheques regarding loan agreements; and
WHEREAS two signatures, one being the President's or VP Finance's, and one being another
VP's, are required to withdraw funds from the Society's bank account; and

WHEREAS in the interest of consistency and accountability two signatures should be required
to enter into agreements; and

WHEREAS Bylaw 12.5 currently reads:

12.5 The President shall sign all contracts on behalf of the Society, unless otherwise
determined by Council.

The President and Vice-President Finance are required to sign any agreements relating to the
long-term investments of the Society, unless otherwise determined by Council.

BIRT 12.5 be struck and replaced with:

12.5 The President and one other member of the Executive shall sign all agreements on
behalf of the Society, unless otherwise determined by Council. The President and the VP
Finance shall sign all agreements relating to the long-term investments of the Society and to
all agreements requiring the withdrawal of funds from the Society's bank accounts, unless
otherwise determined by Council.

Moved – D. Dechene (Engineering)

Seconded - D. Sutherland (VP Finance)

D. Dechene (Engineering) – currently two signatures are needed to sign cheques. President
and VP Finance can sign cheques. At the moment only the President can sign contracts. This
needs to be altered to include the VP Finance.

R. Telfer (President) – for – two officers should sign. There is a concern that some contracts
may be time sensitive.

Motion passes

Motion 2:

Whereas The University of Western Ontario provided alternative transportation during the
transit strike and

Whereas this transportation aided graduate students in fulfilling their academic requirements.

BIRT the Society fund a portion of the van program with the refund provided by the LTC.

BIFRT the remainder be refunded to graduate students.

Moved: D. Sutherland (VP Finance)

Seconded: A. Rochweg (History)

Motion passes

Motion 3:

Whereas the Graduate sponsorship line item is intended to support non-academic initiatives directly benefiting graduate students
BIRT two hundred dollars of the graduate sponsorship line item be used for one time funding of the Indian Graduate Students Association's Diwali Event
Moved – D. Sutherland (VP Finance)
Seconded -

Finance Committee considered it as did the Executive. It was decided to bring it to Council. This motion sponsors diversity.
C. Gray (Health & Rehab Sciences) – does this set a precedent? (A- D. Sutherland – this a one time allocation only.)
S. Beasley (Biochemistry) - Graduate students are to match funds – was this done? (A – D. Sutherland – they spent over \$1000 at the Grad Club.)
R. Kissack (History) – is there a timeline? (A – DS – the even has already occurred.)
B. Hussain (Engineering) – what kind of benefits must the event have? (A – DS – must be a benefit to graduate students.)
V. Macintyre (Occupational Therapy) – what kind of things have been funded in the past? (A – DS – last year the French Department used the money for a door lock for the graduate student lounge. RT – this is a pot of money for the executive to fund discretionary events that contribute to graduate students.)
V. Macintyre (Occupational Therapy) – I'm a member of a Jewish committee – can we apply (A – DS – yes)
P. Baiden (Sociology) – two years ago there was a similar situation with Bangladesh.
S. Beasley (Biochemistry) – that time we didn't have a policy. The line item description was changed to be sure that the *funds* benefit graduate students directly. It was used for *sustainability initiatives, V-day sponsorship, GTA Food Bank, etc.* You must fill out a form and have matched funds requested.
S. Black (Engineering) – point of interest – how much money is available? (A- DS – \$1500 for the year and about \$1000 is still available.)
S. Beasley (Biochemistry) – for – they have fulfilled current requirements
C. Pilkington (Political Science) – against – 2nd motion should come before allocating.
R. Telfer (President) – for – it is important to support diversity, we have the money.
B. Sherar (Senator) – call the question
Seconded – A. Hafiz (Engineering)
Question called

Motion passes

Motion 4:

Whereas the Graduate sponsorship line item has had interest from religious/cultural events that benefit graduate students.

Whereas the Society promotes a climate of diversity.

BIRT Council refer the Graduate sponsorship line item policy to the Policy Committee to determine appropriate conditions for religious/cultural event funding.

BIFRT the formulation of this policy be brought back to Council by March 25, 2010.

c) Other Motions

SOGS Council Motion – Brent Sherar

Whereas, a petition containing > 10% of the graduate student body at Western has been submitted to the CFS National and CFS Ontario organizations to hold referendums regarding our affiliation;

Whereas, members of the SOGS Council during the November meeting wanted more information regarding the CFS' response to our petition prior to deciding Council's participation in the referendum;

Whereas, should there be a referendum, Council needs to know the date in advance of the referendum and needs sufficient time to appoint two (2) members to act as overseers for the referendums, as per CFS bylaws;

BIRT all correspondence (including letters, email, and all forms of telecommunication) between the CFS National, CFS Ontario, CFS Services, or agent/entity acting in good faith of the three branches of the CFS organization and any SOGS Executive, since October 1, 2009, be posted on the SOGS website within five (5) business of it being received/transmitted (telephone transcripts within fourteen [14] business days) and included in the preceding Council package for discussion.

