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**Minutes – Board of Directors**

**8th Meeting of 2020-2021  
Tuesday, December 22nd, 2020 | 3:00 PM EST**

**Video Conference held via Zoom**

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**IN ATTENDANCE**

**Present**

Executive Committee

Muntaka Ahmed, President  
Dermot O'Halloran, VP Operations  
Tyler Riches, VP Public & University Affairs  
Alexandra McLean, VP Equity  
Neeharika Hemrajani, VP Student Life  
Paul Kaita, VP Professional Faculties

Division I Directors (Colleges, Academic Divisions,  
and Transitional Year Programme)

Kayleigh McCormick, New College  
Matthew Ho, St. Michael's College  
Fiona Reuter, Trinity College  
Pranay Prem, University College  
Basmah Ramadan, University College  
Jeannie Yoo, University College  
Radhika Dhawan, Victoria College  
Ava Harrington, Victoria College  
Miloni Mehta, Woodsworth College  
Sheryl Ordonez, Woodsworth College  
Alex Erickson, Social Sciences  
Evan Kanter, Computer Science  
Astrid Chandler, Humanities  
Sidrah Rana, Mathematical and Physical Sciences

Division II Directors (Professional Faculties)

José Power, Architecture & Visual Studies  
Tiffany Tiu, Kinesiology & Physical Education  
Catherine Wang, Music  
Vanshika Dhawan, Law  
Rose Mohammad, Professional Faculties at-large  
Nelson Lee, Applied Sciences & Engineering

Nermin Piragic, Dentistry  
Meredith McKinnon, Nursing  
Danielle Lewis, Medicine

Visitors and Other Non-Voting

Branden Cave, Speaker of the Board of Directors,  
UTSU  
Suzanne Belleau, General Manager, UTSU  
Margaret de Leon, Chief Operations Assistant,  
UTSU  
Vibhuti Kacholia, Chief Executive Assistant, UTSU  
Emmanuel Sackeyfio, EA Operations, UTSU  
Joshua Bienstock, EA Research & Administration,  
UTSU  
Winston Chan, EA Research & Administration,  
UTSU  
Sophia DiNicolò, EA Research & Administration,  
UTSU

**Absent**

Karel Peters, New College  
Ramtin Taramsari, New College  
Jonathan Hsu, St. Michael's College  
Zoe Chen, St. Michael's College  
Andrew Chen, Applied Science & Engineering  
Diana Li, Applied Sciences & Engineering

**Regrets**

Sierra Bevacqua, Woodsworth College  
Katherine Jung, Life Sciences  
Jai Kakkar, Rotman Commerce  
Shaon Parial, Pharmacy



## MINUTES

### Open Session

#### 1. Call to Order

*This meeting was called to order at 3:13 PM.*

#### 2. Approval of Agenda

RESOLUTION

MOVED: AHMED

SECONDED: PREM

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be approved as presented.**

CARRIED

#### 3. Consent Agenda

RESOLUTION

MOVED: AHMED

SECONDED: RICHES

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT the following be approved as presented in the appendices:**

##### 1. Meeting of the Board of Directors

7th Meeting of the 2020-2021 Board of Directors, 30 November 2020

##### 2. Meetings of Committees

First Year Council, 6 December 2020 (3rd Meeting)

Equity and Accessibility Committee, 13 December 2020 (5th Meeting)

Services Committee, 14 December 2020 (2nd Meeting)

Campaigns and Outreach Committee, 15 December 2020 (8th Meeting)

##### 3. Executive Reports

December 2020 Report of the President

December 2020 Report of the Vice-President, Operations

December 2020 Report of the Vice-President, Public & University Affairs

December 2020 Report of the Vice-President, Equity

December 2020 Report of the Vice-President, Professional Faculties

##### 4. Committee Reports

Executive Review Committee Report of Findings to the Board of Directors

DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Motion to Amend the Consent Agenda

RESOLUTION

MOVED: HEMRAJANI

SECONDED: RICHES

**BE IT RESOLVED that the December 2020 Report of the Vice-President, Student Life be included in the Consent Agenda.**



**DISCUSSION**

Hemrajani stated that due to personal difficulties heading back home to the United Kingdom in the week prior, she was not able to upload her report into the board package on time. She stated that the board should have received her report soon after the original board package deadline.

