

AMS Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, March 22nd, 2011
Ban Righ Dining Hall, Ban Righ

-----8:30pm-----

1. Approval of Agenda [Motion 1]
2. Approval of Minutes of the meeting of March 23rd, 2010 [Motion 2]
3. Speaker's Business
4. Speakers
 - a. Brandon Sloan – Judicial Affairs Report, 2010-2011
 - b. AMS Executive – State of the Union
5. President's Report
6. Vice President's Report
 - a. Operations
 - b. University Affairs
7. Board of Director's Report
8. Student Senator's Report
9. Rector's Report
10. Statement by Members
11. Question Period
12. Business Arising from the Minutes
13. New Business
 - a. That AMS Assembly change the name of the "Student Health Fee" to the "Student Health and Disabilities Fee". [Motion 3]
 - b. That AMS Assembly approve the Queen's Pride Project fee question as seen in Appendix ONE. [Motion 4]
 - c. That AMS Assembly repeal the motion from the March 10th, 2011 Assembly meeting as seen in Appendix TWO. [Motion 5]
 - d. That AMS Assembly approve that all concerns relating to Queen's Journal content should only be brought to AMS Assembly if the complainant's issue is not adequately resolved through the process outlined in the Queen's Journal Grievance Policy. [Motion 6]
14. Discussion

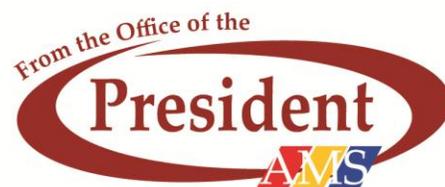
**AMS Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, March 22nd, 2011
Ban Righ Dining Hall, Ban Righ**

-----8:30pm-----

Motion Sheet

1. Moved by: Calum MacBeth (cia@ams.queensu.ca)
Seconded by: Chris Rudnicki (vpua@ams.queensu.ca)
That AMS Assembly approve the agenda for the AMS Annual General Meeting of March 22nd, 2011.
2. Moved by: Calum MacBeth (cia@ams.queensu.ca)
Seconded by: Chris Rudnicki (vpua@ams.queensu.ca)
That AMS Assembly approve the minutes for the AMS Annual General Meeting of March 23rd, 2010.
3. Moved by: Safiah Chowdhury (president@ams.queensu.ca)
Seconded by: Chris Rudnicki (vpua@ams.queensu.ca)
That AMS Assembly change the name of the Student Health Fee to the Student Health and Disabilities Fee.
4. Moved by: Althea Green (7ag6@queensu.ca)
Seconded by: John Atalick (7jea@queensu.ca)
That AMS Assembly approve the Queen's Pride Project fee question seen in Appendix ONE.
5. Moved by: Tyler Ball (journal_editors@ams.queensu.ca)
Seconded by: Rachel Kuper (journal_editors@ams.queensu.ca)
That AMS Assembly repeal the motion from the March 10th, 2011 Assembly meeting as seen in Appendix TWO.
6. Moved by: Tyler Ball (journal_editors@ams.queensu.ca)
Seconded by: Rachel Kuper (journal_editors@ams.queensu.ca)
That AMS Assembly approve that all concerns relating to Queen's Journal content should only be brought to AMS Assembly if the complainant's issue is not adequately resolved through the process outlined in the Queen's Journal Grievance Policy.

The President of the Alma Mater Society
John Deutsch University Centre, Queen's University
Kingston, ON K7L 3N6
Phone: (613) 533-2726 | Fax: (613) 533-3002



March 15, 2011

Dear Members of the Alma Mater Society,

Welcome to the Annual General Meeting of the 2010/2011 school year! I thank you for engaging in the democratic processes of this University so that we may better represent you and address your concerns.

This past year has passed incredibly quickly and I hope I have served you well throughout it! With unforeseen ups and downs, the year has been nothing short of exciting. On the agenda is a progress report on campaign promises that Ben, Chris and I got elected on where I will provide a more substantive update on my year in office. In this AGM package, you will also find reports from both members of AMS Council and Faculty and Residence Societies who have similarly been up to a range of things throughout this year. In every aspect, this Society is a collective of many different parties who together do great things for Queen's.

Indeed the power of students ought to never be underestimated. I decided to run for AMS Executive due to a belief in the power of the AMS and students overall. Everyone will tell you that students are driving force behind Queen's, and we have been vested a significant amount of trust and leverage at this institution. It's our responsibility to ensure this is utilized to its utmost.

To this end, we all have an individual responsibility. As students who have a stake in this University, we have a duty to ensure our voices are heard and accounted for. There are some major planning processes in place at the moment, including the Academic Planning Taskforce, Enrolment Planning Taskforce and soon, the Campus Plan, all three of which will set the par for years to come on matters of academics, the size of Queen's, as well as the physical configuration of services and buildings. Although we may not be present at Queen's to see all the impacts of today's decision making, it will unquestionably affect how our degrees are understood and thought of in the future. Furthermore, as people who care about Queen's, the least we can do is ensure it is kept robust for the generations to come. The time to speak, be heard and make an impact is now.

