

Commitment of the Alma Mater Society to Equity,  
Diversity, Inclusion and Indigeneity (EDII)



## Section 1: Land Acknowledgement

Ne Queen's University e'tho nońwe nikanónhsote tsi nońwe ne Haudenosaunee tánon Anishinaabek tehatihsnónhsahere ne óhontsa.

Gimaakwe Gchi-gkinoomaagegamig atemagad Naadowe miinwaa Anishinaabe aking.

The AMS Acknowledges that Queen's University is situated on Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Territory.

In acknowledging the land we occupy as an organization at Queen's University, we recognize the long history of Kingston; a history that predates the establishment of European colonies, with Anishinaabek and Haudenosaunee roots, significant Métis community, and First People from the Nations across Turtle Island present in Kingston.

We recognize that the violence of colonization is ongoing and that sincerely engaging in decolonial actions is crucial within our work in meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and Indigenizing spaces on Campus. The AMS is committed to educating peers, continual learning, and supporting Indigenous communities. We are grateful to be able to live, learn, and play on these lands.

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## Section 2: Introduction

It is imperative for the Alma Mater Society to apply a lens which considers concerns and interests of our QTBIPOC students into every conversation, initiative and service as the body tasked with serving and representing the diversity of undergraduate students at Queen's University. The AMS certainly requires much consideration, reflection and work put forth to ensure Queen's University can become a safer space for our peers, especially our QTBIPOC community. We understand the power our platform holds and recognize the whiteness and privilege perpetuated within this organization.

We will not allow for the continuation of an organization that is historically fueled with empty statements and promises. We acknowledge that as an organization, we have contributed to this silence and complacency. Thank you to those who have held us accountable to fulfill our mandate. This document serves as a commitment to our QTBIPOC students and highlights Action Items for our term. We aim to create institutional change and goals for the AMS that can be carried on after our term ends.

This document is split into six sections. The first three sections are dedicated to student-facing items. The latter three sections are dedicated to changes the AMS is making internally. Incoming AMS Executive and Staff will be transitioned and trained to ensure these initiatives and projects are seen through to completion or carried on for the coming years.

Please note that this is phase 1 of this document which will be reflected on and revisited in the winter semester to address new concerns, check progress, and highlight new initiatives or goals. Our jobs are to consult with our peers, and we will be continuing this throughout the year. We will update this document to reflect the conversations that will take place. The work is not done yet. Consultations and feedback are welcome and will be ongoing to ensure that the student voice is heard throughout this Action Plan.

The short-term sections ([three](#) and [six](#)) are lists of active initiatives and projects that the AMS has begun and will continue to oversee for the remainder of the current term. We are aiming to have these items complete within the coming months.

The midterm sections ([four](#) and [seven](#)) are lists of longer-term projects and initiatives that have started or will start in the coming months. We will work on these throughout our term and aim to complete these by the end of the school year.

## Alma Mater Society EDII Commitments

The long-term sections ([five](#) and [eight](#)) are lists of long-term goals and initiatives for the Society to begin implementing this year through changes to policy or structure. These items are goals to work toward implementing this year and for many years to come. Some of these items require further planning as we are still in beginning stages. We aim to explain the importance of these goals and initiatives in this document and to highlight University stakeholders that will be required to consult with to initiate the process. Please note that some of these goals will require further consultation, conversations and reflection to ensure they can be successful.

To our QTBIPOC students: this is our commitment to you. Thank you for holding us accountable. Thank you for offering your voice. Thank you for calling us in. We want to recognize your ideas.

As we continue the term, we hope that this report guides us to making long-overdue reparations with our student body. We hope that you continue to hold us accountable. We commit to holding ourselves accountable to the promises we are making in this report today. Queen's University and the AMS are institutions rooted in systemic racism. This needs to change so that students at Queen's, students represented by the AMS, are not failed by these institutions. We are ready for this change and will ensure that we are actively advocating for real change at the University level. This report is one small step forward, and we recognize the amount of work necessary to achieve our long-term goals. Thank you for pushing us to be better.

For more information regarding the Alma Mater Society's resources, Clubs, services and governance [click here](#). If you would like to speak to the Executive about this document or have any specific concerns, please email the [Director of Communications](#). As well, there is an option for anonymous feedback listed below.

