

University of Saskatchewan Students' Union
Annual General Meeting

Minutes for November 30, 2023 - 6:00 PM

Arts 143

Chairperson Anees 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.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 PM.

2. Call for Quorum

Quorum was present.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

Move to adopt the agenda as presented.

AGMMotion001: Member 4 / Member 14

CARRIED

4. Adoption of the AGM Minutes

Move to accept the AGM minutes of November 24, 2022, into the official record.

AGMMotion002: Member 1 / Member 25

CARRIED

5. Auditor's Report

5.1. Presentation of Audited Financial Statements by KPMG

Ian Braaten from KPMG stated that the auditor's report found that the statements were correct and there is a clean audit opinion.

Statement of financial position:

- As of April 30, 2023, total assets are \$27 million, up from \$26.7 million last year.
- Current assets are \$10.8 million, up from \$9.8 million last year due to increased investment in cash position.

- The property and equipment line is at \$16 million. This covers the historical cost of Place Riel, furniture, etc.
- Total liabilities for the year are \$28.1 million, down from \$28.3 million the year before. The decrease is due to paying down the debt. Current liabilities, due within the next year, are \$1.6 million.
- Long-term debt has reduced from \$14.4 million to \$13.8 million.

Statement of operations:

- Revenue has increased to \$6.2 million, up from \$4.8 million. The increase is mainly due to an increase in sales.
- Expenditures have increased to \$5.7 million, up from \$4.7 million. The increase is mainly due to business operations.
- There is an accounting net income of \$466,000.
- The deficit is currently \$1.1 million.

5.2. Financial Statement Resolution

Be it resolved that the audited financial statements of the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union be accepted for the year ended April 30, 2023, as presented.

AGMMotion003: VP Mehta / Member 24

CARRIED

5.3. Auditing Firm Resolution

Be it resolved that the auditing firm of KPMG Chartered Accountants be appointed for the 2023/2024 financial audit.

AGMMotion004: VP Mehta / Member 1

CARRIED

6. Proposed Amendments

6.1. Proposed Amendment to Section 4 (by USSU Executive)

VP Bauman explained that this amendment is to update the "Act" defined in the Bylaw from *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995* to *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2022*.

Move to approve the proposed amendment to Section 4 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion005: VP Bauman / Member 29

CARRIED

6.2. Proposed Amendment to Sections 12, 14, 52 (by USSU Executive)

VP Bauman explained that this amendment is to update references to the Act throughout the Bylaw to *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2022*.

Move to approve the proposed amendment to Sections 12, 14, and 52 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion006: VP Bauman / Member 1

CARRIED

6.3. Proposed Amendment to Section 13 (by USSU Executive)

President Mann explained that the Act had previously required 25% of directors (USSU Executives) to be residents of Saskatchewan. That requirement was removed in the updated version of the Act, so this amendment is to reflect the updated Act.

Move to approve the proposed amendment to Section 13 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion007: President Mann / Member 8

CARRIED

6.4. Proposed Amendment to Section 15 (by USSU Executive)

President Mann explained that the USSU President is currently limited to 6 credit units per Fall and Winter term and 12 total credit units during their year-long term as President. This amendment would increase that limit to 9 credit units per Fall and Winter term and 18 credit units per year. President Mann claimed that EDI is the justification for this amendment because it will allow international students to run for USSU President; international students are required to be enrolled in at least 3 courses (9 credit units) per Winter and Fall term.

Member 4 agreed that EDI is important and that there should be an exception to the credit unit limit to allow international students to run for President. However, Member 4 reminded everyone that being USSU President is a full-time job, and therefore the credit unit limit should not be increased for domestic students.

Member 4 believes there should be a clear process to allow international students to run for President.

- President Mann understands that being USSU President is a full-time job and can be difficult. She suggested that the University Students' Council create a policy to approve or disapprove the President's course load and reminded everyone that the USC can impeach Executives if they fail to adequately perform their duties.

Member 46 asked for clarification about why there is a minimum number of courses a student must take.

- VP Singh explained that an international student must be enrolled in at least 3 courses to maintain their full-time student status, which is a requirement of their study permits.

Member 46 proposed an amendment to the amendment that changes the wording from “may” to “shall.”

Move to approve the proposed amendment to the amendment to Section 15 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion008: President Mann / Member 46

CARRIED

Member 52 shared that some colleges, such as Engineering, require students to complete their degrees within six years, and therefore these students must take heavy course loads.