**CARRIED**

O'Halloran stated that the new UTSU website is finally live. He stated that not all of the content that is meant to be included on the website is there as of yet because the developers requested some time to fine tune the site on their own. He stated that he hopes to upload all the necessary information as soon as possible and indicated that board members can reach out to him if they have any questions.

Riches stated that they submitted a letter to the Ministry of Colleges & Universities regarding the upcoming 2021 Tuition Fee Framework and Ancillary Fee Guidelines. They stated that the letter outlined 4 recommendations;

- Freeze tuition across all programs while increasing operating grants until students are contributing one third of Universities' operating budgets.
- Eliminate deferral fees and late fees for tuition incurred during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic year.
- Reduce tuition for previously de-regulated professional undergraduate programs such as computer science and bioinformatics and data science and increase operating grants to offset that reduction.
- Mandate that Universities provide an alternative method of grading or financial aid where students are required to purchase digital learning materials for assessment that make up portions of students grades (otherwise known as microtransactions)

Riches stated that a full copy of the letter will be available in January.

Belleau expressed praise for O'Halloran's work on the new website. She stated that the first 6 months of her time as general manager consisted of discussions regarding the abysmal nature of the UTSU's communications and online infrastructure. A key recommendation from the 2019 Strategic Plan was to rebuild UTSU communications. She stated that O'Halloran took up much of that work on his own as a side project alongside the rest of his responsibilities and relatively new staff members to create the website and give it an entirely new feel.

Reuter asked O'Halloran if the Student Aid Program will be able to handle applications as we move into the second semester given many staff members taking winter break off.

O'Halloran stated that he will organize a meeting of the Student Aid Committee sometime soon to ensure it can consider students' existing requests in time for the new year.



Reuter stated that at the Services Committee there was a discussion about helping students pay for costs associated with mandatory quarantines. She asked if progress had been made on that front.

O'Halloran stated that he had not yet heard back from the Office of the Vice Provost, Students to see what sort of impact such a bursary would have on the UTSU. He stated that discussions at the next meeting of the Student Aid Committee will decide how to implement such a bursary.

Prem noted that the Executive Review Committee recently met to consider two complaints against members of the Executive Committee. He stated that both complaints were reviewed and dismissed. He stated that the Board can refer to the Committee's report in the Board Package for the information that it was obligated to make public pursuant to the UTSU's Policy Manual.

#### **4. Priorities for 2021**

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

PRESENTED: AHMED

**DISCUSSION**

Ahmed stated that the Executive Committee as well as the General Manager wanted to create an open discussion about their priorities for the remainder of the term. She stated that the Committee has an idea of what they want to focus on but wanted to discuss it with the Board to see if anyone has something to add. She stated her initial priorities being focusing on well conducted elections and a smooth transition into the Student Commons alongside any pressing advocacy that needs to be done in light of the pandemic and the needs of students.

O'Halloran stated that his main priority is to ensure that the website is completely up to date and filled with content hopefully by the end of January. He also stated that he will continue to work on restructuring the UTSU's Policies and Bylaws to be in line with the organization's new human resources apparatus in conjunction with the Manager of People and Culture. He stated that he is working with staff on the Students' Commons given how the organization recently gained partial occupancy; specifically in terms of tenancy agreements and memorandums of understanding with various service groups. He also mentioned he would be working on developing an opportunity for an arts based space on the fourth floor of the building which could potentially become both a commercial and community opportunity for students and the community at large.

Riches stated that they are working on starting up a student consultation for the University's Mandated Leave of Absence Policy (UMLAP) to be able to send tangible recommendations for the next iteration of the policy. They stated that the Ad-Hoc Committee for the CFS had yet to make much progress on its report but stated that they are hopeful it will be done before the end of February to ensure students are informed going into the next term. They stated that they are also working on a provincial budget submission, something that the UTSU has not done to their



knowledge. The themes they are looking to include will be financial support, mental health, transit, sexual violence on campus, and affordable transit.