## Section 3: Short-Term Items

### Providing a Social Issues Commission Page on our Website

- To increase accessibility and visibility of the efforts students on campus are contributing to regarding anti-racism and EDII.
- To provide educational resources to students including a glossary with terms and readings for further education.

### Transition and Orientation 2020

- Creation of a Social Issues Commission-driven Orientation 2020 open house focusing on community-building.
  - o This event will take place during the 2020 Orientation and Transition period and offer a safer space for incoming students to connect with EDII-oriented student groups.
- Integrate Social Issues Commission feedback into the University Orientation 2020 EDII Module.
- Advocate for an increased EDII focus within the Senate Orientation Leader Contract.
- Advocate for an increase in qualitative survey data to be collected following Orientation and Transition 2020 with a specific emphasis on the experiences of QTBIPOC students.

## Consultations with Student Organizations and Clubs

- Increased channels and accessibility for communication between AMS Executive and Student Organizations/Clubs.
- Documenting conversations to add to a file to ensure ideas shared in meetings are not misplaced with yearly turnaround of AMS Executive and Team.
  - o Student and club identities will not be documented or kept on file unless permission is granted.
- Creation of an official AMS Consultation Guide.
  - o The AMS Consultation Guide will be authored by the Commissioner of External Affairs in collaboration with the Commissioner of Clubs, Secretary of Internal Affairs, Social Issues Commissioner, and the Campus Affairs Commissioner to ensure best practices in the consultation process between the AMS and students. This Guide will be implemented into AMS policy and the incoming team will be transitioned on it.
  - o The Guide would be released to student organizations and Clubs beforehand, allowing feedback. We realize feedback is important during these drafts and conversations as this Guide will involve how Clubs will interact with the Executive and the AMS at large.
- Utilizing these consultations to initiate transparent conversations to mend relationships with equity-focused Organizations and Clubs that have historically been excluded from AMS conversations.
  - o Providing Clubs and students doing equity work with additional supports necessary as raised in consultations and throughout the term.
  - o Following through with these students and clubs as much as possible.
- Compensation for Focus Groups:
  - o We are currently assessing our budget and plans for the 2020-2021 year to see what funds and resources can be used to provide compensation for students involved in AMS EDII-related focus groups.
  - o This will be brought to Assembly for approval.
  - o We are assessing where compensation can fit into AMS policy for the future.
- Thank you to the many students and student groups who have offered their voices and called the AMS in.
  - o When facilitating consultations, we will prioritize asking students what we can do in order to recognize this work and their efforts.
  - o We will facilitate more check-ins with students and groups doing this work.

### Options for Student Feedback

- Creating a more accessible, open and transparent space for students who wish to chat with AMS Executive.
- We have an anonymous form [available now](#) on our website to ensure discussion and feedback is accessible for all.
- We have created an [anonymous form](#) as well for those wishing to give direct feedback in regard to this report specifically.

### Creating a Safe and Accountable Space for Students to Meet with University Senior Administration

- Currently advocating to and talking with Senior Administration about concerns voiced by QTBIPOC students.
  - o We have advocated to Senior University Administration to compensate QTBIPOC students for their labour.
- Increase accessibility of Senior Administration to students to allow for increased voices to be present and amplified in conversations.
- Amplifying the voices of students whose stories have been already told on various Instagram platforms such as [@stolenbysmith](#) and [@erasedbyfeas](#) in meetings with Senior Administration.

## Section 4: Midterm Items

### Better Marketing of Paid AMS Positions to QTBIPOC Students

- Ensuring all students on campus are aware of opportunities by using alternate channels to promote them.
- Communications Office and Clubs Office working with Clubs, student groups and organizations to promote positions to their members and paying for additional marketing promotion to ensure there is reach from more students.
  - o Ensuring we are prioritizing reaching out to equity-seeking groups on campus.