- President Mann explained that being USSU President is a full-time job and anyone who holds the position will need to take a reduced course load. Students in the colleges mentioned by Member 52 are eligible to run for President, but they must be strategic in the planning of their degree, such as taking a heavier course load earlier in their degrees, taking Spring and Summer courses, etc.

Member 52 asked for clarification on how this amendment advances EDI.

- President Mann explained that international students are currently unable to run for President because they must be enrolled in at least 9 credit units per term and the USSU Bylaw currently limits the President to 6 credit units per term.

Member 27 asked if it is possible for USSU Executives to take more than 18 credit units per year if they take additional classes in the Spring and Summer terms.

- VP Singh explained that, no, according to this proposed amendment, it will not be possible to take more than 18 credit units throughout the academic year which includes the Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter terms. The Executives may choose how to disperse their course load through the year so long as they are enrolled in at least 3 credit units in each of the Fall and Winter terms and do not exceed the credit unit limits.
- President Mann added that additional courses in the Spring and Summer would not be possible due to the job being full-time.

Member 20 expressed that they were one of the people who helped put together an amendment like this one, and this was only one option. Another option was to work with the colleges to set up an alternate course in which the Executives would essentially receive credit units for working their job. Member 20 is not

against the premise of allowing international students to run for President but wants this change to be made properly.

Member 20 has heard from previous USSU Presidents that 3 courses per term is too much on top of the full-time job. Executives need to remain accountable to students. Because Executives are paid a full-time salary, they need to work full-time hours; being full-time students limits their ability to ensure they are working all the hours for which they are paid. Member 20 is concerned that an amendment that was made out of necessity to allow international students to run for President could be used by every President to do less work.

Member 20 asked the following questions:

- How will a President who takes 3 courses per term remain accountable?
- Will a President who takes 3 courses per term be paid the same as one who takes fewer courses?

Member 20 noted that amendments like this one have been rejected in previous years for this reason—it limits the President’s ability to remain accountable and complete all the work for which they are paid. While international students benefit from being able to run for President, they also benefit from Executives remaining accountable. The role of a USSU Executive is what one makes of it, and what one makes of it depends on the time and effort they commit to the job.

Member 20 is hesitant to support an amendment that makes the USSU less effective. For example, the University of Regina Students’ Union has passed similar amendments that allow their Executives to have multiple priorities, and now that union is struggling to remain accountable, develop policy, and report on its finances.

- President Mann shared that the USSU Executive has remained accountable by sharing information on social media, being approachable at events, writing Senate reports, and has been held accountable by the USC. President Mann also suggested that the Executives will hold each other accountable. The Executive is willing to discuss further means of accountability with the USC.

Member 20 asked if the Executive would be open to creating a policy with the USC that mandates the Executives report how many credit units they are enrolled in per term.

- President Mann confirmed that the Executive is willing to entertain any additional accountability measures.

Member 4 suggested that prior to creating a policy, this Bylaw amendment could state that an exception to the credit unit limit will be made for international students.

- President Mann suggested that having an exception for international students might be unfair for domestic students.
 - Member 4 clarified that they meant that this amendment could say that there can be an exception to the credit unit limit subject to a policy that considers international students; it does not need to be stated in the Bylaw that international students can exceed the limit without being subject to an additional USC policy.
 - Member 4 reminded President Mann that there is a difference between equity and equality. International students have a course requirement that domestic students do not have; therefore, it is equitable, though not equal, to allow them to exceed the USSU Bylaw's credit unit limit.

Member 4 expressed that the problem with this amendment is that it puts an obligation on the USC to impeach a President if there is an issue with accountability because there are no other means to address the issue. It would be better if there were other options, such as a policy that requires Executives to report their course loads to the USC for approval, or an alternative course as suggested by Member 20. The amendment should state that exceeding the credit unit limit is possible subject to a policy specific to international students.

Member 20 expressed that they are hesitant to support this amendment before the USSU has a way to make the exception specific to international students. If all the Executives are taking 3 courses per term, they will likely be too busy to create a policy that clarifies when exceptions to the credit unit limit will be granted.

Members 4 and 20 suggested an amendment to this amendment that would leave Section 15 of the Bylaw as it was before the amendment but with an added subsection that allows an exception to the credit unit limit for international students. With this change, the amendment would read as follows:

“The term of the Executive shall begin on May 1 and end on the following April 30, in accordance with the Articles.