Hemrajani stated that herself and her executive assistants are working hard to plan Frost Week. She stated that in light of the new Clubs' Policy's ratification, she wants to create a support mechanism for a more fluid review of clubs funding applications. She stated her desire to increase accessibility of the clubs funding process by creating a clubs manual that will include the UTSU's applicable policies and provide templates for the creation of their budget and/or constitution. She stated that she is aware of the gaps in place in terms of the UTSU's communication with clubs and campus groups and wants to work at mending those in the new year.

McLean stated that her main priority before next semester will be furthering her equity related campaigns, a crucial aspect of which will be engaging in consultations regarding these campaigns with equity seeking groups. The two campaigns she is working on are Raising Awareness of BIPOC and 2SLGBTQ Businesses and Advancing Equity within Education. She stated that she wants to formally establish these programs with the help of equity seeking groups and the UTSU's communications team by the end of January. She stated that she will also be working on the Expression Against Oppression (XAO) program and is hoping to run a small town hall to engage with community members about it in more depth. She stated that there are already some initial event ideas but that she wants to create an opportunity for people to recommend or help organize other events or initiatives. She further stated that the goal is to run XAO by the end of February.

Kaita stated that his main priority is maintaining communication with student societies and professional faculties regarding how the UTSU can best support them. He stated that he wants to make students in professional faculties aware of the work that the UTSU does and how it can support them. He stated that he is working on a report on how residence enrolment is allocated for first entry students. He is also planning on engaging with administrators and student leadership in arts and science to rectify the issue of students in professional faculties not having sufficient access to arts and sciences courses fast enough compared to other students. Finally, he stated that he wants to do an inventory of mental health supports available to students in different professional faculties in order to recommend changes where necessary.

Belleau stated that herself and O'Halloran are working on making more space during board meetings and through open office hours outside of board meetings to facilitate more communication between staff and students, especially as the UTSU transitions into the Students Commons. She stated that the UTSU has recently gained partial occupancy of the Students commons which means establishing relationships with tenants with move-ins on the horizon, managing the health and safety of the space, and figuring out what needs to be done to operate the space. She stated that the staff team is continuing to be built and added that they are gearing up to engage with new training materials, including equity and anti oppression training, and thanked McLean for her help with that. She stated that conversations around how the community space will be used during the course of the pandemic are ongoing, especially in terms of communication to students about what resources will be available to them in a



hybridized model. She stated that the Student Commons Management Committee will be meeting in January to discuss operational and financial modelling before this Board of Directors' term is complete. She stated that creating the Student Commons as an enterprise and community space is something that will need to be continually discussed, with meetings of the Management Committee specifically, in the new term.

Kanter asked what the consultation process will be in regards to plans to update the UTSU's equity based policies in the new year.

McLean referred to the report of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Review Body which recommended changes to the UTSU's Bylaws and Policies. She stated that conversations have been ongoing on that front and that it is very much on her mind for next semester.

Belleau stated that the Manager of People and Culture can help support any changes that need to be made in and around bylaws and policies with regards to equity at the UTSU. She also expressed support for McLean's work on the Local Committee in supporting the UTSU's World University Service of Canada (WUSC) program.

Piragic stated that students in professional faculties have been paying the same amount of tuition during the pandemic despite having much less practical experience. He asked if there is any advocacy that has been done on this front.

Kaita stated that he has not given this specific issue much thought but that he will follow up with student societies and look into it more.

Riches stated that while they are not specifically familiar with the professional faculties' tuition situations, they continue to advocate for reductions to tuition in an ongoing manner. They stated that the UTSU's report on Online Learning and Remote Classes has demonstrated the need for international students' tuition as well as domestic tuition to be lowered given that the level of education since the shift to online learning has not been up to par. They stated that in response, the University has argued that education continues to be of the same quality. They further stated that they will work with Kaita to look into this specific issue more.

Piragic asked if the UTSU can engage directly with administrators of professional faculty programs instead of engaging indirectly through conversation with student societies.

Kaita stated that much of the existing advocacy takes place internally between student societies and their administrations given that they know their students best.