### Review of AMS Policy Stances and Priorities

- Policy Manual 3 covers AMS Stances and Priorities regarding student affairs and social issues. It is currently being reviewed in order to add necessary clauses and remove outdated clauses as it is outdated. The review of this policy is imperative to ensure concerns voiced by QTBIPOC students are addressed.
  - o The Executive, the Secretary of Internal Affairs, the Commissioner of External Affairs, the Commissioner of Social Issues and the Commissioner of Campus Affairs are adding items that have been absent. Some examples of these items are stances and priorities on EDII, sustainability, health and wellness, sexual violence prevention and response, Indigeneity and campus safety.
  - o Examples of these reviewed policy stances include advocating for:
    - Increased BIPOC counsellors on campus
    - Non-merit-based scholarships
    - Recognizing the intersection of students impacted by gender-based violence on our campus.
- The revised policy will be presented to AMS Assembly for approval.
- Updating AMS policy holds us, as well as future AMS Executive teams, accountable. This will ensure the continuation of these important stances.

### Creating more Accessible and Equitable AMS Executive Elections

- Consultations with the Secretary of Internal Affairs and the Social Issues Commission to see where the AMS can ensure elections are more equitable. Ensuring resources to do so are prepared beforehand and widely shared, not just to those internal to the AMS.
- Conducting further outreach to outline AMS position mandates especially to students external to the AMS to encourage them to get involved in student government and leadership.

### Policy Mandating the Yearly Revision of this Action Plan by AMS Executive

- Creation of a policy indicating that this Action Plan needs to be updated, considered, reviewed and acted upon in the summer and throughout each new AMS term. New AMS Executive will be transitioned on and instructed to revisit this Action Plan for the following reasons:
  - i. To check on yearly goals and progress.
  - ii. To address new challenges on campus.
  - iii. To reflect and revisit goals and initiatives.
  - iv. To hold the AMS and the University accountable to committing to supporting QTBIPOC students.
- This Action Plan will continue to be added to and worked on during the 2020-2021 term.
- This Action Plan will be heavily revisited at the beginning of the winter term to ensure appropriate needs are being addressed.

### Updating Progress on AMS Website

- In order to be as transparent as possible with our peers, we will be creating a page on our website that will list these goals and show progress.
  - o We will indicate which items have been started, which are pending, which are ongoing and which we have completed.
  - o This page will update as this document does.

## Section 5: Long-Term Items

### AMS Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Indigeneity Training for Ratified Clubs

- Implementation of QTBIPOC-led racial bias training.
- Educating employees and volunteers about microaggressions in the workplace through training.
- Providing Clubs and club leaders tools to respond to the behaviour.
  - o These items would be implemented with the consent and consultation of Clubs.

### Equitable Orientation Week

- Integration of student feedback and qualitative Orientation feedback to develop a more intersectional Orientation Round Table (ORT) training for all Orientation executives and leaders.
- Creation of an Orientation EDII Committee including members of all faculties to hold executives and administrators accountable through training and programming.
- Proposal to create new ORT Director portfolio focusing explicitly on Equity and Inclusion.
- Expansion of equitable hiring training for Executive and Leader hiring panels through the Human Rights and Equity Office ([HREO](#)).

### Holding the Queen's University Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Principal's Implementation Committee on Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (PICRDI) Accountable

- Using our ability to meet with Senior University Administration to ensure they are revisiting, reflecting on and upholding these reports.
- [TRC Webpage](#).
- [Appendices to the TRC Task Force Final Report and Recommendations:](#)
- [PICRDI Webpage](#).

### Amplifying EDII Issues Within the Board of Trustees Speeches

- Securing a presentation on issues affecting QTBIPOC students on campus.
- Work with the Rector and the Undergraduate Student Trustee to establish a working relationship to ensure that QTBIPOC student's concerns receive more time at Board of Trustees meetings. [Click here to learn more.](#)

### Advocating for Permanent QTBIPOC Counsellors in Student Wellness Services (SWS)

- For SWS to properly assist the QTBIPOC community at Queen's with health and wellness, it is imperative that there are QTBIPOC Counsellors available.
- Providing University Administration and Hiring Teams with reports and data to show why this is imperative.

### Supporting Faculty Societies in Diversifying Curriculum

- Work with Faculty Societies through both Equity and Academic Caucuses to discuss and advise.
- Empowering Academics Caucus to work with their faculties to diversify curriculum, critically identifying issues that exist and collaborating to guide each other through solutions.
- Advocate for these changes to Senior Administrators and various faculty groups.

