
**University Students' Council Minutes
October 3, 2024 – 6:00 PM
Roy Romanow Student Council Chamber**

Present:

- **Krunal Chavda** (he/him), President
- **Moses Ahiabu** (he/him), VP Operations and Finance
- **Elisabeth Bauman** (she/her), VP Academic Affairs
- **Joel Bilyk** (he/him), WCVM
- **Karlin Frykas** (he/him), Agriculture and Bioresources
- **Zachary Cey** (he/him), Agriculture and Bioresources
- **Eliaking Cabrera** (he/him), Nursing
- **Nisarg Chaudhary** (he/him), International Students
- **Nahian Mashrafi** (he/him), International Students
- **Melissa Fielding** (she/her), Education
- **Selim Bytyqi** (he/him), Arts and Science
- **Guillermo Tellez-Hernandez** (he/him), Arts and Science
- **Jordie Finnie** (he/him), Arts and Science
- **Upkar Singh** (he/him), VP Student Affairs
- **Shayan Ahmed** (he/him), Kinesiology
- **Queen Tayab** (she/her), Nursing
- **Meet Patel** (he/him), Medicine
- **Chang Ge**, Dentistry
- **Paras Sidhu** (he/him), Law

Also Present:

- **Zoher Rafid-Hamed** (he/him), USC Chairperson
- **Jason Ventnor** (he/him), USSU Communications & Marketing Manager

Absent:

- **Norah Jacob** (she/her), St. Thomas More
- **Kyungsoo Ryu** (she/her), Edwards
- **Ritu Patel** (she/her), Edwards
- **Yusup Guldadov**, Engineering

Guests:

- **Ali Versa** (he/him), Studentcare

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Chairperson Rafid-Hamed stated the land acknowledgment: As a Council of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous students, we acknowledge that we gather on Treaty 6 territory, the homeland of the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene, and Dakota people. We acknowledge the harm that colonial institutions, such as the University of Saskatchewan, have done. We remember that there were centuries of governance and education on this land before the settlers arrived and that these forms of education and governance are continuing today. We honour and reaffirm our relationships with one another and the land that we are on as we work to dismantle the systematic barriers to education that First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and other marginalized people face.

3. Roll Call/Quorum

Roll call was completed, and the list of attendees is listed on the first page of these minutes. Quorum was present.

4. Adoption of an Agenda

No amendments were made to the agenda.

Move to adopt the agenda as amended.

USCMOTION024	Councillor Finnie / President Chavda	Carried
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5. Council Address

5.1. Studentcare - Ali Versi

Motion to enter informality.

USCMOTION025	VP Singh / VP Ahiabu	Carried
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Ali Versi from Studentcare gave a presentation about the USSU health & dental plan:

- Mr. Versi explained that the health & dental plan fills the gaps in provincial healthcare and other private plans. Over 11,000 students are enrolled in the plan.
- There are advantages to having a group plan. An individual plan can cost 5-7 times more. Individual plans may also discriminate against people with pre-existing conditions.
- Studentcare is a third-party administrator and broker, not an insurance company. They do not underwrite policies, do not collect premiums, and do not pay out claims. Studentcare manages the health & dental plan student experience.

- Studentcare acts as a consultant to the USSU. They negotiate with insurers, conduct plan design and benefits research, and provide detailed reporting and financial analysis to the USSU.
 - Councillor Bytyqi asked how health & dental plans are tailored to each campus.
 - Mr. Versi explained that different campuses have different needs. For example, an athletics-based campus might want to cover physiotherapy. Also, needs will evolve; based on changing environmental conditions, a campus might want to cover inhalers.
- Studentcare also acts as an administrator. They have an assistance center in Place Riel, conduct communications campaigns, and manage data.
- The role of the USC in the health & dental plan is to steer its big picture success. This involves MSCs creating awareness and gathering feedback from their constituents. Based on feedback from students, the USC makes policy decisions and approves changes to plan fees or benefits.
 - Councillor Finnie asked why the plan does not cover braces.
 - Mr. Versi explained that it can if that is what the USSU wants. However, premiums would increase. It is uncommon for student plans to cover braces.
 - Councillor Mashrafi asked about the process for adding braces.
 - Mr. Versi explained that the USSU would make the suggestion to Studentcare, Studentcare would negotiate with insurers, and insurers would provide the new cost of premiums.
- Other aspects of the health & dental plan include vision coverage and health travel insurance.
 - Councillor Bytyqi asked if the health travel insurance applies during the spring and summer.
 - Mr. Versi answered yes.
- The health & dental plan also includes access to Empower Me, a short-term solutions-based mental health service. Empower Me gives students 24/7 access to licensed professionals with virtual appointments within 24 hours. Students have access to up to four sessions per issue. New features to Empower Me as of September 2024 include in-person sessions and multilingual support.
 - Councillor Finnie asked when students are students covered by the plan.
 - Mr. Versi answered that the period of coverage is from September 1 to August 31 of the following year.

