



Annual General Meeting Minutes

Date: April 19, 2024

Chair: Kalani

Secretary: Karina

Kalani calls the meeting to order at 7:18 pm

Kalani begins the meeting by acknowledging we are in Mi'kma'ki, the territory of the Mi'kmaq. As Treaty people, we are committed to reconciliation. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1725. As a union of students operating within a colonizing university, we must fulfill our responsibility to fight collectively and collaboratively for such outcomes as free and universal education, which are themselves aspects of the project of decolonization, as well as other outcomes which are in the interest of First Nations students at NSCAD. We recognize that Nova Scotia is the home to over 50 African Nova Scotian communities, whose culture, heritage and histories have been, and remain a key part of this province for more than 400 years.

Roll call: (See attendees list)

Chair ratification: Owen motions to ratify Kalani as Chair, student seconds. Motion passed

Agenda: Owen motions to approve the agenda, student seconds. Motion passed

Signatures:

Exec Member

Resource Coordinator

SUNSCAD's roles and responsibilities

- Kalani explains SUNSCAD's roles and responsibilities
- Student asks about the difference between Council, Executive, and clubs; Owen clarifies that Executive is made up of 5 paid, elected positions, Council is made up of Executive members plus elected volunteer positions representing different groups, and clubs are separate and run by students
- Student asks if the student publication is active- it is inactive currently, but in the process of restarting, students can contact VP External for details

Student motions to change the name of the "Free Coffee" Publication if it is restarted, majority, motion passed

Reports (full reports at end of document)

Owen gives report

- Student asks about the outcome of the BOG meeting, work on Bylaws regarding restructuring SUNSCAD
- BOG will consider holding public meetings, and we will hold another General Meeting to ratify new Bylaws after working on them over the summer

Chris (Kalani reads from presentation)

- Some comments, questions from students after the 'Investigations & Findings' section of Chris' report
- Student thanks Executive for finding this information, notes that SUNSCAD is a nonprofit organization and should not have a surplus, money needs to be returned to students
- Student asks whether a decision has already been made regarding the remaining funds described in Chris' report, Owen clarifies that the I.D.E.A. fund was suggested by the Ombudsperson, but a decision has not been made yet
- Alexandra clarifies that Executive is currently working on returning the money to the best of our ability

Student motions that any money regardless of date, owed to a student or graduate, should be returned to them if possible, with the remaining money put into funds suggested by Chris/Ombudsperson, and that the Executive is mandated to create a communication to

students within the next 7 days that clarifies this, and make a decision based on their responses, Owen seconds, majority, motion passed

Student motions to create a meeting where this is discussed with Chris and the student body about whether or not to return all of the money (and to have this discussion within a short timeframe), another student seconds

Student motions to amend the main motion with the provision that every attempt should be made to return money to students who are owed, then further discussion can be had with Chris after this is done

Student rescinds motion and amendment regarding discussion with Chris after discussion amongst AGM attendees

Alexandra gives report

Mohammed gives report

Budget

- Student motions for the budget to be sent to all students when it is available, another student seconds, unanimous, motion passed

Executive/Council Ratifications

Kalani lists the newly elected Executives/Councilors:

President: Owen Skeen

VP Finance: Chelsea Stilwell

VP Internal: Jewell Tan

VP External: Mohammed Aadil Kallivalappil

Textiles Rep: Beah Learn

2SLGBTQPA+ Rep: Miranda Planetta

- Student motions to omnibus all ratifications into one vote, another student seconds
- Point of information on omnibus- this would still individually ratify each person, just all at once
- Alexandra is against this because if someone is against ratifying a person who is part of the Omnibus, they will be pressured not to vote

- Majority vote in favor of Omnibus ratification, Adia and Alexandra vote against, majority, motion passed
- Alexandra motions to separate the President position from the Omnibus motion, no-one seconds, amendment fails
- Student motions to ratify all positions included in the Omnibus, another student seconds, majority vote in favor, Alexandra votes against, majority, motion passed
- Student suggests listing vacant positions on Ratifications slide at the next AGM so students know what they can run for

Bylaws

- Bylaws are not ready to be voted on, the committee is active but hasn't held any meetings
- Alexandra will try to get enough people to hold an intro meeting within the next week, she is still Chair- students can contact her to join the committee
- Alexandra motions for the SUNSCAD 2024-25 bylaws to be passed under interim order, with the clarification that they have not been changed from the 2023-2024 versions, majority, motion passed
- Alexandra motions that the role of Resource Coordinator is delegated to Council to consider the position's removal from Bylaws until the new Bylaws are finalized and voted on within another General Meeting, majority, motion passed
- Owen will ask Jude Gerrard to review the Bylaws

Pigeon Press Picnic

- Ellen of Pigeon Press proposed holding a picnic on Monday, April 22 on the courtyard outside of Duke campus
- Requested funding for cakes, ice cream, and cutlery, and wages for a student designer
- Owen motions that we fund \$334.97 for the Pigeon Press Picnic, unanimous, motion passed

Gender-affirming care coverage

- A student brings up that GreenShield has expanded their gender-affirming care coverage within the last year
- Student motions that, if we don't have expanded gender-affirming care benefits, we get them in the upcoming plan, majority, motion passed

Announcements

- Some plans for graduating students to wear Palestinian solidarity patches/keffiyehs for Commencement

Owen motions to adjourn the meeting, unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:57 pm

Reports:

Owen Skeen (President)

- Represented SUNSCAD both provincially and nationally at National General meetings, Provincial Executive meetings, and a student-government roundtable
- Represented the interests of students in meetings with senior administration
- Assisted in the ongoing effort to revitalize the Pigeon Press
- Sat on the Board of Governors, and argued for Board of Governors meetings to be public for all students
- Assisted in the addition of a supply of safer sex products to the student lounge
- Assisted with the SUNSCAD letter-writing campaign to protest the 2024/25 NSCAD course offerings
- Participated in the formation of 8 new SUNSCAD Committees
- Assisted in the ongoing effort to restructure SUNSCAD

Chris Parsons (VP Finance)

Committees & other Activities May 2023 to April 2024

- Student representative attending meetings of: Board of Governors, Board of Governors Sub-committees: (Budget Advisory, Financial & Physical Resources, Senate Executive, Occupational Health & Safety, Honorary Degree Committee, Teaching & Learning), Ad hoc meeting with Chief Financial Officer, Chief of staff, BOG chair, Ombuds
- Events planning, including Fall & Winter orientation, etc.
- Advocating for students
- Attended meetings with student and Dean
- Academic and transfer credits – appeals with Dean of Students, Registrar & director of Academic Programs Registrar etc
- Initiated Letter writing campaign delivered to the NS Legislator in response to Budget cuts to Arts funding
- Assisted individual students with applications for provincial rent rebate & heating rebates
- Researched income tax rules for international students and domestic students
- Worked at student Foodbank

Investigations & Findings

- Fall 2023 to February 2024 – VP Academic, Alexandra Butu & VP Finance, Chris Parsons start enquiry relating to administrative and financial procedures of student Union operations
- Annual Financial Audits were replaced with Financial Reviews in 2016

- Accountants' letters of findings and recommendations were not shown to Executive members nor kept on file
- As of financial year-end April 30th, 2023, financial statements show an accumulated surplus of \$245,000
- Between 2006 & 2022, monies owed to students for Health Insurance opt-out refunds and UPass (transit pass) refunds never distributed to students
- Undistributed student refunds make up \$116,000 of surplus. These monies are to be earmarked as 'restricted cash' pending a financial audit followed by a process to return money to students. Approximately \$43,000 of these funds are from 2015 to 2021 and owed to both current and recently graduated students.
- The remaining \$73,000 for 2002 to 2014. A proposal to use these monies to establish SUNSCAD legacy donation/scholarship through the I.D.E.A. program specifically designed to support Mi'kmaw, African Nova Scotian and youth emerging from foster care. In addition, contribute to the materials fund and food support bursaries

Alexandra Butu (VP Academic)

- Advocated for: course descriptions that are easier to understand; campus dorms during entire time on the Board of Governors (brought up the idea and helped solidify it in these meetings); to have lower or to stagnate tuition rates; prices paid upfront in some of the more costly courses to be reduced; a wider variety of courses to be offered throughout each semester, and to have specific courses required to graduate throughout all the degrees be offered throughout the year (although the condition was that student interest would be a determining factor if these changes would hold); a Dean of Students who will respect, understand, include students, be willing to help all NSCAD students & be a reliable and trustworthy person; keeping the Foodbank open and running
- Stood in place of the Resource Coordinator to help hire, train and then support, to the best of my abilities, the CRO for the SUNSCAD 2024-2025 elections. [Context for transparency: I was the closest qualified to help as I was a past CRO myself, and had been previously trained by both the Resource coordinator and the provincial government of Ontario for previous elections.]
- Was in liaison with VP Finance in regards to a handful of financial issues that came up
- Supported and resolved: Master degree and academic-financial issues; class issues as they were brought forward.
- Attempting to help the updating of the SUNSCAD website (sadly, due due to issues with the pages, it is trickier than expected)
- Researched and compiled the past and ongoing issues with the SUNSCAD bylaws & how they relate to interferences with student union performance

- Transferred ownership of the NSCAD Discord with the help of the Discord server's previous owner, ensuring its existence
- Maintained email and online office hours and provided support to the other Executives as things came along
- Analyzed agenda items in both SUNSCAD Working and Executive meetings with critical and realistic mind with the student's benefit at the forefront; attempting to balance what I knew from my role in this position (about courses, technology, bylaws, previous precedents, limitations, etc...) to what can be done and what is expected
- Attended: BOG Finance and Physical resources meeting up until November 2023; Curriculum Committee; Dean of Students Hiring Committee (ongoing) ; Travel Subsidy Committee, Senate meetings, Senate Research Committee, all other Senate sub-committee meetings, attended SUNSCAD Executive meetings and gave input and voted on discussion items in the agendas
- Met with: the Dean (ex. issues regarding course selection, student emails of the letters of complaints, next steps, Self Service updates needed, etc...), the NSCAD Ombudsman, & the OSE and the OOB; Participated in OSE panel Q&A discussion
- Continued attending the Board of Governors meetings until December 2023 to keep SUNSCAD's seats so they were not removed

Mohammed Aadil Kallivalappil (VP External)

- Initiated relaunch of SUNSCAD BIPOC Collective, created social media handle as part of this, renamed to UNISUN
- Held open call for logo for BIPOC Collective
- Coordinated with Spring Maker's Market
- Worked with Courtney from Mindful Campus on Ramadan Feast

Prabnoor Kaur Bhatia (VP Internal)

- N/A