



2018 ALMA MATER SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MINUTES

Subject to Approval at the 2019 AMS Annual General Meeting

Meeting commenced at 6:30 PM

Jennifer Li is Speaker

President Li: Welcome to the 2018 AGM. Motions cannot be added at this time. Seeing no amendments to the Agenda, we will proceed with Motion #1, Approval of the Agenda for the 2018 Annual General Meeting

For: ALL

Against: None

Motion Carries

President Li: Motion #2, approval of the minutes of the 2017 AMS AGM. Any amendments? Seeing none, we'll move to a vote.

For: ALL

Against: None

Motion Carries

Speaker's Business

President Li: Moving into Speakers business, seeing as I am the speaker it is an opportunity to provide general remarks. I would like to recognize that Queen's university is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. I would also like to welcome everyone watching on the livestream, and thank all those in attendance for coming. If you do want to speak, please try and find a mic so that your comments can be recorded for the LiveStream.

On a procedural note, any member here is allowed to stand on a point of privilege, point of information, or a point of order. You can stand on a point of privilege to speak to anything that directly affects you or bring to attention any insults or misrepresentation specific to you. You can stand on a point of information to request any clarification or provide clarification on a matter. Finally, you can rise on a point of order to bring to the speaker's attention any deviation from established rules. I will explain the remaining sections of the agenda as we approach them. We have two speakers tonight, the first will be my State of the Society Address, and the second will be a report on the state of the Non Academic Misconduct system delivered by Manager Sidhu. I would ask that any questions you may have on these talks be held until the question period.



Guest Speaker

State of the Society Address

President Li: Good evening everyone. As mandated by our Constitution, I am here tonight as your AMS President to share my thoughts on the state of the society. Thank you to those of you here in these seats and those of you not here but watching on the livestream.

My position gives me a unique perspective into the Queen's student experience, but every one of us has our own individual lived experiences. We each bring something special to Queen's and our experiences are also shaped by our cultural influences, worldview and personal identity.

Tonight, I would like to share a few observations that I've made in the past year and throughout my time at Queen's.

It's no secret that engagement with the AMS hit an all-time low this year with the Executive elections. This was an unprecedented situation in the long history of the AMS and a few lessons have been learned. We have learned that there is a gap in our policy that can guide an appointment process, and Assembly has since taken steps to identify measures we can put in place for the future. We have learned that the elections process can be confusing and pose a barrier to getting involved, and so we have reduced requirements of candidates and streamlined our internal Elections Team structure to make it easier for students to get the information they need.

The Executive appointment process also highlighted a more systemic engagement issue that I would like to discuss further. It is interesting to note that during the traditional campaign process, only one team put their name on the ballot. But when the public campaign process was removed in favour of a single Special Assembly meeting, there were 4 teams who submitted their names for AMS Executive.

Going through a campaign is very intimidating, and it is a difficult decision to make. For years, we have assumed students will willingly put themselves through this gruelling process and have taken this initiative for granted. In the past few years, campaigns have become more vicious and personal privacy has been increasingly violated in large part due to social media. There seems to be an expectation that those who seek positions of power must also sacrifice their privacy and personal dignity.

Serving as AMS President means that you're often an idea or an image more than a real person. It means that people assume they know you based on social media posts and your election campaign. It means people forget that when they make critical Facebook statuses and comments, there's a human behind the screen reading it all and taking the hits.

I raise this point because we need to be kinder to one another. We tend to forget that we are all trying our best and will undoubtedly make mistakes at times. Instead, we are willing – and even anxious – to see prominent figures in a state of helplessness as they sacrifice their privacy for the



greater good. But how willing are students at large to place themselves in these positions and do their part for the greater good? It's very easy to make a statement from behind a computer screen about the idea of the AMS, but how many students realize that it's one of their peers, likely the same age as they are, trying their best and putting in the effort day after day to serve their peers.

As I've said before, the AMS does not have a monopoly on student leadership. What makes Queen's so great is the breadth of opportunities to get involved on campus and the numerous ways students can make a difference. This is evidenced by the number of clubs that we have at Queen's and the initiatives that are often started at grassroots levels by students. What I've noticed over the past few years has been a decrease in traditional forms of engagement that has been replaced by engagement in newer forms. For example, we are seeing decreased interest in elected positions but more and more students each year come together with their peers and form clubs and informal groups to discuss issues they are passionate about.