- The annual plan fee is \$317.88. Members of the plan can add a dependent for \$317.88 or unlimited dependents for \$635.75 per year.
- Studentcare has a network of associated health and dental providers that offer additional discounts. For most basic dental services, the health & dental plan covers 70% of the cost. Dentists who are part of the Studentcare network offer an additional 20% off.
 - Councillor Finnie asked if the plan covers dentists in Saskatchewan only.
 - Mr. Versi answered no, the plan provides coverage for dentists anywhere in Canada.
 - Councillor Finnie asked where Studentcare network dentists are located in Manitoba.
 - Mr. Versi claimed that this information can be found on the Studentcare website by filtering results by location.
- Rexall, a Studentcare network pharmacy, now offers 100% coverage of prescription drugs up to \$40.
- USSU claims have been trending upward, increasing from a total of \$1.88 million in 2018-2019 to \$2.31 million in 2022-2023. A majority (65%) of health claims are for prescription drugs. Dental claims are similar between the three categories of surgical/restorative, diagnostic/preventative, and periodontics/endodontics.
- Councillor Ge asked how the health & dental plan is affected by the new Canadian dental plan.
 - Mr. Versi explained that the Canadian dental plan is only for people who do not have coverage. Students with a plan are excluded from the government plan.
- Chairperson Rafid-Hamed asked if the plan can help bypass an MD signature for certain services that usually require a signature.
 - Mr. Versi answered that massage therapy is the only service offered that requires a signature. The USSU could remove the requirement of signature from benefit, but there would be a cost implication.
- Councillor Ge asked if the health travel insurance covers international students.
 - Mr. Versi answered that it does not cover nationals within their home country, but it does cover them in any other country. The main health & dental benefits provide coverage in Canada only.
- Councillor Tellez-Hernandez asked if the insurance covers dual citizens.
 - Mr. Versi was not confident that it would but will have to do some research to confirm his answer.
- President Chavda asked if international students will be covered by the health travel insurance while they are on the way back home.

- Mr. Versi explained that those students will not be covered when they enter their home country but would be covered along the way.
- President Chavda asked what some of the trends are in claims.
 - Mr. Versi answered that claims for prescription drugs related to mental health are common. Oral contraceptives have been a popular claim but are declining as more provincial governments are choosing to provide contraceptives free of charge to all citizens.
- Councillor Chaudhary asked if ambulances are fully covered under the plan.
 - Mr. Versi answered that the plan covers “reasonable and customary charges,” which varies based on distance, the mode of transportation, etc.
- President Chavda asked what other services Studentcare offers that are not part of the USSUs plan.
 - Mr. Versi mentioned therapy; expanded virtual healthcare, including physicians, nurse practitioners, referrals to specialists, prescription renewals, reproductive care; legal consultation and representation (restricted to housing, academic, and employment issues); and gender affirming care.

Motion to return to formality.

USCMOTION026	Councillor Mashrafi / Councillor Bilyk	Carried
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6. Minutes and Reports for Information

6.1. USC Minutes – September 26, 2024

6.2. Executive Committee Minutes and Report – October 1, 2024

Some of the key updates include the provincial lobbying document, the Academic Advocacy report, and the USSU Childcare Centre AGM.

6.3. Academic Relations Committee Report

6.4. Advocacy Committee Report

6.5. Campus Group Committee Report

6.6. Code of Ethics and Disciplinary Committee Report

6.7. Elections Committee Report

6.8. Finance and Assessment Committee Report

6.9. Governance Committee Report

6.10. Student Life and Sustainability Committee

6.11. Student and City Connections Committee Report

6.12. Indigenous Student Advisory Committee Report

6.13. International Student Advisory Committee

7. Motions Arising from the Minutes and Reports

No corrections were made to the minutes or reports.

Move to adopt the USC Minutes of September 26, 2024, into the official record.

USCMOTION027	Councillor Finnie / Councillor Mashrafi	Carried
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Move to adopt the Executive Meeting Minutes of October 1, 2024, into the official record.