- 1) The President shall register in a minimum of three (3) credit units in the fall session and three (3) credit units in the winter session and a maximum of six (6) credit units in the fall session and six (6) credit units in the

winter session. The President may not take more than twelve (12) credit units throughout their twelve (12) month term.

a) *Applications to the maximum credit load can be made subject to exceptions defined by further guidelines made by the University Students' Council.*

- President Mann reminded the Members that only friendly amendments will be accepted. Therefore, Members cannot replace the original amendment with a different one.
 - The Members accepted that their proposed subsection be added to the amendment originally as proposed by the USSU Executive.

Member 20 suggested that their proposed subsection to the amendment should allow the USC to review a reduction in payment, when necessary, if an Executive fails to work their required weekly hours. This would give the USC another measure to ensure accountability beyond impeachment.

- VP Singh suggested that it is not fair to reduce the pay of an international student President.
 - Member 4 explained to VP Singh that an international student President would not necessarily be paid less. However, the USC should have the authority to review a pay reduction if it is necessary in the case of an international student President failing to work their required weekly hours.
- President Mann added that the USC is always able to propose a payment reduction for underperforming Executives.
- Member 4 suggested that payment is beside the point; if a President fails to meet their required hours, they should be impeached. Trying to monitor Executive hours and calculate payment reductions will be difficult to process.

Member 46 suggested that the problem could be addressed by adding to his amendment that the increase in the credit unit limit be subject to a policy set by the USC. The upper limit would be 18 credit units per year.

Member 43 suggested that the alternate course mentioned by Member 20 be included in this amendment. Including this would allow international students to maintain their full-time student status without having to worry about the work of a third course on top of their duties as President.

- Member 4 suggested that the amendment remain as proposed. The addition of the alternate course can be included in a policy created by the USC at a later date.
- Member 33 affirmed that the alternate course is a good idea. The problem is that the course does not exist at the moment.

President Mann clarified that, with change of wording proposed by Member 46 and the addition of the subsection proposed by Members 4 and 20, the amendment now reads as follows:

“The term of the Executive shall begin on May 1 and end on the following April 30, in accordance with the Articles.

- 1) The President and Vice-Presidents shall register in a minimum of three (3) credit units in the fall session and three (3) credit units in the winter session and a maximum of nine (9) credit units in the fall session and nine (9) credit units in the winter session. The President and Vice-Presidents shall not take more than eighteen (18) credit units throughout their twelve (12) month term. Exceptions to maximum course load may be made according to further guidelines and approval set by the University Students’ Council.”

Move to approve the amended amendment to Section 15 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion009: Member 4 / Member 20

CARRIED

6.5. Proposed Amendment to Section 27 (by USSU Executive)

President Mann explained that this amendment is to amalgamate some of the USSU’s standing committees, which will allow the Executives to better focus their efforts.

President Mann asked each Executive to explain the committees they are responsible for.

- VP Bauman shared that the Academic Relations Committee assists with the USSU Excellence Awards, the USSU Undergraduate Symposium, and any academic-related issues that require discussion. The only proposed change to this committee is that it will decrease to two students-at-large from three to ensure that quorum is reached.
- President Mann shared that the Advocacy Committee assists with the Executive’s lobbying efforts and works with the USC to create advocacy goals within the University, as well municipally, provincially, and nationally; such efforts and goals include, but are not limited to,

addressing the needs of Indigenous and international students, and advancing EDI, anti-racism, and anti-oppression.

- VP Mehta shared that the Campus Group Committee deals with all issues pertaining to campus groups, including funding, ratification, insurance, event coordination, and grant applications. The committee also acts as the hearing board for appeals for funding, ratification, and insurance decisions made by the VP Operations and Finance.
- VP Singh shared that the Elections Committee conducts elections and referenda and is chaired by the Chief Returning Officer, not an Executive. This committee remains unchanged from last year.
- VP Mehta shared that the Finance and Assessment Committee considers all financial matters of the Union and makes recommendations to the USC, including the approval of the annual budget and capital expenditures. The committee also reviews union fees, develops long-term administrative strategies, and discusses USSU operations in collaboration with senior managers.
- President Mann shared that the Governance Committee reviews proposed Bylaw amendments and develops policies requested by the USC.
- VP Mehta shared that the Student and City Connections Committee connects USask students with the City of Saskatoon. The committee discusses City engagement opportunities, presents information about City projects, and provides the City of Saskatoon with feedback from students.
- VP Singh shared that the Student Life and Sustainability Committee focuses on creating environmentally-friendly goals, events, and initiatives within the USSU and oversees sustainability grants.

