

SOGS Council Meeting Minutes

Approved

March 25, 2010

6:07 – 7:10 pm

1. Agenda Changes

- No guest speaker
- Approval of AGM Minutes
- Elections (

Agenda approved

2. Announcements

- a) Welcome to all Councillors to the SOGS February Council Meeting with a special welcome to new Councillors. There are new Councillor packages available .
- b) Quorum is 30.
- c) When addressing Council, Councillors were asked to stand up and speak loudly. The recorder does not pick up sound well in this room, and it is very hard to use the recording to recreate minutes when necessary.
- d) The next Council meeting will be on April 29th in this room.
- e) Elections next month – VP External & Communications and VP Student Services.
- f) Please tell your peers to remind undergraduate students to submit nominations for the GSTA Awards for full and winter term courses by no later than March 31.
- g) Remember you **MUST** sign in at the beginning of Council with your signature and time and if you leave before the meeting is 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.

3. Reception and Approval of the SOGS Council Minutes of the February 25 Council Meeting

pg.13: C. Pilkington – Political Science (not Computer Science).

Minutes received and approved with change.

4. Reception and Approval of the SOGS AGM Minutes of February 11, 2010

Minutes received and approved

5. Orders of the Day

a) Motions Arising from the President

b) Motions Arising from Other Committees

BCC

WHEREAS proxy voting should be prohibited, as described in the report from the BCC to February Council; and

WHEREAS the BCC still feels it is irresponsible to prohibit the use of proxies from committee work until it can be demonstrated that committees can reasonably function without them; and

WHEREAS Bylaws prohibiting proxies are redundant, as proxies are already prohibited by Robert's Rules unless explicitly allowed; and

WHEREAS this would not affect the use of alternates, only proxies:

BIRT Bylaws 4.7.4, 6.1.13, 15.2.2.2, 15.3.11.4 and 15.3.11.5 be struck.

BIFRT 15.2.2.1 be amended to strike the clause "and".

BIFRT 15.2.3 be amended to strike the last sentence, which reads "Proxies count for quorum."

BIFRT Section 15.3.11 be renamed "Alternate Councillors".

BIFRT 15.3.11.2 be amended to replace "SOGS alternate Councillor/Proxy form" with "SOGS Alternate Councillor form".
BIFRT the Bylaws be renumbered accordingly.

Moved – R. English (Music)
Seconded – J. Dechene (Chemistry)

J. Dechene – this motion goes along with the report from last month. Proxies will still be allowed for committee work, but will no longer be available at Council. Alternates will still be allowed for Council.
D. Najjar (Anthropology) – what is the rationale for this?

J. Dechene – Robert's Rules of Order is against the use of proxies. They are undemocratic. A single individual should not have the right to vote for two people.

No – 1
Abstentions – 1
Motion passes

VP Finance

BIRT Council accept the 2010-2011 Grad Club budget.

Moved – D. Sutherland (VP Finance)
Seconded – S. Chowdhury (VP External & Communications)
B. Sherar (Senator) – when will the Grad Club pay off the loan to SOGS?
D. Sutherland – within the next couple of months.
Motion passes

c) Other Motions

Motion 1 – Brent Sherar

Whereas the cost of tuition continues to rise and remains a barrier to program entry;
Whereas tuition payment is required in full at the beginning of each term;
Whereas tuition may be paid in two portions, but with an additional late payment charge incurred;
Whereas Category I PhD students are guaranteed a stipend to cover at least the cost of tuition fees;
Whereas Category I students are paid monthly by the University;
BIRT SOGS adopt the official policy that tuition payments should be able to be deducted monthly directly from a Category I graduate student's stipend;
BIFRT the SOGS Executive write a letter within fourteen (14) days following the adoption of this motion to Dr. Linda Miller, Vice-Provost of SGPS, and Drs. Michael Milde and Stephen Sims, Associate Vice-Provost of SGPS, to instruct SGPS that monthly tuition payment is a top priority for all graduate students and should be implemented with great haste.

Moved – B. Sherar (Senator)
Seconded – J. Dechene (Chemistry)

J. Dechene – this is done at other campuses around the country. Having tuition come off each month's pay, instead of once per term would make it easier to plan finances. Currently, OGS recipients are the only ones who can split tuition payments monthly.