By no means is this easy. At the University-level, many student positions are tokenized by having one or two student representatives, usually from the AMS and SGPS Executive respectively. In this respect, the AMS President serves as a custodian of so much information. I encourage all my successors to take this responsibility in stride and realize how important it is to always outreach to the student body. The student body also has a role in this, and that is keeping the Executive accountable on a range of matters. By all means, you are all free to speak to University administrators yourself as to what is going on at Queen's and what the AMS is doing about it/what can be done about it.

We also have a responsibility to tell these administrators our opinion in productive and proactive ways. Unfortunately, in my years at Queen's, I have found that we are quite reactive in our response. Be it a response to something that happened on campus, or a response to a suggestion regarding future academics, we tend to be reactive. As young adults about to start the rest of our lives, I truly believe we can more creatively engage with matters and provide unique ideas and feedback to administrators to let them know what we want our University to be about. I sincerely believe these opportunities ARE present, it is simply a matter of capitalizing on them.

If we have learnt anything from these past few weeks, it is the power of student mobilization. We have witnessed hundreds of students rally together around a mutual cause, with an additional thousand or so signed on. This is a demonstration of what we can do when we are truly motivated. However, I am concerned that our priorities may be a bit ill-placed. For example, during our last AMS Assembly, we had an initial turn-out of over three hundred people, causing us to move our location to Wallace Hall and we still managed to exceed capacity. Assembly was not advertised in any special way by the AMS, but was spread through word of mouth regarding a specific motion, leading to such a large turnout. However, immediately prior to that Assembly, we held an undergraduate-wide town hall on the academic planning process. This was widely advertised in The Queen's Journal as well as through student-wide emails. Despite this mass outreach on something so profoundly important, we had a turnout of perhaps forty people. The discrepancy is quite troubling given that the importance of the Academic Town Hall cannot be understated. I am so grateful to those students who came to the Town Hall and provided their very salient input, but it would have been so wonderful to have three hundred additional bodies present and motivated as was witnessed during our Assembly immediately after. To this end, I believe self-reflection is necessary to question why this was not the case.

Overall, this year has taught me about the many challenges that lay in our path forward. While I initially got involved to enact my ideas of change, I have found that there are many barriers to this occurring. The foremost barrier is the fact that for anything to significantly change at Queen's, we must proceed together with buy-in from all parties. Too often are we bogged down by competing individual interests, but if we sincerely self-reflect, keep the big picture in mind, and work together on mutual causes (which I believe should not be difficult), we can achieve SO much. I have seen this happen, and it is beautiful. To do so requires an acceptance of both responsibility and accountability; indeed, I truly hope we can accept and proceed with both for the betterment of our alma mater.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to get in touch with me at any time. Thank you so much for your engagement.

Best,

Safiah Chowdhury

president@ams.queensu.ca



Report to AMS Assembly
Tuesday, March 22nd, 2011

Dear Students,

The 2010-2011 year has been one of growth and change for the Alma Mater Society

The Student Life Centre and Queen's Centre Contribution

After over 20 years of work, AMS Inc. will be absorbing the Student Life Centre in to its financial operation. Over the course of the year, this has involved a substantial amount of political negotiation with the issue of financial authority being ever present. In terms of operationalizing the SLC, the delays in the negotiating process became a concern, especially in regard to the Queen's Centre commitment. Positions taken by all sides have also slowed down our internal latitude in operationalizing, but when all is said and done we can say that the AMS worked in good faith with all partners to make this long-time dream a reality in 2010-11.

Entering our year, a primary concern for my office has been how we treat the withheld Student Interest Fee monies accruing from the Queen's Centre contribution. Per a motion passed in 2009, the AMS will be withholding this money until construction restarts or negotiations take place. Recent developments at the Board of Trustees notwithstanding, these negotiations have needed to begin for quite some time, as we must be honest with students about why we are collecting this money, and what it is intended for.

Services

In 2010-11 we saw positive growth in the services as a whole. With a focus on customer service and long term financial sustainability, the AMS services succeeded in meeting both their financial and social goals. This year I have stressed to the Assembly the importance of balancing the social and financial bottom line. I'm happy to report now that in 2010-11 we have put just under 2 million dollars back in to students hands as a result of the services. These dollars have an economic effect both on our society, but also our community as whole. These sums are no small dollar amounts in terms of contribution to the Kingston economy.

Internally, the AMS has done this without significant opportunity cost. Budgeted for a loss of approximately 30 thousand, my expectation is for the services to beat this marker. IN the scope of the 6.5 million dollar operation that the services entail, this couples a good social outcome with a sustainable financial model.