President Mann shared that the Student Life and Sustainability Committee will collaborate with the Advocacy Committee and the Governance Committee on major projects. For instance, USask Vice-Provost Students and Learning, Dr. Jerome Cranston, has requested the USC provide a review of USask's EDI policies. These three committees will work on reviewing the policies, proposing changes, bringing the proposals forward to the USC, and submitting the document to the Vice-Provost for consideration.

Member 4 proposed reintroducing the Indigenous Student Advisory Committee. While they understand that there have been challenges sitting this committee, they believe that too many historical injustices have been perpetrated due to a lack of consultation with Indigenous peoples. There is a desire for Indigenous engagement, but many students do not know about this committee's existence.

Member 31 is an MSC representing Indigenous Students. They were not aware of the committee and were not consulted about its dissolution.

Member 20 shared that when it was proposed last year that the Indigenous Student Advisory Committee be dissolved and amalgamated, it was with the understanding that the incoming Executives would consult students on how best to proceed. The Executives failed to conduct said consultation. The USSU has a duty to advance reconciliation, and this committee is the space to do that.

- President Mann stated that the Indigenous Student Advisory Committee can remain with an amendment to the amendment.

Member 32 stressed the importance of keeping both the Indigenous Student Advisory Committee and the International Students Advisory Committee. They did not know about the committee and think that the USSU should provide students with more information about it.

Member 43 believes that if the Indigenous Student Advisory Committee is being kept, the International Student Advisory Committee should be kept as well.

- President Mann stated that the International Student Advisory Committee can be kept with an amendment to the amendment.

Move to approve the amendment, with the addition of the Indigenous Student Advisory Committee and the International Student Advisory Committee, to Section 27 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion010: President Mann / Member 46

CARRIED

6.6. Proposed Amendment to Section 29 (by USSU Executive)

VP Bauman explained that this amendment is to reduce the number of students-at-large on the Academic Relations Committee to two from three.

Move to approve the amendment to Section 29 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion011: VP Bauman / Member 2

CARRIED

6.7. Proposed Amendment to Section 30 (by USSU Executive)

President Mann explained that this amendment is to establish the Advocacy Committee, an amalgamation of previous committees.

Move to approve the amendment to Section 30 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion012: President Mann / Member 25

CARRIED

6.8. Proposed Amendment to Section 31 (by USSU Executive)

VP Mehta explained that this amendment is to reduce the number of students-at-large on the Campus Group Committee to two from three.

Move to approve the amendment to Section 31 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion013: VP Mehta / Member 43

CARRIED

6.9. Proposed Amendment to Section 32 (by USSU Executive)

VP Singh explained that there is no change to the Elections Committee. This amendment is simply to renumber this Section of the Bylaw after the amalgamation of committees.

Move to approve the amendment to Section 32 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion014: VP Singh / Member 4

CARRIED

6.10. Proposed Amendment to Section 33 (by USSU Executive)

VP Mehta explained that there is no change to the Finance and Assessment Committee. This amendment is simply to renumber this Section of the Bylaw after the amalgamation of committees.

Move to approve the amendment to Section 33 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion015: VP Mehta / Member 1

CARRIED

6.11. Proposed Amendment to Section 34 (by USSU Executive)

President Mann explained that this amendment is to establish the Governance Committee, an amalgamation of previous committees.

Move to approve the amendment to Section 34 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion016: President Mann / Member 14

CARRIED

6.12. Proposed Amendment to Section 35 (by USSU Executive)

VP Mehta explained that there is no change to the Student and City Connections Committee. This amendment is simply to renumber this Section of the Bylaw after the amalgamation of committees.

Member 32 asked whether the spot on the committee reserved for an Indigenous student will require proof of status or self-identification.

- VP Mehta stated that it will be on the basis of self-identification.
- Member 4 explained that obtaining status is a barrier to some Indigenous students.

- Member 31 confirmed that non-status people can self-declare and be considered Indigenous.
- President Mann stated that all previous points are valid and that the USSU will consult the Indigenous Students' Union on this matter.
- Member 32 restated their question.
 - VP Mehta answered that they will discuss it with the USC, but the question does not affect the proposed amendment.
 - President Mann stated that the USSU has no way to check, so self-identification is the only basis available to them.

Move to approve the amendment to Section 35 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion017: VP Mehta / Member 43

CARRIED

6.13. Proposed Amendment to Section 36 (by USSU Executive)

VP Singh explained that this amendment is to establish the Student Life and Sustainability Committee, an amalgamation of several previous committees.

Member 46 proposed a change in the section numbers because the Indigenous Student Advisory Committee and the International Student Advisory Committee were reintroduced into the Bylaw.