S. Black (Engineering) – what is a Category I student?
B. Sherar – Category 1 students are thesis based; Category 2 students are course based.
C. Jubayer (Engineering) – why only PhD's?
J. Dechene – most PhD's have guaranteed funding.
C. Jubayer – it should apply to both Masters and PhDs.
B. Sherar – currently only looking at PhDs.
J. Brown (Biology) – Can this be changed to apply for all grad students?
D. Sutherland (VP Finance) – Call the questions
Seconded – R. English (Music)

Question called.
Motion passes

Motion 2 – Brent Sherar

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

Whereas the SOGS President received a letter dated January 14, 2010 from the CFS admitting as such;

Whereas a referendum regarding Local 47's membership in the CFS is imminent;

Whereas the CFS Bylaw I - Membership does not place a limit on campaign financing;

BIRT SOGS earmark \$20,000.00 into a CFS referendum contingency fund;

BIFRT \$5,000 of the referendum contingency fund be allocated to spend on campaign materials;

BIFRT the remaining \$15,000 be allocated for cover legal costs should the CFS infringe on Local 47's democratic efforts to hold a referendum regarding our affiliation.

Moved – B. Sherar (Senator)

Seconded – R. English (Music)

B. Sherar – motion is self explanatory. Will answer questions.

R. Telfer (President) – not self-explanatory. Setting aside \$15,000 for anything should go through Finance Committee. There is no need to do this because there is enough money available to accommodate this size of expenditure.

D. Sutherland – motion to send to Finance Committee

Seconded – J. Dechene

D. Sutherland – this type of motion should go through the Finance Committee.

J. Dechene – This amount of money should go through the Finance Committee.

S. Armstrong (Law) – if we are sued, will we have to wait to go to Council to get money approved?

Speaker – this is to put money aside, not to get approval from Council

B. Sherar – if we face legal challenges, then Executive would have the leeway to move forward.

D. Sutherland – Call the question

Seconded – R. English

Question called.

Motion passes – Motion will go to Finance Committee.

6. Executive/Committee/Councillor Reports

a) President

(Report available as Appendix A.)

b) VP Academic

D. Sutherland presented on behalf of N. Szudy, who is away at an International Conference.

Electronic Thesis Project:

At this month's Graduate Education Committee Meeting the final terms of the ETD project were discussed.

The projected date for the start of this program is July

This pilot project is now open to all PhD candidates instead of limiting the project to 30 students as mentioned in previous reports.

We will continue to bring updates about this program to council.

c) VP External & Communications

Equity Committee – need members and a new Chair.

GSIC – committee couldn't meet due to lack of quorum.

CFS bylaws were uploaded to SOGS Website.

d) VP Finance

Budget was successfully presented to Property and Finance Committee.

Met with Libro Financial regarding possible investments.

e) VP Student Services

Orientation Committee – new members needed, many completing studies.

Spring bash is being organized.

International Graduate Student Issues Committee – new members and ideas needed. Spring event is coming up.

Health Plan Committee – planning a survey to look at health plan. Feedback will be appreciated.

An email will be sent out with a link to a website with a few yes/no questions.

f) SOGS Commissioners' Reports

g) Councillor Reports

h) Senator and Board of Governor Reports

7. New Business/Open Forum

C. Pilkington (Political Science) –

Motion:

Whereas university should provide a forum for open discussion and debate,

Whereas university should remain a safe place for students of diverse backgrounds, religions, races, sex, sexual orientation or other identifiable traits, and

Whereas American political columnist Ann Coulter gave a talk in the North Campus Building on March 22, 2010 that did not encourage academic discussion and that was clearly prejudiced against a number of identifiable groups.

BIRT the President of SOGS draft an open letter condemning Ann Coulter's talk at The University of Western Ontario and particularly comments disparaging groups such as homosexuals, women, and Muslims. This letter should also be disseminated widely to the media, The Gazette, the London Free Press, the Globe and Mail, the National Post, the CBC and local television stations.

Moved – C. Pilkington (Political Science)

Seconded – R. Telfer (President)

C. Pilkington – A letter should be written by the president to condemn Ann Coulter's appearance at Western.

R. Telfer – in academia, it is important to have a setting for freedom of speech; however, it is equally important not to condone bigotry. It is good for us to have our opinion heard.

R. English – will the letter just condemn what she said?

R. Telfer - yes

D. Sutherland – call the question

Seconded - C. Gray (Kinesiology)

Question called

2/3 required to pass

Motion passes

Elections

Equity Committee – J. Rahman, E. Pridoehl

GSIC – J. Rahman

Sustainability Committee – A. Anvari

Motion to Adjourn – 7:05 pm