



Student Caucus of Osgoode Hall Law School

Minutes

7 June 2020 (12:00pm – 2:00pm)

Zoom (Online)

Present: Akshay Aurora (Chair), Chloé Duggal, Corey Fletcher, Rachael Glassman, Gaby Pellerin, Karin Kazakevich, Priyanka Sharma, Brittany Town, Nushrah Amod, Viktor Hohlacov, Arielle Masur, Faiza Tariq, Tomislav Milos

Note: The Caucus Executive suspended the usual rules of quorum and allowed for the meeting to take place online as well as in-person due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All members joining online or via phone were granted voting rights.

CALL TO ORDER (12:04pm)

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion: THAT the Agenda be approved. (Corey/Rachael) CARRIED

COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE

Akshay: Land acknowledgement

Akshay provided a recap of the email with Dean's re Osgoode moving online. Akshay has reached out to the Deans for further information and will circle back

Akshay: We have not received any further information from the Deans on this (online learning). When fielding questions from students, we should know that if a course is in person, this will be easily noted. If you cannot make the in-class requirement, there should be a flexible medium to make this course available to people who cannot make it. Just reiterate that it is flexible, and a remote methodology should exist always.

CLOSE DOOR/OFF RECORD DISCUSSION

Fall Outreach

Akshay: Traditionally we set up in Gowlings and we share office hours. This will not happen in the fall. This year caucus must push to become more.

Corey: Maybe combine with O-week to promote to field any questions.

Faiza: *Concurs with Corey*

Akshay: *Concurs with Corey and Faiza. Suggest that those on caucus who are on O-week executive to push the engagement of caucus.* Wherever we can get our faces out, it is integral that we get our faces out, especially for the ones coming in. Also, outside of the O-week leverage, use your current connections in law school, speak to your friends and keep engaging in getting feedback. We are also planning to do an upper year town hall so we will have this ability to engage with students this way

Akshay: L&L has an Instagram account. Chloe to speak on Saba's account

Chloe: Per last year, many agreed that caucus should have a separate Instagram account. Saba may have created an Instagram account. *Chloe to follow up to see whether an account exists.*

Akshay: If no account exists, then we should move to have an Instagram account set up. However, we have the issue of content. What sort of content should we bring in? We can even bring creative bios and introduce ourselves on this Instagram page.

Chloe: We can post all of the stuff introducing ourselves, to make sure that we are accessible. We can even make a template about the academic information. So we can have an academic blast but a very recognizable template. For example, we could provide the information on Cr/nCR and who to reach out to, if you have an issue.

Akshay: *Concur*

Faiza: We can have a post every week about what the caucus does. This would be in anticipation of the 1L elections.

Akshay: *Concurs*. Plus, we could include what we have discussed in the last week. This would be a weekly update on what's happening and don't necessarily have to be promises that we will produce weekly content. We also want to make student caucus to become more relevant, not boring, friendly, so that students can reach out to us. The goal is to make caucus more accessible and less prude.

Brittany: Another avenue of student engagement. Something that the kids are doing is going on Instagram live and fielding questions this way. Perhaps we can adopt this mechanism and open up Instagram live as a platform to have questions this way.

Nushrah: *Provided supporting technical effects on how to set up question on the Instagram live and discussion forum.*

Arielle and Faiza volunteer to sort this out

Rachael: *Provided insight that there may not be a lot of things to post to a caucus specific Instagram page.* Suggest that we may not need to have a separate insta-page and perhaps combine the two halves of government

Akshay: Thank you for this. This is a key consideration

Brittany: *Agrees and understands Rachael's point.* However, because we are fully online, the number of postings this semester should be higher than last year. So, thinking about both parts of student government may require a lot of coordination.

Chloe: I really appreciate the offer Rachael. *Chloe concurs with Brittany and stresses the point that we are not going to have that physical point of contact we really should differentiate the roles within student governments.*

Viktor: *Concurs*

Karin: *Brings up the issue that she would love to bring up that the main point should be collaboration.* Our message should not be why are they separate but that there is a connection piece. Generally, this message is stronger if we are communicating and collaborating. No matter what we are doing going forward – the goal should be working as a team.