### Prioritizing QTBIPOC Issues during Provincial Advocacy – Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA)

- [Click here to learn more about OUSA.](#)
- Utilizing the AMS relationship with OUSA to ensure QTBIPOC issues are being advocated for during Provincial Advocacy work.
- Ensuring an equity lens is being taken during drafting of all papers.
- Ensuring QTBIPOC folks are engaging with OUSA during the consultation of policy papers and attending OUSA General Assembly as delegates.

### Advocate for Mandated Anti-Oppression Training Campus Wide

- Advocating to University Administration that all staff and faculty must receive mandated Anti-Oppression Training.

### Creation of an Indigenous Resource Package for Clubs and Faculty Societies to Reference

- Working with Clubs Office, Faculty Societies and Social Issues Commission to make an Indigenous Resource Package available to student leaders and those in Clubs to serve as an information guide. Any and all Indigenous related items will be discussed in collaboration with appropriate groups on campus.
- The package would include items such as the following:
  - o Resources to learn about the land in which we live and study on at Queen's University
  - o How to develop a Land Acknowledgement
  - o Information on Settler Colonialism
  - o Some modern legal context

### Advocate for Integration of Indigenous Knowledge in Academic Curricula

- Work with Faculty Societies through both Equity and Academic Caucuses to discuss and advise.
- Advocate for these changes to senior administrators and various faculty groups, including the Provost's office.
- Work with the Centre for Teaching and Learning ([CTL](#)) to introduce a student consulting and advisory program on Teaching and Learning. This program would employ and train students to observe classrooms and advise instructors on how they can effectively incorporate EDII into their teaching and what can be done better.
- Pushing for additional integration into curriculum and degree plans. Every course should strive to incorporate it in some form, but there should be courses relevant to each degree that have a strong EDII focus.
- Seriously addressing inappropriate course material and assessments included in courses by instructors and advocating for University Administration to enforce stricter control over course material by departments and units.

### Hiring Equity and Equitable Operations for Clubs

- Looking into QTBIPOC-led bias training for Clubs on campus, through the Clubs Commission.
- Offer new version of Hiring Equity Training to club leaders to ensure equitable practices in club operations.
- The Commissioner of Clubs will work on an AMS endorsed Clubs Policy for operations.

### Amend and Rebuild the AMS' Relationship with Students by Distancing the AMS from the University

- Ensuring that we are centering the student voice in all discussions, projects and meetings, both internally and externally, with the goal of furthering the AMS from the University and being complicit with its actions.
- This distance will help in rebuilding the relationship with students to make it clear that the AMS works for students and not for the University. It is imperative that any compromise on a decision made with the University is not done at the cost of the student experience.
- The focus shall always be on the students, and not on the relationship with the University. We will be challenging the University and ensuring they are being held accountable to their statements, reports and their commitments to the students.

### Addressing Needs of International Students

- The AMS Executive is meeting with the Queen's University International Centre ([QUIC](#)) on July 29<sup>th</sup> to present our ideas. We wish to collaborate with the QUIC to address needs of international students and to see how we can support them.

## Section 6: AMS Internal Short-Term Items

### Staff-Wide Monthly EDII Discussions

- AMS-wide discussions on equity, diversity, inclusion and Indigeneity to ensure safe and accountable spaces within the organization for conversations, collaboration, and accountability.
- Implementation of an anonymous feedback form on the AMS website where students can voice concerns comfortably, with the option to provide their contact information if they wish to follow up. These items will be reviewed at the staff-wide discussions to ensure all extensions of the AMS are made aware and can consider how these issues can be mitigated in their portfolios.
- The purpose of these meetings is to reflect on topics brought up anonymously by student feedback or by staff who have identified an issue. The projected outcome is to continue to seek out areas for improvement, collaborate as a team and to update this report.
- Staff will be asked for more feedback regarding this document and certain initiatives in their portfolios during these meetings.

### Reviewing Campus Affairs Commission Mandate

- Continuation of this review to include a broad scope assisting the AMS Executive and the Social Issues Commission with student-facing issues, support, policy revision, and advocacy.
- Creating a channel where the CAC is able to directly engage with students and amplify their voices in advocacy work regarding EDII to the University.