Investments and Capital Assets

In terms of acquired capital assets, the AMS did not make extensive purchases of a large capital nature. While capital asset acquisition had budgeted ahead to 2010-11 in terms of viability, the corporation only exceeded half of the predicted threshold. This will prove useful in 2011-12 for renovations to AMS services, and in to the future with long term needs such as a radio transmitter for CFRC being a pressing issue.

Since the 2008 crash, the AMS assets have picked up steam gradually. Investing in Canadian, American, and International bonds and stocks, we carry a conservative investment policy that ensures our assets are not at a major risk. It is worthy of public consideration however, as to whether or not the Alma Mater Society, as a student organization, wishes to continue investing in oil and gas companies or other companies in the long term.

Long Term Strategic Planning

In an organization with annual turnover, long term strategic planning has proven to be more difficult than the Executive and I first expected. Broadly stated, there are internal structures at play within the AMS that imbibe an inherent conservatism that prevents growth and change. What I speak of here is not a political conservatism, rather it is an inherent problem that the culture of the AMS – known to many as the clique – is a self-reinforcing concept that thrives on unnecessary conflict. In a 14.75 million dollar organization, I have at times observed conflicts that have very little impact on the society, but ultimately prevent growth and change because of ideal types sustained by those who have perhaps spent too much time in our midst.

Long term financial planning has been slightly more successful, in defining our long term goals and articulating them in to value statements that can carry through to our services over a long term trajectory. To this end, the Board has solicited feedback from students in forums, and has gone ahead with the significant project of reforming our bylaws, many of which date back to the 1990's.

Final Note

As a final word, I would just like to make a point about my experience at AMS Assembly this year. I came in to this position with the highest hopes, but have observed that the discourse of campus remains rooted in dialogues of conflict, rather than edifying the students around us. If we remain more interested in the political fight instead of advancing serious campus issues such as the academic and financial state of the University, then we will have failed in our duty as student leaders. Quite simply we can do better. I firmly challenge the next AMS Assembly to raise the level of debate on this campus, and ultimately better serve students.

Sincerely,
Ben Hartley
vpops@ams.queensu.ca
(613) 533-2728



Report to AMS Assembly

Chris Rudnicki | Vice-President (University Affairs)

March 22nd, 2011

Dear AMS Members;

What a year it's been! When you elected CHR last February, there was no way Safiah, Ben or I could have really seen what this year had in store for us. It has been a year full of significant challenges but also bright moments, and all in all it has been an honour to serve the undergraduate student body at Queen's university.

I won't go over every minute detail of the year in this report, but I will review significant occurrences in my portfolio and what they impact they will likely have on the future of the Society. At the end, I will also outline what I feel to be our systemic hindrances to a fully democratic student union.

Academic Affairs

The Academic Affairs Commission has engaged in significant lobbying efforts over the course of the year on both local and provincial fronts. Locally, Kieran has been engaged with administration and students over both the coming change to a GPA system and the change in tuition deadline from September 30th to September 1st. Kieran and I have both been engaged in provincial lobbying through the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, meeting with MPPs to push for increased per-student funding, more robust financial assistance, and enhanced early outreach programs.

We have learned this year that the AMS does not have mechanisms in place to ensure that we proactively seek student direction and feedback for our lobbying efforts. We have much better access to administrative and provincial systems of power by virtue of our positions, and we need to use this access in order to both share information and receive direction from the student body at large. This task is especially imperative given that next fall there will be a provincial election that will decide the fate of the post-secondary system as a whole.

Campus Activities

The Campus Activities Commission has had a very successful year fostering student engagement and learning outside the classroom. Through a number of our events, students have had opportunities to grow personally and professionally. While each event gives value in its own way, I'd like to highlight a brand-new committee this year: Queen's Model Court. Though only in its first year of operation, the conference was

wildly successful. Lara deserves full credit for giving her volunteers the support and guidance they needed to provide the optimum experience for our constituents.

A significant challenge for the CAC moving forward will be ensuring a financially sustainable frosh concert. For the past three years, the concert has lost money as a result of being bilked by external venue managers. This has resulted in a concerted push this year to ensure an on-campus frosh concert, and I have full confidence that the executive-elect and the new Orientation Roundtable Coordinator will be able to make it happen.

Internal Affairs

The Internal Affairs Commission has had a strong year on all fronts. The clubs database has been put online in order to ensure ease of use for our constituents; the elections team is strong and demonstrates sound judgement; and while there have been heated discussions, Assembly has for the most part been a space where respectful debate can occur. I cannot speak extensively to the internal workings of the Judicial Affairs Office- you will be receiving a report at the AGM to that end-but I can say that there seems to be a very high awareness of non-academic discipline at Queen's and in the community, no doubt as a result of our Judicial Affairs Director's concerted effort.