Akshay: Even if we do have a separate Instagram account there has to be constant communication between Rachael and anyone else on L&L

Arielle: I recognize that we can reach a large amount of the students via Instagram. But we need to ensure that we have to reach out more than Instagram.

Akshay: *Concurs.* We are even looking into overhauling the Facebook page and making this more useful. We also have our massive email mail out list. No matter what publication we have, we will make sure that we go out through all mediums

Straw Poll: Are we in favour of a separate Instagram account for SC?

Unanimous approval

Motion: Move to set up a separate Instagram account for SC for the purpose of reaching students during the online semester and to continue beyond this? (Akshay/Brittany) CARRIED

Akshay: This is not to be two separate Instagram accounts and that there is constant coordination

Statement of Solidarity

Akshay: Caucus has not put out a statement in solidarity re the Anti-Black racism at hand The statement is contained on page 10 of the agenda. Please have a look now

Pri: We should also add that we support BLSA and their report.

Corey: *Concurs and explains what the BLSA report is.*

Faiza: We should also add that we are committed to supporting all races.

Pri: We need to ensure that we don't take away from our solidarity with Black Lives.

Rachel: L&L released their statement last week. There was backlash from the Osgoode community who did not appreciate that we equated the death from Regis to police brutality. We had to remove some of the comments from our online media platform. Be aware that certain members of the community may not appreciate that, and we should have a strategy in place to handle any backlash.

Karin: *Concurs*

Pri: Concurs we also had this issue on the OUTLAWS page. We need to make sure that this doesn't take away from our ability to engage with this discussion. A strategy in place is to ensure that what we are actually standing in solidarity. For example, we can delete the comments and say this is not a place for discussion, but should not censor people.

Nushrah: *Concurs*

Corey: I will double back with Rachel to check to see what has caused contention with the L&L letter. I will add in an action item on the letter in support of the BLSA Report.

Akshay: Perfect

Chloe: Perhaps we make the report a little bit more public so that it is accessible.

Karin: *Concurs and spoke to the fact that L&L will look into making it public here.*

Nushrah: I will also look into this and get the BLSA report for all of you

Corey: We should ensure that this is a concerted approach from everyone on Caucus. So although a few of us has drafted this, we need to ensure that everyone is on-board with what it says. SC does not tolerate anti-black racism and when you are online, you represent SC.

Tomi: Just to clarify, are we allowing comments or are we not allowing people to comment?

Akshay: I think we should post and not turn off the comments. This is a little like censorship.

Brittany: As student caucus we are putting out the statement, however if anyone needs further resources or training. I can show you where they are.

Akshay: Brittany please post these on the slack.

Akshay: We have surplus in the budget and we thought we might use some of it to be donated to one of the ongoing go-fund me campaigns.

Rachel: Taking money that students have been required to pay to student government may not be meant to be put towards external causes.

Akshay: I appreciate this background but if this is coming to a student levy, are there any objections?

Karin: *Governance point.* If the club has a bank account, then the surplus gets brought over. But if there is a line action, then this doesn't. SC doesn't have a bank account.

Akshay & Corey: *In discussion with Bobby and with prior emails for L&L it appears that we have this extra cashflow.*

Chloe: In taking into consideration what Rachel said. If this is the case, perhaps we should engage in student programming that allows the money to be spent this way. For example, we could use the money into anti-oppression training.

Karin: We could potentially use the money this way to avoid any overstepping of mandates.

Corey: Anti-oppression training for who?

Karin/Chloe: For the incoming 1ls

Gaby: *Spoke to the fact that she knows how to go about the anti-oppression training. This can be accessed through York.*

Akshay: *Inquired into the logistics of the training.*

Gaby: I will look into this and circle back.