### AMS BIPOC Alumni Community

- Director of Alumni and Sponsorship will create more Alumni Networks and networking events specifically for QTBIPOC students. Students will be consulted beforehand to ensure these events are accessible and tangible.
- Creating a space to connect alumni in the AMS QTBIPOC community with current QTBIPOC students.

## Section 7: AMS Internal Midterm Items

### Investing in Social Issues Commission (SIC) Staff and Volunteers

- Increasing honoraria of the Social Issues Commission Deputies to recognize the labour associated with these positions and increase the accessibility of paid opportunities for QTBIPOC students.
- The Social Issues Commissioner will submit a proposal to the AMS Board of Directors to promote the Deputy of Education position for next year. The position will be a salaried Equity Affairs Manager position.
  - o This is because of the leadership nature of the role. The position has been exploitative in the past, exceeding the 10 hours scheduled commitment in which honoraria is not a fair compensation.
- Investment into QTBIPOC student leadership and offering opportunities for learning, healing, skill sharing, and professional development.
- Increasing funds allocated to SIC Equity Grants and Bursaries.
  - o Proposed increase of \$10,000 in funds allocated to SIC grants for all students and leaders on our campus.
- Increasing allocation to SIC Special Projects line for events and initiatives like SIC Community Care sessions.
- Increasing investment from \$60,000 to \$100,000+ into the AMS Social Issues Commission for the 2020-21 year.

### Enhancing AMS Equity Caucus

- Each month, the Social Issues Commission leads an Equity Caucus with student leaders in equity positions.
- In consultation with the Executive, we will edit the current Equity Caucus mandate to respond to prevalent equity issues on campus and streamlined advice to the AMS.
  - o Organize Equity Caucus meeting in the fall semester and bring forward mandate changes.
  - o Include special topics to focus on rather than monthly updates.
- Expand equity caucus to include Clubs and other student stakeholders.
- We aim to take this caucus further by redeveloping the mandate to include the development of a discussion paper and the support of initiatives throughout the year.
- Promoting community building across faculties through campus wide collaborations.

### Reviewing Hiring Policy

- Review of Hiring Policy as indicated by the Human Resources Office (HRO) to ensure the appropriate hiring by AMS staff, volunteers, and ratified Clubs.
- Revamping of the hiring process.
- Training managers will be taught about unconscious bias, which will be included in the revamped Hiring Equity Training in conjunction with the Human Rights and Equity Office ([HREO](#)).
- Reviewal of the application process of the HRO to mitigate exclusion.

### On-Going AMS Training Throughout the Term

- Providing more opportunities for AMS staff to receive training outside of the training period scheduled at the beginning of May each year.
- The Human Resources Office (HRO) will work with the Human Rights and Equity Office (HREO) to revamp the AMS Hiring Equity Training in order to use a more universal online model.
- The HRO will work with the Director of Alumni and Sponsorship to develop Professional Development programming for QTBIPOC students.
  - o This programming will be developed in conjunction with equity seeking groups and EDII resources. Additionally, consultations with QTBIPOC students to assess their professional development wants and needs will be conducted prior to implementing this programming.
- The HRO will revisit and improve the HDV (Harassment, Discrimination and Violence) taskforce to better understand the adversities students are facing and how they can be addressed.

### Review of Marketing and Communications Policies

- Revisiting current marketing and communications policies to ensure easier release of communications specific to social issues.
- Director of Marketing will use the AMS platform as a tool to share more QTBIPOC resources for self-education and general awareness.
  - o Establish formalized guidelines within the Marketing Office to ensure all posts, resources and tools are being fact-checked and assessed prior to sharing with the student body.
- Director of Communications will use the AMS platform as a tool to amplify efforts of students conducting research and doing equity work using statements on our website. Ensuring we highlight the work and amplify these voices in a much timelier manner than we have been.

## Whistleblower Policy to Report Racism, Homophobia and Discrimination within the AMS

- Creation of a safe space for employees to speak up and report racist, homophobic and discriminatory incidents. A whistleblower policy will be developed to protect the anonymity of students, staff and volunteers who experience discrimination and report it to the AMS without fear of retribution.

## Section 8: AMS Internal Long-Term Items

### Revisiting AMS Service Mandates

- Revisiting AMS service mandates to ensure they are unequivocally serving and representing the diversity of students at Queen's University.