This is something the AMS must continue to support. When we came into office, we committed to further increasing the resources and support we provide to our vibrant clubs' community. Within the Clubs Office budget, we created a student constable bursary to make it more financially accessible for clubs to hold events that require student constables. We are also well into a comprehensive review of our event sanctioning process to ensure that it is as simple as possible for clubs to navigate. An opportunity moving forward is to increase relationships between the AMS, clubs, faculty societies and other student groups to foster partnerships and ways to collaborate meaningfully to enhance the collective student experience.

The AMS must continue to increase our reach to students that don't associate themselves with the traditional structure of the Society. We have a responsibility to serve and represent the diversity of students at Queen's University. It's time to recognize that the ways students engage with each other and with issues that arise on campus is changing. Students no longer see student government or a ratified club as the only avenues to affect change. Instead, they are bringing more of a personal approach and individual passion to address issues on campus.

I believe that the role of the AMS is to facilitate these conversations and amplify the voices of those who do not have an existing platform. We have a unique position at the University, unparalleled access to administration and decision making bodies, and strong leverage for advocacy issues and bargaining power to affect change.

This year saw a significant project, the redevelopment of the JDUC, make unprecedented process within a year because administration, decision making bodies of the University, and student government were all aligned and willing to make it work. Together, we have developed a full business case for the redevelopment of the JDUC. We have prepared a tri-party MOU that is ready to be signed. We have an Advancement campaign that is ready to begin and we conducted a campus wide referendum to secure a student fee. These things can often take well over a year to do but the fact that we were able to do them in a few months is a testament to what is possible when administration truly collaborates with student leaders.



What was missing to make the project a definitive success was the engagement from students at large who were unwilling to ask questions and make an informed decision. In order to reach the referendum stage of the project, we sought feedback through multiple channels and for several months beginning in September. We hosted town halls, visited faculty society assemblies, conducted direct email surveys, and made ourselves available for questions. Unfortunately, students did not see the need to meet us halfway.

We need a constructive way to move forward and ensure this project has a chance to succeed, and while there are things that the AMS can do differently it won't matter if students continue to refuse to engage and provide meaningful feedback. If you have a question, ask someone who can answer it. If you have an opinion, start a conversation so that you can make an informed decision. If you feel passionately about something, share your thoughts with your peers.

The reality is that decisions are made by those who show up. And in the JDUC special referendum, the decision for 18,935 students was made by only 3,724 students. This is disappointing because the project will impact every student on this campus and every student should make their voice heard.

Beyond the JDUC project, I hope students realize the incredible opportunities they have to transform this institution by simply starting a conversation and taking action. Whether you are AMS President, a club executive, a volunteer, or simply a student who does not engage at all with the AMS – we should all be striving to make Queen's a better place. There is strength in community and what makes Queen's special is that generations of students before us have fought to implement changes and advocate for things they care about so that future students inherit a better Queen's.

I am incredibly optimistic because of the high caliber of students that come to Queen's, and I hope that we continue to foster this spirit of giving back and serving our peers. Queen's students have unparalleled influence and access to decision makers at the university, which is extremely helpful when it comes to affecting change we want to see. We have always been active and responsible partners of the University community, but trust me, if we stop showing up we will lose our seat at the table.

Judicial Affairs Report

Manager Sidhu: Good Evening Everyone. I hope you're all doing well during this midterm season! For those of you who don't know, my name is Seema Sidhu and for almost a year now I have had the honour of serving as the AMS Judicial Affairs Manager.

For the past 120 years, the AMS Judicial System has served students by adapting to the changing needs of the University community, under authority from the Board of Trustees and a mandate first established by Principal Grant in 1898. Though the University's 2015-2016 review of NAM tested our system and its policies, the Judicial Affairs Office, and more importantly, the student body, has continued to show that it is willing and able to undertake challenges in order to ensure



that that they are at the forefront of involvement in their conduct process. As a result of the Agency Agreement struck between the University and the AMS in 2016 and renewed yearly thereafter, the AMS has continued to make clear its support for student involvement in the non-academic misconduct system.

As I near the end of my term and look back on my three years of involvement with the Judicial Affairs Office, I take this time to reflect on the year that we've had. This system encapsulates both the Judicial Affairs Office and the Judicial Committee, and while I do not oversee the Committee, it is my honour to speak on behalf of the system as a whole. Both the Judicial Committee and the Judicial Affairs Office exist as functionaries of the society at arm's length from the rest of the AMS; this is why the Judicial Committee can deal with election appeals, and why the Judicial Affairs Manager can personally investigate a case involving an AMS club.