Motion: Corey will send out the statement of solidarity after including amendments by adding the BLSA report and removing the sections regarding donations (Corey/Akshay) CARRIED

Faiza: This can also be posted on our Instagram.

Course Selection

Akshay: We had the discussion at the L&L meeting. Last year SC created a course selection sheet. Course selection is a very painful process. When myOsgoode courses and tables are updated to match the Covid19 restrictions. Perhaps we can have admin update the methodology of how to pick courses. This was all discussed at the L&L meeting. It would also be helpful to note feedback from students about the courses from other students. Akshay poses question: if we have to create this database with L&L thoughts.

Karin: Offering opinions in not a rate-my-prof style. Similar to clinics or intentions, we have gathered people would make themselves available to be reached out.

Akshay: There will be a disclaimer about the advice that we are giving.

Rachael: *Likes the idea of Osgoode taking over the current iteration of the excel sheet.* One thing that is difficult is having like seven pages open to do course selection. This could be done in a lot better job. York also has a schedule builder. There is no way on the Osgoode site that has this available. It is really helpful.

Akshay: Other schools do have mechanisms that tell you if your grade and course selections satisfy your requirements. Can we look into if anyone is on Osgoode Ovation/Innovation — this should be Osgoode position.

Chloe: I will look into it.

Karin: *Information is referenced into the Student Caucus slack channel.*

Akshay: If Osgoode does not take this on can we have someone to assist on this team? *Chloe to send an email Osgoode Digital Innovation to see if they are willing to take this on.*

Faiza: The online slack referenced above is missing the Indigenous requirement.

Akshay: *Concurs.* Good catch.

Faiza: The document should have the schedule builder, requirements and other pertinent information.

Vice Chair Report

Chloe: We have two students on academic standing committee, and they are doing well. For APPC – reached out to FTR but has not heard back. *Chloe will reach out to staff APPC*

Letter to Board of Governors

Chloe: Faculty council passed a motion on advocating to lower the tuition for next year. Faculty has agreed to advocate on this front, but faculty council are not voting member on the BofG. We have since decided to write a letter to consider this request on compassionate grounds. We want to pass this on. The meeting is on June 23. There are 2 York students on the BofG and I will reach out to connect with them.

Akshay: This will be a google doc that is accessible for everyone to see the letter. We should approach the letter to the BofG saying that this motion has already been approved. Sort of by saying "Please keep Osgoode accountable".

Tomi: Has there any discussion on Osgoode housing lowering their rent?

Akshay: Has not heard anything of the sort. I will look into whether this is Osgoode Specific or York specific

Gaby: When you look into housing, can you look into the other York residence.

Pride Month Recognition

Corey Fletcher: *Recognition of pride month.* This is an important time. With all of the atrocities going on in the world, it is important to recognize the love that the world has to offer and to continue to be an ally.

New Agenda Item: Senators attending meetings

Akshay: Having student senators attend meetings. Jordan Crocker had suggested that senators attend the meeting as ex oficio members. This would mean that they attend as non-voting members and would not be mandated. *Akshay goes into detail of the breakdown of the role of Student senators.*

Corey: perhaps we could have special senate meetings, where they attend when they are most needed? It might be helpful to have the senator sit in on some of our meetings. We should exercise our ability to request them.

Akshay: *Concurs*

Pri: Perhaps we should send them our agenda item and let them decide whether or not they want to join the meeting to speak on the topic.

Akshay: I am hesitant, not sure if we want a free for all. There is a distinction between the two positions.

Pri: So would the senators be able to attend and would we have in camera sessions where we do not wish them to attend?

Corey/Akshay: Discuss the logistics of in-camera meetings and how that would work.

Pri: *Notes that this is her preference. To have the senators attend.*

--- Chloe has left the meeting — Virtual issues

Corey to respond to Jordan's email and clear it with Akshay

Motion: Motion of conclude the June 7 student Caucus Meeting (Corey/Akshay) *CARRIED*