Riches stated that the UTSU has been doing ongoing advocacy to different levels of administration on the issue of tuition. They referred to the Same Degree, Same Fee Campaign that is focusing on raising awareness of the higher tuition fees imposed on Computer Science and Biology, Biological informatics, and Data Science students. They stated that student societies in professional faculties are often those involved in divisional level consultations but that the UTSU



can engage with these issues at a higher level once they go through the University governance process.

Prem asked if anything has been organized to facilitate more accessible avenues of communication with the membership, such as creating office hours.

Ahmed stated that the Executive Committee has not been able to organize office hours given hectic scheduling and the online nature of things but that the UTSU front desk staff have been working to facilitate that communication and will continue to do that in the new year. However, she stated that she is looking at other student societies and campus groups to see how the Executive Committee could possibly implement office hours in the new year such as through open zoom links that students can jump onto.

## **5. Annual General Meeting**

### **DISCUSSION ITEM**

PRESENTED: O'HALLORAN

### **DISCUSSION**

O'Halloran stated that he wanted to open the floor for discussion regarding the Annual General Meeting (AGM), its agenda, and any questions surrounding the meeting or how it will take place.

Belleau stated that the AGM is part of the UTSU's compliance requirements of the Canadian Non for Profit Act (CNCA). She stated that the main components of the meeting are approving the last year's meeting minutes as well as looking at the audited financial statements and then choosing auditors for next year. She further stated that the UTSU adds additional components to this such as the Presidents' Report, the Annual Report, and a question period. She stated that this space and these documents are how we remain transparent to the student body and to the University. She stated that there are many changes coming up soon, specifically with regards to the Students' Commons, and wants to ensure she can answer any governance related questions surrounding that.

Kanter asked how quorum is determined at the meeting and what the next steps are if it is not.

Cave stated that holding the meeting meets the requirements of the CNCA. He stated that if quorum is not reached at the beginning of the meeting, the members present have the right to adjourn the meeting until a future time. He stated that they are looking forward to 4 or 5 weeks from the present if a new date for an adjourned meeting to be set. He also stated that if quorum is present at the beginning of the meeting, it lasts for the remainder of the meeting even if the number of members present drops below quorum throughout the course of the meeting.

O'Halloran stated that the earliest the UTSU would be able to hold an adjourned meeting would be January 26th but most likely in the first week of February to ensure that all the appropriate processes and materials were in place.

Kanter asked if the Executive Committee is expecting to make quorum.



O'Halloran stated that quorum should be met although he cautioned that it's possible that quorum could be lost sometime during the course of the meeting.

Erickson asked if the Executive Committee is still planning on organizing a Special General Meeting (SGM) in the new year and further asked how a potentially adjourned meeting would affect that.

O'Halloran stated that a Special General Meeting will most likely happen slightly later than when a possibly adjourned meeting would be. He stated that having an adjourned meeting in February would make it difficult to promote an SGM as well. However, he stated that he intends on planning for an SGM regardless.

Erickson asked if the agenda of an adjourned meeting could be changed to include any items that would have been included in a potential SGM.

Cave stated that he is not completely sure but that he will look into it with O'Halloran.

O'Halloran stated that there were two "invalid" proxies reported by simply voting and stated that he will be in conversation with simply voting to figure out how this issue arose and with the affected directors to address them before the meeting.

## 6. Other Business

### DISCUSSION ITEM

PRESENTED: AHMED

### DISCUSSION

Ahmed thanked the Board for their patience given that the UTSU had to hold an AGM and a Board of Directors meeting during the exam period and on the same day. She apologized for the unideal nature of the circumstances and expressed appreciation to everyone for their cooperation.

O'Halloran stated that he has been working on the UTSU Strategic Plan. He stated that they are planning on having a number of focus groups at the beginning of January and stated that he hopes board members will participate once more information is available.

Belleau stated that these focus groups could provide a forum to have discussions with regards to equity in the UTSUs policies and bylaws, as mentioned by McLean and Kanter earlier.

## 7. Adjournment

### RESOLUTION

MOVED: AHMED

SECONDED: O'HALLORAN

**BE IT RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned.**





**CARRIED**

*The meeting adjourned at 4:13 PM.*

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**Appendices Listed on Following Page**



## APPENDICES

- **Consent Agenda**

Link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/11hGfPRLQ-suw6mUdjNiYlqeBMcp2BooS>