### Indigenizing Space, Practice and Dialogue within the AMS and on Campus

- AMS Executive is meeting with Four Directions ([4D](#)) on July 29<sup>th</sup> to present our ideas. We wish to work alongside them to develop new ideas and enhance our current ones.
- Support the Council of Indigenous Initiatives and work alongside Council on action items, advocacy, and projects.

### Creating Discrimination Policy for AMS Volunteers and Staff

- Institution of an explicit policy where racism, homophobia and discriminatory actions or statements are not accepted or tolerated within the organization by staff or volunteers.
  - o Change to the current Demerit Point Structure within the AMS.

### Reviewing the AMS Constitution and Mandates with an EDII Lens

- Working with the Secretary of Internal Affairs and AMS Assembly to strike a committee charged with reviewing the AMS Constitution with an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Indigeneity lens. This committee will begin in September and will bring forward findings no later than February 1.

### Increased Representation of Indigenous, International, Black and Racialized Students in the AMS

- Commitment to evaluating organization culture and integrating inclusivity practices into the workplace.
- Funnelling more time, resources and energy into marketing and recruitment for QTBIPOC students at Queen's.
- Increased marketing and exposure of the TAM (Talent Acquisition Manager) function within the HRO to reach more students.
  - o The TAM function allows individuals believed to be well-suited for a role within the AMS to be contacted by email about it. This email keeps the person who recommended the receiver anonymous and encourages the individual to submit an application to be considered for said position.
  - o The TAM function will be communicated to student organizations and Clubs, as well as through general channels that reach more students such as our website and social media.

## Section 9: Final Comments

### Student Consultations

The AMS Executive has consultations booked with students beginning next week. We will credit students if their ideas are implemented.

Any students or clubs that wish to speak with the AMS Executive can fill out this [form](#). The Director of Communications will set up a time that works for you and the AMS Executive.

### Compensation for Focus Groups

We are assessing our budget and plans to see where we have appropriate funds and resources to propose compensation for focus groups to AMS Assembly. We are seeking out the funding to do so and will reach out directly to students and student groups.

### Feedback about this Document

We welcome all feedback. This will only allow us to be better and mold this Action Plan to ensure that student concerns are effectively addressed.

We have created a [form](#) where students can provide anonymous feedback about this Report if they choose. There also is an option to leave your email if you require a follow-up conversation.

### Note from the Executive

Thank you for taking the time to read this document. Please remember that this is not a final draft of what we aim to accomplish or start this year. We are prepared to act on the feedback we hope to receive from students to ensure that this document addresses your concerns and effectively finds a way forward.

The primary way in which students interact face-to-face with the AMS is through our services. We will continue to have staff-wide meetings, including all of our Directors, Commissioners and Managers on a regular basis where we will continue to discuss general feedback we receive on our website and feedback specific to this document.

Students have, time and time again, shown that they are leaders on University campuses across the country. It is students that create, and have created, the necessary changes to our institutions. It is clear that this movement is no different. The environment created by Kelly Weiling Zou through the [Stolen By Smith](#) account showcases how necessary it

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is for student voices to be heard and amplified. Students are shaping our University campuses with their voices and the AMS is ready to amplify them.

In turn, we must address Queen's University and the Administration. Students have been demanding change for an extended period of time, and it is now impossible to say that you have not heard their voices. We expect you to take accountability for your actions, and detail how you will work forward to ensure that students feel safe and welcomed at Queen's. Working groups and deflecting to Student Faculty Societies and the AMS are no longer acceptable. Students are ready for change and have detailed how it must be delivered. We implore you to listen, reflect and speak directly with students in the QTBIPOC community to better understand how you can be better. We are ready to help in creating these changes but will not accept compromises which do not put students, and particularly QTBIPOC students, at the forefront of all conversations.

To the students who have called us in: thank you. Thank you for this opportunity to learn, reflect and serve you better. Thank you for doing this work. Thank you for offering your voice. This is our commitment to you, but remember this process is not over.

We're learning. We're listening. We are ready to continue working diligently on these issues to ensure that all students on our campus can feel safe, supported and heard by the Society that represents them. We must do better, and we hope that this Action Plan is a good first step to showcase how we can do so.