I think the greatest challenge for the CIA next year will be making sure that AMS Assembly is an accessible, comfortable space for the average student. As it stands, students often feel intimidated by the formality of the space and by their ignorance of internal AMS workings. We will need to find a way to educate students in a non-condescending manner while making sure that their voice is seriously heard and considered.

Municipal Issues

The Municipal Affairs Commission has had a powerful year of building relationships and positioning the Society for successful lobbying efforts in the future. Hilary has not only worked extensively with city staff-notably securing an on-campus voting booth for the fall municipal election and helping pass a town-gown strategic plan in conjunction with a number of stakeholders-she has also helped build positive relationships with the newly elected City Council. This foundation will set the stage for the achievement of the Society's strategic goals, such as the on-campus frosh concert, over the course of the next four years.

The challenges that the MAC will face next year will be the same that it has always faced: a small but very vocal opposition from some Kingston community groups, a national press that covers scandal and controversy before charity and community-

building, and a general ignorance of housing and property rights among the general student population. These challenges are vast and systemic, and cannot be overcome except through perseverance and dedication; I wish our successors the best of luck in this endeavour.

Social Issues

The Social Issues Commission has produced a number of successful programs this year, but I want to highlight what I take to be its greatest strength: building an informed, organized anti-oppression community. Daniella has provided a new level of support and guidance for her volunteers, helping them make connections with each other, with student clubs involved in anti-oppressive and equity-promoting work, as well as like-minded community organizations. This has resulted in a robust and vibrant community that thrives within the SIC and which has begun to extend into the general student population.

The greatest challenge for the SIC is, in my view, lack of institutional protection. It is mandated to keep the Society and the university accountable on issues of social justice, yet it is as subject to the political vagaries of the student body as any other commission. A good model to consider would be that of the Judicial Affairs Office, whereby the SIC would report to Assembly in order to keep the Society accountable. In this respect would the SIC be able to speak without fear of disciplinary action.

Sustainability

The Sustainability Office has experienced a year of tremendous action and growth; Jodi has ensured that the portfolio is well-positioned to make the transition to becoming a commission under CES. Jodi has established partnerships with Youth Mentoring Youth to enable Queen's students to mentor local high school students on issues of sustainability, organized a nation-wide conference on campus sustainability with the Sierra Youth Coalition, worked with the SGPS and the university to establish AMS management over the west campus community gardens, and, in conjunction with the Queen's Solar Coalition, successfully lobbied for the installation of roof-top solar panels across the campus.

Next year will be a challenging year for this portfolio, as the new coordinator (and, pending Assembly's approval, commissioner) will face the task of building on a successful year and cementing the place of the office among the other commissions. This must include consultation and collaboration with community groups, the Queen's Sustainability Office, and student organizations like Queen's Back Action on Climate Change and OPIRG. I have every confidence, though, that next year's team is up to the job.

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Now that I have reported on my portfolio for the year, I want to speak briefly about the political climate of the AMS. I believe that we are, for some reason, afraid to speak out on issues deemed too 'political' for fear of in some way alienating the student body. While this fear may sometimes be justified, I think it is foolish to accept as a general principle that the AMS should never make pronouncements on political issues. Taking a stance may sometimes alienate or frustrate some of our constituents, but not taking a stance can do the same. Worse, it can make us irrelevant to the lives of some students; if we aren't going to represent their interests, why should they care? We do not live in a just world, and the lives of students are in no way perfect; as it is our job to represent our constituents, we must take sides on issues pertinent to their lives. This will require vigorous and respectful debate, which should be encouraged. We have to stop shutting down debate before it begins by claiming that the AMS shall not even consider political issues.

As it stands, we will occasionally take stances if students bring these issues to our attention; it was with great pleasure that I voted for the motion by a group of low-income students to lobby the administration toward their goals. But we do not have the institutional mechanism to ensure that we are consistently seeking feedback and direction from students on these issues, and until we do, we will only be occasionally relevant to the lives of our constituents.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Rudnicki
Vice-President (University Affairs)
613 533 2729
vpua@ams.queensu.ca

Appendix ONE

“Do you agree in an increase in the Queen’s Pride Project fee (subject to individual opt-out) from \$0.50 to \$0.55, an increase of \$0.05?”

Appendix TWO:

The motion passed at the March 10th, 2011 meeting reads as follows:

“That AMS Assembly directs the Media Services Director to conduct an analysis of the content of the Queen’s Journal during the current academic year and to subsequently report on the percentage of content that directly addresses student activities and events,”

The AMS Assembly should repeal this motion because any discussion resulting from the data collected would violate the AMS Constitution and its By-Laws governing the Queen’s Journal, thus any conversation or reflection on this data is ineffective in its current form.