- VP Singh explained that those two committees will be added after the rest of the committees as Sections 37 and 38 respectively.

Move to approve the amendment to Section 36 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGMMotion018: VP Singh / Member 17

CARRIED

7. President's Report

President Mann delivered the President's Report.

- The USSU is focused on empowerment, wellness, and accessibility.
- So far this year the USSU has had 750 meetings and been involved in 60 events.
- The USSU has been using social media effectively to keep students informed and engaged.
 - The USSU has promoted tuition consultation by sharing USask's tuition consultation survey. The survey was responded to by 4000 students.
- The USSU has organized the following events so far this year:
 - Bike to Work Day
 - USSU Summer Games
 - Welcome Week
 - Academic Awareness Week
 - Various trivia nights

- Campus Club Week.
- The USSU distributed 50 orange shirts and 2000 Moose Hide Campaign pins during Truth and Reconciliation Week.
- The University Students' Council has recently submitted a report to the Provost regarding tuition and the budget.
- Assisting with the academic concerns of students has been a major component of the USSU's work.
- Lobbying plans:
 - The USSU is a member of the Undergraduates of Canadian Research Intensive Universities (UCRU), a coalition of student associations that advocates the needs of undergraduate students to the Canadian federal government.
 - Met with Saskatoon Mayor Charlie Clark to advocate that the Housing Accelerator Fund be used to build housing near campus for USask students.
 - Met with Saskatchewan's Minister of Advanced Education, Gordon Wyant, and other student groups to discuss a unified lobbying approach.
 - The USSU's lobbying efforts aim to increase the value of tuition and ensure no student has to compromise the quality of their education for any reason.
- USSU Centres:
 - The USSU's Centres are the Food Centre, Pride Centre, Women's Centre, Help Centre, and Student Crew & Safewalk.
 - The Women's Centre has hosted events including Sexual Assault Awareness Week, Take Back the Night, and the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.
- The USSU has seen increased engagement in campus groups this year.
- The USSU and USC will meet with StudentCare about proposed changes to the insurance policies. The changes will seek to improve health, dental, and vision coverage, as well as proposing a new gender transition care service to the health & dental plan.

8. Questions and Comments for Executive

There were no questions or comments.

9. Any Other Business

Member 47 proposed a motion to delegate the staffing of the Law Library extended hours to the Law Students' Association. The USSU is currently overseeing the staffing. This motion was proposed because there was a mistake one day where no one showed up to staff the Library and 100 people were displaced. It is important that the Law Library be

open late so students can write papers and study for exams. Law students are losing faith in the USSU's ability to oversee the extended hours. The LSA has 20 people on a list ready to staff the Library's extended hours. If extending the Library's hours is not successful, extended hours might not be offered in the future.

- Chairperson Anees explained that this is not an issue that can be included in the USSU Bylaw. She recommended the Member email the Executives to set up a meeting to discuss the issue.
- President Mann apologized for the mistake. She claims that the Library, not the USSU, cancelled the extended hours that day because of a cancellation and miscommunication about how to deal with it. She suggested that instead of delegating the responsibility to the LSA, Law students should volunteer for the USSU's Student Crew to help staff the Library during extended hours.
 - Member 47 claims that they have emailed Student Crew to volunteer but did not receive a response.
- Member 4 suggested that if miscommunication happens again, the USSU should contact the LSA; the LSA will provide volunteers whenever needed.
- VP Singh claims that he emailed Member 47 two weeks ago asking them to volunteer for Student Crew.
 - Member 47 claimed that they forwarded the email to Law students, and some of the students never received a response.
 - VP Singh claimed that Student Crew did not get many applications from Law students. He recommended that Law students apply to volunteer for Student Crew so they can staff the Library's extended hours.
- Member 47 stated that the College of Law is funding the extended hours. They suggested that it would be easier for the LSA to oversee the initiative.
 - VP Singh claims that the Library approached the USSU because they knew the USSU has Student Crew to help. VP Singh suggested having a meeting to discuss solutions.
- Member 47 requested that they and Member 4 be listed as back-up contacts in case a mistake occurs again.
 - President Mann stated that the USSU cannot make this decision; it is the College of Law's decision to make. She recommended that the LSA have a discussion with the Dean. The USSU can support the LSA in that discussion.
 - Member 47 clarified that they want to be a volunteer for Student Crew. If there is a mistake, Member 47 can be contacted to fill in.
 - President Mann claimed that when Law students learned what the hours of a Student Crew volunteer were, they revoked their applications.

10. Adjournment

Chairperson Anees adjourned the meeting at 8:14 PM.