**VUSAC Meeting Minutes**

October 28 at 5 PM in the Goldring Student Center

MINUTES

**In Attendance**

**VUSAC**

**Judiciary**

PRESIDENTS: Stuart Norton and Rahul Christoffersen VP EXTERNAL: Stephen Warner

VP INTERNAL: Golda Greenspoon

**Assessor Members**

CHAIR: Saambavi Mano

SECRETARY: Artimes Ghahremani

**Commissioners & Councillors**

SCARLET AND GOLD: Zahavah Kay

SUSTAINABILITY : Jamil Fiorino-Habib

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT : Nina Christianson

COMMUTER: Co-Chair Karen Indraatmadja

ARTS AND CULTURE : Olivia Klasios

EQUITY : Commissionner Yasmine Hassan

**COUNCILLORS**

Tyler Biswurm

Alexa Breininger

Peter Huycke

**LEVIES**

**GUESTS**

Thomas Lynch, Councillor Candidate

Auni Ahsan

Christian Schoug, Levy Head

Nicholas Grant

Sharon Tan, Councillor Candidate

**REGRETS**

FINANCE: Nicole Gumapac

COMMUNICATIONS: Shailee Koranne

CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER: Taylor Cenac

Commuter Commissionner Isaac Khouzam

Councillor Melinda Hector

**ABSENT**

Councillor Milliene Xu

VP STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS: Hannah Brennen

VP INTERNAL: Golda Greenspoon

EQUITY Co-Chair: Zoe Kwan

Land Recognition: Alexa

Zahavah moves to approve the minutes from last meeting. Olivia seconds. Motion passes.

* Favour: All
* Abstained:
* Opposed:

Motion: Olivia moves to approve the agenda as it stands. Nina seconds. Motion passes.

* Favour: All
* Abstained:
* Opposed:

*\*Rahul moves to extend the discussion of the SGSA by 10 minutes. Stephen seconds.*

* Favour: All
* Abstained:
* Opposed:

*\*Zahavah moves to add one minute for semi-formal update. Stuart seconds.*

* Favour: All
* Abstained:
* Opposed:

*\*Olivia moves to add one minute for Arts and Culture update. Peter seconds.*

* Favour: All
* Abstained:
* Opposed:

*\*Rahul moves to extend mental health update by 2 minutes. Alexa seconds.*

* Favour: All
* Abstained:
* Opposed:

\**Rahul moves to add 2 minutes on Vic Academic Internship. Zahavah seconds.*

* Favour: All
* Abstained:
* Opposed:

**EX-OFFICIO REPORTS AND UPDATES**

*CLC – Emily*

**Orientation Co-Chair Applications, Halloween Trick or Treat Event, and Remembrance Day**

Emily says orientation co-chair applications are now open, signs have been posted around Vic and on Facebook. They are due November 21st, and she encourages people to apply, and if we know of anyone good, to let them know. They can get copies of the application at the VUSAC office, the Dean’s Office, Caffiends and the Cat’s Eye, as well as online on the orientation website.

The Remembrance Day Ceremony will be on November 11th at 2 PM. They are looking for two members interested in participating, Golda will be and asks if any others are interested. They would be reading a letter of a soldier from the field. She just wanted to put the word out. Nina volunteers. Golda will be in touch with her. Emily will send an email out to people for more information.

For the trick or treat event, people already know about this, but students will be coming into the office, and those on office hours should hand out candy. They should already have a raffle ticket, if not, there are some on the front table. You should host and be welcoming as they come in.

The Dean’s Office is hosting a coping skills workshop, which happens centrally through U of T. Vic is hosting five. There are 4 more. Normally, you have to go through a councillor or Health & Wellness – but because it is at Vic, you just need to apply online. With exams coming up, these workshops will be helpful. She asks members to encourage others or to apply themselves, the major link is on the handout she has distributed, and the specific Vic link is at the bottom. There is no need for a referral, they just need to register.

Emily continues that she spoke with Rahul and Stuart about a study club, which is hosted by the Dean’s Office with Andrea the learning strategist. They are held on Thursday’s from 10-5. There has not been a high turnout, partly because of the space, as students don’t study there normally. She asks if VUSAC would be interested in hosting as a study space. If not, that is fine. Andrea the learning strategist would come in periodically and help people who wanted help on their essays, or to give tips on taking notes. The space would be allocated to that.