My primary responsibility has been the oversight of the day-to-day operations of the investigatory branch of the AMS non-academic misconduct system. For the remainder of this speech, I'm going to give a brief overview of the system, identify some important developments made this year, and, hopefully, give you a general idea of how the system is functioning

First, by way of introduction, the Judicial Affairs Office is the branch of our system responsible for investigating complaints, forwarded to it by the Queen's NAM Intake Office, involving AMS members who have been alleged to have violated the Student Code of Conduct. This code was updated most recently in 2016. Violations can encompass a great number of things, from stealing food from the cafeterias to getting into physical altercations at the Underground. Judicial Affairs Deputies, under my oversight, investigate these complaints, meet with any involved parties, and aim to arrive at as clear and balanced a picture as possible of the incident in question. If a violation was determined to have occurred, they will proceed to propose sanctions to the respondent in the form of a settlement agreement.

Sanctions are quite broad in their scope, but are chosen with the primary goal of achieving the restorative justice that is central to the system. They are designed to restore any damage done to the complainant and the community, as well as to provide the respondent with the opportunity to reflect on their actions so that they can avoid similar situations in the future. Sanctions can include, but are certainly not limited to, educational essays or workshops, exclusion from licensed campus pubs or events, fines, bonds, and restitution. Once sanctions are proposed, the respondent may either accept or reject the settlement. In either event, their case will proceed to the Judicial Committee for a hearing. The Judicial Committee is comprised of six members and one chair who render decisions on various cases involving non-academic misconduct. The involved parties have two weeks following the receipt of the written decision to appeal it to the University Student Appeals Board if they are dissatisfied with the disposition.

So that's what the system looks like, but where are we this year? To this date, we have processed a total of 13 cases this academic year. At the same time last year, the number was 53. Now, let me address the elephant in the room; the reduction in caseload is due to a smaller number of cases



being diverted from the Non-Academic Misconduct Intake Office throughout the year. In conversations with the Office of the Ombudsman, University Administration, and the other NAM units, we have determined that this year has simply seen fewer complaints being filed on the whole – perhaps students have finally learned that Jacket Bars just aren't worth it, or in a more likely reality, incident reporting has decreased.

As explained in the published report to the Annual General Meeting, most of the incident reporting that comes through our system happens by way of Campus Security, Student Constables, and Residences, but students have been filing fewer complaints on the whole. Because of the way in which the system operates, cases can be delegated back to the AMS or deemed a "Category 2" offence to be dealt with by the Student Conduct Office. This is one of many reasons students can feel uncomfortable filing complaints. We must work to understand the effect uncertainty and other barriers have had on reducing the likelihood of students reporting misconduct.

While it is clear that we have work to do in increasing student awareness and comfort, we have exciting new projects underway that will aid in bettering processing cases and filling holes in policy. The better part of my summer was spent closing cases from the previous Manager's term, strengthening relationships with University administration, and prepping a comprehensive training week for the AMS Judicial System's volunteers. Perhaps the best way to explain the guiding efforts of Judicial Committee Chair Pavan Pasha and myself throughout this year is to pivot the Judicial Affairs Office into a position where we can act, in a truly non-adversarial fashion, as a resource to students going through University NAM or seeking appeals to the Judicial Committee. Our goal has always been to make the AMS Judicial System as effective and efficient as possible, keeping in mind the complex circumstances of students. With this in mind, we have decreased the average number of days from when a case is delegated to us to the time it takes to get to a Judicial Committee Hearing by 34 days from last year.

Updating and navigating society policy has also been central to our work over the past ten months. Last year, the Judicial Affairs office implemented Policy Infringement Protocol, or PIP, in order to deal with AMS-specific violations. This year, in an attempt to be proactive regarding concerns to the new policy an appeals board was put in place. The implementation of the Policy Infringement Protocol Appeals Board (PIPAB) this fall was created as a matter of procedural fairness, and a healthy check and balance within the AMS Judicial System. Now, an individual who is found responsible for a violation of the Constitution or AMS Society Policy can appeal the decision of the Judicial Committee if they feel that there has been a miscarriage of justice.

As we continue to test our system against new waves of students each year, the previous Managers and Directors have often found themselves asking whether the sanctions we have used for so long still make sense for the student body today. As we move towards best practices in line with the 2016 Student Code of Conduct, this year I have worked to conduct a comprehensive review of our sanctions and sanctioning practices. The outcome of this has included the removal



of Mandatory Minimum Sanctions, with approval from the Office of the Ombudsman, which were originally instituted in 2006 as a result of the Dean's Motion. In simple terms, the removal of mandatory minimum sanctions ensures that each sanction fits the respondent coming through the system and takes into account their individual circumstances.

