

SOGS COUNCIL MEETING
Approved MINUTES
February 24, 2011
6:05 – 7:05 pm
UCC Room 56

Speaker: John Nater

Recording secretary: Yvonne Rollins

1) Ratification of Agenda

Agenda approved.

Ratified

2) Guest Speaker

- Professor Sam Trosow from the faculties of Law and Information and Media Studies gave an overview analysis of the proposed increase in tariff charged by Access Copyright which, if approved, will be raised from \$3 to \$45 per full-time equivalent (FTE) student.
- Access Copyright is a non-profit collective, therefore in his view the tariff paid by students should be going down not up.
- The definition of copying will be broadened to include hosting a URL and projecting an image; both of which are troubling.
- Invasive surveying of emails exchanged between professors and students will be required to police these new arrangements to make sure that there are no violations. Universities may therefore need to make payments at a later date if copyright violations are deemed to have taken place earlier but only noticed latterly.
- Western's Board of Governors intend to charge students a fee that will cover potential future costs so that UWO is not financially exposed. Professor Trosow's view is that this decision was due to a misrepresentation of the issue to the Board and more generally due to the fact that UWO has historically been a risk averse institution.
- He highlighted that graduate students are both producers and consumers of copyright information and advised that SOGS contact the Board of Governors regarding this issue. A draft of a proposed letter was circulated and it will be posted on the SOGS website.
- A motion to circulate the letter was proposed by Desiree Lamoureux and seconded by Emerson Doyle.
- Before a vote could be taken two issues were raised: (1) Fighting access copyright in partnership with the Board of Governors; and (2) short term fee rise. There was a suggestion to separate these 2 issues and re-word letter in a more collaborative and less adversarial tone.
- Simpson (VP Academic) suggested that the letter should highlight graduate students' concerns in order to gain more traction with the Board.
- John Magyar defended the use of such a strong tone because he thought it was necessary to caution the Board, however he conceded that it could of course be re-worked.
- Emerson Doyle proposed and John Magyar seconded a motion that the letter should be sent as it is currently worded. The motion was carried.

3) Announcements

- The next Council meeting will take place on March 31 2011.

- SOGS Bursary deadlines are on Monday 28th February.
- Western Research Forum on Saturday 25th February.
- Presidential debates will take place from 7pm on Wednesday 2 March in the Grad Club
- Presidential elections will take place on-line as follows:
 - Advance Poll: March 3, 2011 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
 - Polling Days: March 8, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. to March 10, 2011 at 4:00 p.m.
- One more person from the physical sciences is needed to sit on the appeals board.

4) Reception and Ratification of the SOGS Council Minutes January 27, 2011

Minutes received and ratified (Doyle/Teichert). Carried.

5) Motion to receive AGM minutes from February 8, 2011 moved by ? and seconded by Jordan Epstien. Motion carried.

6) President's Report

This consisted of two motions: (1) A Business Plan for the Grad Club; and (2) A SOGS Endowment with UWO.

A Business Plan for the Grad Club

- The General Manager has requested a business plan that explains how the Grad Club should operate to fulfill its mandate to promote the interests of graduate students. There are 4 possible approaches:
 - financial: i.e. a stand alone, profitable business
 - social: subsidized by SOGS fees
 - a mixture of the above 2
 - financial targets of grad club - what would be the consequences of not meeting its targets?
- Duncan sought views from members.
- Q: Who has experience of developing business plans? A: Jordan has business planning experience as does the Grad Club GM.
- A motion to develop a business plan for the Grad Club was moved by John Magyar and seconded by Lance Da Silva. Motion carried.

SOGS Endowment with University

- The aim of the proposed endowment is to make better use of SOGS' \$30,000 surplus by investing a proportion of this figure in an investment vehicle. Currently it is sitting in the bank gaining only a low interest.
- It will be a fixed endowment, that is, for a fixed term.
- There are two options: (1) a fixed rate of return whereby the principal sum is guaranteed to be paid along with a fixed rate of interest; or a variable rate whereby the principal sum is guaranteed to be paid, however the rate of interest will vary with market performance (worst case scenario - no interest).
- The finance committee advise that a 50/50 split between the 2 options would be best.
- Q. Will SOGS need capital for anything? DS - maybe for Grad Club upgrade.
- A motion to approve the endowment fund was moved by Lance Da Silva and seconded by John Magyar. Motion carried.

6) Orders of the Day

7) Executive/Committee/Councillor Reports

a. VP Academic

- Simpson reminded council members that the Western Research Forum would take place on Saturday 26 February.

b. VP External & Communications

- None.

c. VP Finance

- Harel highlighted the two elements of his report: the Grad Club budget; and the SOGS budget
- There was a question about the GTA food bank which Harel will investigate.

d. VP Student Services

- Hum extended his thanks to Environment & Sustainability students for promoting the Grad Club open mic.
- Hum also highlighted some future events:
 - - Formal charity dinner and wine tasting, including one hour of candlelight to celebrate earth hour (26th March).
 - - Funspiel / curling (19th March).
 - - International graduate student music event (6th March)

e. SOGS commissioners' reports

- Disabilities Commissioner - none.

f. Councillor Reports

None

g. Senator and Board of Governor Reports

None

8) Elections - Committees (internal & external)

- Election - equity committee. Nominee: Mac Hassan proposed by Desiree Lamoureux and seconded by Jordan Epstein.
- Election - appeal board. Nominee: Laura Sanchez (Earth Sciences) proposed Reagan Unrau and seconded by Reza Azarderakhsh.

9) New Business / Open Forum

- There was a question on ancillary fees. These are currently approximately \$500 for international students and \$260 for domestic students.
- This is not covered by all departments' minimum funding which means it must be met by students (e.g. Kinesiology has always charged its students the ancillary fee).
- VP Academic Simpson requested that an email be sent to her and she will consider how best to approach the issue.

Duncan Sutherland moved that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Erin Doyle. Meeting ended at 7.05pm