Moved – B. Sherar (Senator)

Seconded – G. Zeni (Medical Biophysics)

B. Sherar – this is to ensure transparency.

R. Telfer – against – unnecessary waste of time – VP External and Communication as well as President attend CFS meetings are report to Council.

Amended motion:

Whereas, a petition containing > 10% of the graduate student body at Western has been submitted to the CFS National and CFS Ontario organizations to hold referendums regarding our affiliation;

Whereas, members of the SOGS Council during the November meeting wanted more information regarding the CFS' response to our petition prior to deciding Council's participation in the referendum;

Whereas, should there be a referendum, Council needs to know the date in advance of the referendum and needs sufficient time to appoint two (2) members to act as overseers for the referendums, as per CFS bylaws;

BIRT all official correspondence regarding the petition and referendum at the UWO (including, but not limited to letters, emails and faxes) between the CFS, CFS Ontario, CFS Services, or agent/entity acting on behalf of the three branches of the CFS organizations and any SOGS Executive member since October 1, 2009, be posted on the SOGS website within five (5) business of it being received/transmitted and included in the subsequent Council package for discussion.

D. Dechene (Engineering) – for – information from the CFS to SOGS should be disseminated in a timely manner.

K. Asquith (Media Studies) – against – we do need information, but transcribing cell phone calls is a little heavy handed.

R. Telfer (President) – agreed with K. Asquith that posting information on referendum on the website should be done in a timely fashion.

Question called

Seconded - J. Dechene (Chemistry)

Passes

Amended motion passes

7. Executive/Committee/Councillor Reports

a) President

President presented report.

Motion to have section on Orientation Committee stricken from the report.

Moved – J. Dechene (Chemistry)

Seconded – D. Dechene (Engineering)

S. Beasley (Biochemistry) – for

D. Dechene (Engineering) – inflammatory

R. Telfer (President) – should respect officer's right to express oneself

D. Sutherland (VP Finance) – for – could lead to a law suit

R. Kissack (History) – for – do people know what

Speaker read out inflammatory section

J. Dechene (Chemistry) –

C. Pinkleton (Political Science) – agree with intent – president is entitled to his opinion, our job is to knit-pick

K. Godbout (English) – amendment – to eliminate bulk of language

Seconded – K. Pisters (Engineering)

D. Dechene (Engineering) – against – this is setting a precedent

G. Keller (Computer Science) for –

R. Telfer (President)– opinion, observation expressed – council can't make - report highly problematic

S. Thompson (English) – for amendment

D. Dechene – call the question

Seconded – R. vanderZanden

2/3 needed

Question called

Abstention – D. Dechene

Short version of motion passes

K. Pisters – is there a SSC report (A – now part of VP Student Services portfolio)

R. vanderZanden (Engineering) – looking into food options on campus – has anything been done? (A – J. Wiebe from Economics was to run the campaign but hasn't been able to do so yet.)

R. vanderZanden – It was suggested by Council that GSIC work on this issue.

Would you please ask GSIC to look into the issue and report back to Council. (A – GSIC has many things on their agenda, can advocate to bring this to the front of the line.)

b) VP Academic

Western Research Forum abstract submission deadline has closed. Over 100 participants. Come out to support peers – both oral and poster presentations. Dinner will be held at the Wave – cost \$10. Registration will be on Thursday and Friday – February 25 and 26.

SGPS is trying to eliminate the need to print theses. On-line was to start in January but has now been pushed to March

B. Sherar – would this reduce the time needed for PhD's to submit in order for committees to get their copies.

K. Asquith – are the TA awards only for students to fill out or for faculty too? The questionnaire seems more geared to students. (A – will look into it and raise this concern with committee.)

c) VP External & Communications

VP External unable to attend – any questions should be directed to him by email.
J. Caughlin (Education) attended CFS meeting and made a presentation.

D. Dechene asked VP to inform Council how he voted on Motion 6.

d) VP Finance

Presented budget and financial report.

e) VP Student Services

VP Student Services unable to attend – any questions should be directed to her by email.

Orientation Committee and Health Plan Committee need members.

f) SOGS Commissioners' Reports

Disabilities Commissioner
Pride Commissioner

g) Councillor Reports

h) Senator and Board of Governor Reports

8. New Business/Open Forum

No new business

Motion to Adjourn

Moved – D. Dechene (Engineering)

Seconded – S. Beasley (Biochemistry)