USCMOTION028	VP Bauman / President Chavda	Carried
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8. College/Constituency Report

8.1. Agriculture and Bioresources

Councillor Frykas shared the following:

- They elected representatives.
- Their executives were part of career day.
- They are looking to collaborate with Women in Agriculture on a fundraiser.
- The second annual Pinning Ceremony was held recently.

8.2. Arts and Science

Councillor Bytyqi

- Their tote bag painting event on September 25 was successful.
- They have more members and locker sales than last year.
- Councillor Bytyqi has gotten student engagement about his role as an MSC, tuition, and Senate.
- The ASSU is meeting with the Dean of Arts and Science.
- They are planning the ASSU Gala that will be held in January.
- The two prescheduled academic hearings were cancelled.
- Faculty council.
- Secured funding for the ASSU office makeover and an ASSU banner.
- ASSU pictures were put in the Arts Tunnel.

8.3. Dentistry

Councillor Ge shared that the Saskatchewan Dental Student Society is still in the process of getting ratified.

8.4. Education

Councillor Fielding shared the following:

- Their Purple Party is this Saturday.
- They are working on new merch.
- Their hockey trip is January 21-24.

8.5. Edwards

No Councillor present.

8.6. Engineering

No Councilor present.

8.7. Indigenous Students

No Councillor present.

8.8. International Students

Councillor Chaudhary shared the following:

- They held a 2024 Cultural Continuity event.
- They are collaborating with Google Developer Group.
- They held a Truth and Reconciliation event.
- They are working on their website.

8.9. Kinesiology

Councillor Ahmed shared the following:

- Their beach volleyball event was successful.
- They are hosting a bowling night soon.
- The College of Kinesiology hung up a star blanket from the blanket project initiative in the PAC as a step towards reconciliation.

8.10. Law

Councillor Sidhu shared

- They will be hosting a formal dance for Law students at the Delta Marriott on October 26.
- Other events for the month include trivia, pottery, and yoga.

8.11. Medicine

Councillor M. Patel shared the following:

- In early August they held welcome week events for first years which included Outdoors Games Day, Bowling, Socials, and Initiation Weekend. As part of this, they had the Healthcare Classics baseball tournament to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House Charities.
- Throughout August, they held their Elections to fill positions open to the first year medical students.
- Starting in September, they had many sports events such as the Beach Volleyball tournament to raise money for the JPCH Pediatrics Oncology.
- The SMSS held a Miles for Smiles run to raise money for the Food Banks of Saskatoon.
- On September 21 they held a golf tournament.
- Their fall formal event was very well attended and a great success.

8.12. Nursing

Councillor Cabrera shared the following:

- SNSA is voting tomorrow.

- Alliance for Clinical Excellence in Nursing (ACE) will host practice sessions in mid-October.
- They are planning a mock objective structured clinical examination (MOSCE) on November 16.

8.13. Pharmacy and Nutrition

No Councillor present.

8.14. St. Thomas More

No Councillor present.

8.15. Western College of Veterinary Medicine

Councillor Bilyk shared the following:

- Vetavision went extremely well.
- They are working on ratification and should be done soon. They are talking with the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association to get accreditation.

9. Business

9.1. Mayoral Debate Updates

VP Singh shared that he is planning a mayoral debate at 4 PM on October 15 in Health Sciences GB06. So far, three candidates are confirmed.

President Chavda encouraged MSCs to promote the event and help with the USSU's get-out-to-vote campaign.

9.2. PEC Updates

President Chavda shared that the main topic they discussed at this month's PEC was VP Bauman's Academic Advocacy report. They also wanted to discuss student finances & awards and campus safety but did not have time.

9.3. Provost Budget Recommendations

President Chavda shared that the USSU has three priorities in its budget recommendation to the Provost:

1. More needs-based bursaries and scholarships.
2. More student employment on campus.
3. More study spaces.

Councillor Bytyqi asked if more study spaces would mean an expansion of the library.

- President Chavda answered no. He would like to do a survey of the spaces available to determine where more seating could be placed in existing places.

9.4. Provincial Elections Lobby Document

President Chavda informed Council that the provincial lobby document will be presented to the province. It incorporates the priorities identified by students in a survey the USSU conducted in July.

10. New Business

11. Questions, Comments, and Announcements

11.1. Concern about Fees and Tuition

Councillor Mashrafi expressed concern about fees and tuition for international students.

- President Chavda said students can contact him if they are facing financial difficulties, and he will advocate on their behalf.