Stu says he spoke to Artimes, and they see the validity of the idea, and might be interested. However, our biggest concern is that we are not ready for a commitment on a recurring basis, as this space is for clubs and levies. They will follow up later.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

*SGSA Discussion*

Stuart welcomes everyone. As we have talked about, this is the fourth meeting with a discussion on the Saint George Students’ Alliance (SGSA). They will be discussing the set of bylaws that have been posted for over a month, and Saambavi included with the preliminary agenda. Across campus at each division, there have been meetings with all the college and pro-fac divisional heads, each looking over the bylaws and getting feedback from their councils. Building off of earlier discussion, Stuart has invited Nick, from the New College Council, who spearheaded the drafting of the bylaws and making them compliant. The bylaws are to be specifically addressed in the meeting, and Nick has most experience to answer any questions. At the end, we are looking for a symbolic vote on the fact that VUSAC would be interested in supporting this set of bylaws, putting Vic’s stamp of approval on them. As Rahul and Stuart have reiterated, they are open to multiple perspectives, and are looking for fruitful conversation. Nick is here as a resource. It should be an informative process, and folks are to share thoughts and questions about the bylaws and the SGSA in general.

Stephen asks Nick if Vic is… not late, but since he has been around to other divisions already – what kind of changes have been made to the constitution since the meetings with other student societies. Nick says Vic is not late; rather in the middle of the game. St. Mikes, Trinity, New, and Kin have discussed the bylaws so far. A couple of people attended the town halls for bylaw discussion. They haven’t been changed since, the only thing is the recalls, if a division wishes to bring back a steering committee member. Having impeachments in the AGM with no notice was a concern of some members. Now, it is up to the divisions themselves to trigger a recall election. That is the only change, and he had forwarded the most updated version out three weeks ago.

Nick goes into the history of this, as well as the purpose and mandate, as some people question why there is a need for the SGSA when we have the UTSU- he speaks to the purpose. Nick asks if anyone knows about student society summit, which happened 3 years ago. It was a result of Trinity, St. Mikes, and Engineering voting to [edits not received] from the UTSU. The politics were not constructive, and central admin was called in to iron out grievances. The non-CFS backed slate took control of the UTSU. Things are good right now, and the SGSA doesn’t seek to replace the UTSU, but wants to work with them. They will lead them to run campus events, such as winterfest and homecoming. The idea is that this would formalize and make more democratic the SGRT. Currently, it is not official, just a bunch of presidents getting together to chat and coordinate. The purpose is to give a democratic mandate to students. The UTSU has worked to tackle things on an undergraduate level, they have their own issues, but are running out of space to support campus initiatives. The support from the UTSU is because of this. The bylaws call for biweekly meetings with them. They could be terminated after 2 years, it is just to see if they are trying. People question why it is useful – for some people, it’s about having a community spirit, for others a lot more remembering when the UTSU was stifling voices, and people want voices. All it takes is one election cycle for a huge change to be made. These things are subject to voters will. One election cycle can undo a lot of good progress. This calls for work with the UTSU as of right now, but in the future, if not, they have a way to defend students.

Auni asks about funding. In the bylaws, there is a fee student societies pay to become members. Is it an operating fee? Nick says there is no fee - upon establishment, each division is a de facto member. They can opt out, there are no operating fees as they stand. Nick says upon establishment you could choose to be out, and never pay that fee. It depends on your college council membership, full time or part time. Auni asks regarding the potential levy referendum – discussed last year, maybe 50 cents or a dollar, which is a lot of money. Considering the recent climate, with the clubs referendum being voted down, does he think they’ll seek to do this? Nick says the New College Student Council (NCSC) payed for Winterfest, Homecoming, and they get it through donation. The intent is to run a referendum in the spring for $1. Membership is between 30-35 000 members. It would be more than they currently get, but it would free up more money at the VUSAC level, as they would not be paying. Otherwise, people have been volunteering money into it. If it fails, it’s subject to voter sentiment, and they are hoping there is quorum, but there is other recourse to run events and democratize.

Tyler asks if there is a cap on membership size (Clarification Needed – edits not recieved). Nick says first-entry undergraduate divisions are the only ones they can represent. This means students can come straight from high school into the programming. They are not able to represent others as per bylaws.

Rahul asks if he could speak to what services would be carried out. Nick says based on their understanding with the UTSU, they are hoping to continue with winterfest and homecoming. Last night, they had a club night at orchid. These are the kind of events the SGRT allows, such as the mental health round table, which currently has to get people together. He is currently the chair of finance, as he was at New. Nick is hoping to get a VP finance. In terms of the round tables, this will formalize their relationship, having dedicated funding through levies. They are running different services, and as much as the UTSU does great work, they can be out of touch with students. From experience, Nick says the UTSU hits the mark and doesn’t, and college and pro-fac perspectives are important. They would continue with those collaborative events. They would have to have 30-35 000 dollars, half of that would go to current events, and half to other events they are hoping to run. The idea is if the membership likes what the SGSA is doing, they can increase their levy fee. They don’t want to be bogged down by staff hours or office space, which a lot of UTSU money is tied up in weird places like that. They are not running a printing center – rather a lot more services on an engagement level.