A great amount of work has also been done in other areas in an effort to move towards best practices. This year has seen collaboration between Student Constables and the Judicial Affairs Office to improve incident reporting – this includes categorizing events and, subsequently, incidents that are to be reported to the Intake Office as violations of the Code. On the side of the administration, new data management tools for incident reporting and case tracking have aided in a smooth transfer of information between the AMS and the University's other NAM units. Updates to our Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement have helped to ensure that the confidentiality of students coming through the system continues to be the first priority in the disclosure of information. We have continued to work with the Orientation Roundtable to ensure that orientation week leaders understand their responsibilities towards first-year students and the standard to which they are held as role-models. In working closely with the Judicial Committee, Chair Pasha and I have worked to clean up the relay of information between the investigatory branch and the adjudicative branch of the AMS Judicial System to ensure more timely sanctioning.

I came into this office as a hopeful, perhaps even naïve, first-year intern; and I'll be honest, for some time, I struggled to see how an independent AMS Judiciary was relevant to more than the hundred, or even two-hundred students that this system directly affects each year. But I guess I just wasn't looking hard enough, because when I was working with Orientation Leaders, clubs, and conference organizers it was staring me right in the face. NAM is relevant because it's ultimately about the student experience. Orientation week, student clubs, and student traditions; that's what makes Queen's special. NAM is no different; student well-being has *always* been the motivation behind our system and student involvement in the system has been the *driver* of that motivation. Perhaps this is exactly why I have hope. With the University's increased awareness of the functions of the AMS Judicial system, and with improving relationships between the AMS and the administration, this trust is slowly building again. And when the Code's triennial review comes up in a year, I have hope that both groups can work together to make improvements for students. Over the past two years, the NAM Intake Office has increasingly placed its faith in the AMS to deal with steadily more complex cases, and this demonstrated trust in students bodies well for the future of the system – now, the AMS must prove that we deserve the trust placed in us by both the administration and students by continuing to foster an environment that takes misconduct seriously.

NAM was created on the principle that if you give students the agency to make positive change, they will rise to the occasion and achieve incredible things. Ultimately, students are the stewards of this system, whether directly as the executors of NAM or indirectly as those stakeholders invested in the University's successes. Students must care, must show that they care, and they



must engage with the system. And my hope is that, with our continued diligence in our work, students can have direct involvement in this system for another 120 years to come.

That's all for now folks! If you have any questions about NAM, any thoughts on justice, or any desire to enjoy the comfiest couch in the AMS, feel free to drop by the Judicial Affairs Office. If you have any questions regarding the report that was published or the system I would be more than happy to take those now.

Thank you for your attention.

Statements by Students

Member Cattrysse: I think that it's unfair to say that JDUC failed because of students not engaging and students voting no. Students should be allowed to vote no, and that's their right. The AMS should realize that there are more than just one side to an argument and accept that students voted no to this project.

President Li: Thank you for your comments. What I meant was that the vote was decided by 20% of the population, with 80% of students not engaging. We need those students who have not engaged to ask questions, make an informed decision and vote in these elections so that their voice is heard. This was a close margin and we think that if more students had engaged, the outcome could have been different.

Member Dowling: I echo Member Cattrysse's sentiments. The AMS should realize that there are two sides to this and that some students may really have just wanted to vote no. I applaud President Li for clarifying what she meant in her speech and also applaud Member Cattrysse for standing up for what he believes to be right.

President Li: Seeing no other statements we'll move into Question Period.

No questions during Question Period, nor was there any Business Arising from the Minutes or New Business. Move straight to discussion period.

President Li: Any discussion topics?

Member Pirani: I would like to say that all turnout was drastically down in elections across faculties this year, and while having no AMS Executive election certainly hurt, I encourage all faculties to work on their voter engagement and turnout.

Member Sengupta: In the AMS, we actually increased turnout in the Fall Referendum by 5%, but I agree, turnout in the winter was poor and we need to work at all levels to get that back up.

No further discussion, move to adjourn

Adjournment moved by Secretary Sengupta, seconded by Commissioner Zhang

For: ALL but 4



Against: 4

Motion Carries

The AGM is adjourned at 7:02 PM.