11.2. Tuition Payment Deadline

Councillor Finnie asked if it was possible to advocate to delay the tuition payment deadline.

- President Chavda explained that there are a lot of factors that go into choosing the date, but he is open to discussing it further.
- VP Ahiabu suggested that the USC can discuss it further at the next meeting and decide what to do.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 PM.



Executive Meeting Minutes for October 7, 2024

Present:

President/Chair – Krunal Chavda
VP Operations and Finance – Moses Ahiabu
VP Academic Affairs – Elisabeth Bauman
SM Communications & Marketing – Jason Ventnor
Academic & Governance Assistant – Brock Neufeldt

Regrets:

VP Student Affairs – Upkar Singh

1. Call to Order

President Chavda called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM and stated the land acknowledgment.

2. Quorum

Quorum was present.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

EXEC 2024.10.01

President Chavda / VP Ahiabu
Carried

4. Roundtables

a. President Chavda

i. Meetings

1. Exec meeting
2. Exec/SM meeting
3. Residence/ USSU
 - a. Security concerns.
 - b. Halal foods.
 - c. Housing accommodations.
 - d. Marquis loyalty program.
4. PEC
 - a. Childcare.
 - b. Academic Advocacy Report.



5. Government Relations - Sara Daniels x David Siebel
 - a. Get out to vote strategies.
 - b. Lobbying.
 6. Financial Review
 7. Pre Council
 8. USC
 9. Governance Committee
 10. COD Dean Dr. Walter Siqueira
 - a. Interested in renting space for a clinic.
 11. USSU x USask Oral Care Research Team
 12. SAL review meeting
- ii. **Projects/Initiatives**
 1. SAL Review
 - iii. **Events**
 1. Usask Residence Queer Housing Lounge Launch
 - iv. **Other**
- b. VP Ahiabu**
- i. **Meetings**
 1. Exec Meeting
 2. Meeting with CG Leaders (5)
 3. PPC
 4. Check in with Amanda Mitchell
 5. Exec/SM Meeting
 6. PEC
 7. Financial Review
 8. Pre-Council Meeting
 9. USC
 10. SAL Meeting
 - ii. **Projects/Initiatives**
 1. Ratification (≥ 15)
 2. Cheque Request
 3. SAL Review
 - iii. **Events**
 - iv. **Other**
- c. VP Bauman**
- i. **Meetings**
 1. Exec Committee
 2. Acting Provost, Dr. Vincent Bruni-Bossio
 - a. Report discussion
 3. Student + department head
 4. Complaint-based policies working group



5. Vice-Provost, Dr. Jerome Cranston
 - a. Report discussion
6. Exec/SM
7. Jae Morgans
 - a. Report discussion
8. PEC
9. Student cases
10. Student case with Brock
11. Financial Review
12. University Students' Council
13. TEA preparation (J Ventnor and Brock)
14. SAL selection meeting, exec

ii. Projects/Initiatives

1. Academic Advocacy Office Report: presentations
2. TEA preparation
 - a. New Award Idea that was emailed to me: "One idea we had discussed was the possibility of awards that recognize collective student action in a class working towards one of the six USask competencies. I mentioned this idea to Wendy and we thought it was worth exploring. I will leave this idea with you both as something to discuss and I am happy to rejoin the conversation as needed."
3. AI Pamphlets: now done! I either have to pick them up or Mark has (I'll have to check in with him)
4. Academic Videos on YouTube: some are getting very good views!

iii. Events

d. VP Singh – absent

- i. **Meetings**
- ii. **Projects/Initiatives**
- iii. **Events**
- iv. **Other**

5. New Business

a. USSU Elections

- i. A student is willing to do research and complete a report about what other universities are doing to increase turnout.

b. CG Policy Review

- i. CG-2, s7.3
- ii. CG-2, s9.1



c. Ratification

- i. AgBizz Club
- ii. Geological Engineering Students' Society
- iii. Mechanical Engineering Students' Association
- iv. Muslim Medical Association of Canada U of S Chapter
- v. USASK Hip Hop

Motion to provisionally ratify the following groups for the 2024-2025 academic year:

- AgBizz Club
- Geological Engineering Students' Society
- Mechanical Engineering Students' Association
- Muslim Medical Association of Canada U of S Chapter
- USASK Hip Hop.

EXECMOTION045	VP Ahiabu / President Chavda	Carried
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d. Funding

- i. Red Cross Usask (P&I Cash, \$100) - Volunteer Orientation / Annual General Meeting, October 7th

6. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 10:32 PM.