Steve wonders if, since Vic students are **already** represented by VUSAC, ASSU, UTSU, adding a 4th layer would be an issue for student participation and general bureaucracy. Nick says yes, to the average student, it is very confusing. It adds an extra layer, but you already participate indirectly, and it goes back to the 11 steering committee members elected internally. Student committee members are chosen, or maybe seen in a new position. The VPE currently doesn’t exist, but he is needing executive manpower. After the NCSC elections are done, council will decide from executives who would be the member. It depends on involvement. He is hoping to run elections alongside the UTSU. It would be done using the university voting platform, to reduce voter exhaustion.

Peter says we have had this discussion for a while, and if we are making a decision about this, it is a big discussion and decision, so it would be valuable to have time to speak just as a council. It would be potentially valuable to have a discussion in private.

Peter moves to go in camera. Tyler seconds. Motion passes.

* Favour: All others
* Abstained: Rahul, Jamil
* Opposed:

*\* In Camera session commences*

*\*Public meeting resumes*

Nick says that he felt jumped by the decision to move in camera. He says these discussions are great, and that he will come back. The endorsement he is seeking is not to approve the bylaws, it is just putting the membership at vote at the AGM to establish it. There are a few more steps before it becomes finalized, and it is just a symbolic endorsement that the organization has merit, and should be discussed collectively.

Stuart thanks for Nick for coming, and for the point of information. Speaking openly, Stuart says the general consensus was that folks would be interested in engaging with Vic students before moving to endorsement. Initially, they mentioned that it has changed, and they will come back to this. The climate in the room has changed, but he thanks Nick for coming and answering questions.

Nick says that’s fine, UC and Innis aren’t discussing for another 2 weeks. He shares a quote from the Vice Provost, “governance is at its best when students are engaged.” He says VUSAC might have more members after elections the elections that they would want to consider, and he is happy to come back. He mentions that questions can be directed to him by email at president@ncsc.ca

**COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND UPDATES**

*Arts and Culture - Olivia*

Olivia says they sold out the last set of Friday Night Live tickets, and she is hoping to do one more on the 18th, which is called ‘Wild.’ There will be National Geographic photography on display.

The Bob is at the end of the month, there will be Facebook events and info to be shared, she asks members to be on the lookout.

*Scarlet and Gold - Zahavah*

Zahavah shares that semiformal will be taking place on November 24. She will be posting to ask for volunteers.

**JUDICIARY REPORTS AND UPDATES**

*VPSO- Hannah*

*\*Rahul will be speaking for Hannah in her absence.*

**Levy Updates**

Rahul reads that Student Projects is accepting applications. The applications are due on November 7th, and interviews will be on November 9th.

The Victoriad has continued to record and photograph events that have occurred in the past month, with a special thanks to the Photo Editor Ashley, VicXposure, and the VCDS Photographer. They have updated the website and Facebook Contributors group on the available opportunities for students to contribute to the yearbook. They printed more bookmarks to advertise The Victoriad, but they are having difficulty finding a working paper-cutter on campus. Finally, they are advertising for more photographers on their team.

The Cat's Eye has had a busy start to the semester. This week they held pumpkin carving with the commuter dons and have had VCDS's The Goat performances Wednesday through Friday. Tomorrow is the Halloween Costume Party and they encourage everyone to come out and dress up.

**VCDS Update**

On Friday, VCDS will be having closing night of The Goat. It is a really interesting and good show, and they encourage you to come out and see it. There are sexually explicit themes, some hints of homophobia (but meant as a social commentary on homophobia) and some strong language. Their next show is the musical Last Five Years and that will be in the Cat's Eye in December.

**New Ratifications**

Vic Climbing Club: The Vic Climbing Club (VClC) is meant to encourage and facilitate a healthy lifestyle for climbers of all levels. We'll go on climbing excursions to gyms around Toronto, and welcome anyone interested in climbing to come out.

Wing Chun Jing Jun Association: To give students a chance to learn the martial art of Wing Chun on campus.

Rahul moves to ratify Vic Climbing Club. Tyler seconds. Motion passes.

* Favour: All
* Abstained:
* Opposed:

Rahul moves to ratify Wing Chun Jing Jun. Peter seconds. Motion passes.

* Favour: All
* Abstained:
* Opposed:

Stephen asks if Nicole isn’t here, since budgets closed last week, will they be eligible for budgeting. Saamba says contingency fund.

*VPI – Golda*

**Update**

*\*Stuart will be reading for Golda in her absence.*

Golda would like everyone know that she is in the process of finalizing the councillor assignments. There have been hiccups in office hours, and she is working on reconciling that, and appreciates everyone’s patience.

*VPE – Stephen*

**Caucus Information**

Caucus is on Tuesday November 15, at 6:30 in NF 003. Members should have an email about this. It is an open meeting for all VC students, and the goal is to talk about Vic in a general sense, reflect on how we are doing, and look to what criticisms, hopes, and ideas we may have. It will provide a good panel for different things. If you have thoughts, or an idea to be bounced around, that is the whole point, so he will fit it into the schedule. VUSAC is asked to come, but if you have class that’s ok.

**Student Experience Survey Update**

Stephen says it is moving forward, since last update it was in a weird period in the year, because staff was not around. It is moving forward, they had a productive meeting last week. They have started shaping general themes for the survey. Hopefully, they will come back with more concrete questions for feedback. Right now, they are in the early stages of looking at themes, what kinds of things to ask students about. They are not consulting much on this one, but once the ideas are more concrete, they will solicit feedback from council and on caucus.

*Presidents – Rahul and Stuart*

**Racialized Students’ Collective Update**

Rahul says the first meeting was last week of the ad hoc committee, and it consisted of Saambavi, himself, Yasmine, Zoe, Nicole, Shailee, and Amanda Aziz. They have decided to move forward with an event on Tuesday, which will be advertised as a safe discussion space. They will consult on what direction to take moving forward, with an advocacy or event focus, or to be discussion based. It will mimic the UTSU racialized student collective model. The meeting will be next Tuesday, from 4-6 in Wymilwood Lounge.

**SGRT Mental Health Committee**

Rahul says he met with Briannne, who is the head of the ICSC, as chairs of the mental health subcommittee, to plan their accomplishment for this ear. The goal was to produce a survey of student sentiment on mental health at U of T. Instead of focusing on particularly issues of those involved in these bubbles, they hope to reach out to the entire Saint George community. The subcommittee would be taking 1-2 reps from each division. He asks if anyone would volunteer to be part of the representatives. He will post on Facebook, because of the current low attendance. They will be meeting on November 9th, at 8 PM in the main meeting room in VUSAC. January 16st will be the date for the formation of survey, findings will be presented to SGRT on April 1st. Responsibilities of representatives would be to report the findings of the subcommittee to VUSAC, and to report on the desires of members and the Vic community to the subcommittee.

**What We’ve Been Up To**

Stu says he submitted this item to be accountable. He updates council on what’s going on, as they have been all around campus. There have been external requirements in the past few weeks. They met with the VP students, in response to the free speech rally, and instances of hate, as they were interested in seeing what was going on. VUSAC is collaborating with UC Lit. He wanted to inform them that students felt disappointed by admin, as there was a lack of stance and engagement, and those personally affected felt disappointed. She recognized this, and recognized that the university needs to do more, but there are systems of bureaucracy, and as much as she agrees, others are responsible for sending out emails to students. The university is hiding behind that, certain responses that should be taken haven’t been. Stuart wanted to relay this. On Monday, he attended a meeting with the SGRT, You Decide people, and Auni. They heard voices together responding to how work together. If anyone has any questions for Stuart or Rahul, they can send an email to the at president@vusac.ca

**SGRT: Winterfest**

Stuart mentions that he is one of the chairs of the sub round table winterfest committee. It is a week of programming in the first week of classes after Winter Break, January 9-14. Classes resume on the 4th though. He knows it is an external focus. When they ran, they wanted to get away from external focus, but there are opportunities for intercollegiate collaboration. The pub crawl route is being changed, that is a radical change. Anything else about winterfest can be answered if you send an email.

**Vic Academic Internship**

Professor Rubancic is forming an internship for VC students, and they are in the process of finding an application system. If you have any thoughts, shoot Rahul an email, and he will communicate them.

*Academic and Professional Development – Nina*

Nina moves to ratify Aviva Glassman, Blanaid McNally, Menandro Cruz, Reema Gill, Isidora Ateljevic, Aparajita Bhandari, Cindy Liu as members of the Academic and Professional Development Committee for 2016-2017. Stuart seconds.

* Favour: All others.
* Abstained: Nina
* Opposed:
	+ Absent:

\*Peter asks what is happening with Blanaid – Nina responds that she emailed and will come in second semester.

**COUNCILOR REPORTS**

No Reports

Motion: Zahavah moves to adjourn the meeting. Peter seconds. Motion passes.

Meeting is adjourned.

* Favour: All
* Abstained:
* Opposed:
	+ Absent: