



Student Caucus of Osgoode Hall Law School

Minutes

16 September 2020 (12:30pm – 2:30pm)

Zoom (Online)

Present: Akshay Aurora (Chair), Chloé Duggal, Corey Fletcher, Gaby Pellerin, Karin Kazakevich, Priyanka Sharma, Brittany Town, Nushrah Amod, Viktor Hohlacov, 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 (12:34pm)

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

Chair's Remarks & Items – General

Akshay: *Land acknowledgement.*

As this meeting is virtual and we are not all gathered in the same space, I recognize that this land acknowledgment might not be for the territory that you are currently on. We ask that if this is the case, you take the responsibility to acknowledge the traditional territory you are on and the current treaty holders. As a member of the York University (Osgoode) community, I recognize that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships with the territories upon which York University campuses are located that precede the establishment of York University. York University (Osgoode Hall Law School) acknowledges its presence on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Nations. The area known as Tkaronto has been care taken by the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Huron-Wendat. It is now home to many First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities. We acknowledge the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region.

We should also bring forward a fun fact about the land that they are on for each caucus meeting.

I started running for fun and noticed a sign of the Huron-Wendat People. I kept running and the park sign then talked about how the trail was on this land because of a lot of artifacts that were found here. As we know about Toronto we think about it in the context of European land divides but we forget that the divides are not always like this. The land lines have a much deeper history. I now run on these trails that have a much deeper history and that intersect with many Indigenous regions and history

Senators Introduction

Akshay: Invites Jordan and Jina to speak

Jordan: Hey everyone, I recognize most of you. I am the senior Osgoode senator and was on Caucus last year with Corey's role. I also sit on L&L and Outlaws and FGN and Osgoode Hall Law Journal

Jina: Hi everyone, I am Jina and I know almost everyone here and have interacted with y'all. I am a second year at Osgoode and am involved in FGN, Journal, Obiter and many clubs. We just

wanted to express how excited we are to create an opportunity to consolidate and

Corey: Thank you for the introduction, did you want to briefly talk about your role for those who are new?

Jordan: Senators are elected in 1L for 2 terms and they sit on the York senate. Basically, we establish the communication from FC and Osgoode to the senate. This year it is important because of covid19 and the senate is doing a lot to legislate. Usually admin is pretty quick, but we share the info with you all. One example is that we sit on awards committees, last year Janet Walker won an award, which we fought for pretty hard. Sometimes there are some "anti-Osgoode" sentiments at the senate at large so our advocacy piece is very important there.

Jina: We also have a petition going about the installment for the crosswalk at Passy Road. The work that Jordan and I are doing is to get students involved. We are asking for the city of Toronto specifically councilor Anthony to help us get a crosswalk installed for a safer crosswalk. Right now, the main intersection is quite a ways away and in reality it is not how the students actually use the space. So if anyone wants to take this on to share this, letting people know about this and what initiatives are happening – that would be great.

Corey: Thank you, I will circulate their emails if anyone needs to reach out to them. For now, I will pass it back over to Akshay.

Akshay: Any meetings yet?

Jordan: No, and I haven't gotten any agenda packages yet.

Akshay: We also have a member of the public here today Leanne

Chair's Remarks & Items – Continued

Akshay: I have one really good thing that happened today re the FC meeting on Monday. At the end of the meeting, I brought up the issue of BLSA being involved in the hiring of the candidate. I received formal confirmation from Prof Tucker (head of the FRC) to make sure that this will happen. I have reached out to BLSA, to have them figure out how this should be done. I don't want to speak for BLSA, it makes more sense for them to have those conversations toge : .

As you recall on Monday, there was hesitation and I am glad that they reached out to me saying they do want BLSA on this. That's a great development from Monday's FC. I was a little uneasy about not making the promise, but I am happy they came back.

I would like to talk about the Tuition Working group and will move into closed camera portion

CLOSED DOOR

Administrative Matters – 1L/ 1L Elections

Akshay: The other thing I want to talk about is this idea from L&L. 1L rep mentorship. As you know there are 1L reps and my idea is based on when I was a 1L on caucus I didn't know who to go to, and I don't want this to happen with the incoming 1L. So, I was planning if the 4 returning people would be willing to get a randomly assigned 1L and if anyone has any thoughts. So Pri, Chloe and Gaby. What do you think?

Gaby: I think it's a great idea, I would definitely want to do that. It can be daunting to navigate the Osgoode institution; it can be a mind-boggling task to take on a SC role. Especially right now with everything being online, it's not like you can go to someone's office and talk to them so I think it's a great idea.

Akshay: That sounds great, Pri, Chloe any thoughts

Pri: I have a lot on my plate, but I would still love to do this

Akshay: Yea, I don't want to overburden anyone, but if you could be a go to person that would be great. Gaby, could you take it on to see who the next 1Ls are and split them among us

Gaby: Yes I can do that.

Akshay: By tomorrow we will know who they are and you (Gaby) can split them. If there are connections then please feel free to match them there.

I want to do a proper orientation for the 1Ls – it will have to be next week, before they sit. Maybe 30 minutes, here's what you do, what we do, and what you can do as a 1L. This would be so that we can prime them before committees start

Chloe: Orientation before general committee appointments – this was going to start next week.

Akshay: we could start earlier next week with the 1Ls

Chloe: I was thinking of doing a 1 on 1 discussion with everyone else. But with timelines wise it is not feasible. It may be helpful for people who were not on SC to move forward about how we operate

FC Debrief

Akshay: Speaking on FC, I want to appreciate everyone. This was our first meeting and we are all well-articulated. Great job everyone and thank you for being outspoken as you are. Not every FC meeting goes this way. Even in those situations – actively listen and say something if it will contribute to the discussion. This was similar to my 1L, I was frightened until someone said something about international students. But always be conscious about contentious meetings There are meetings where we will need to be more strategic to have a specific strong message come across. For this FC meeting, everyone did a great job. I am really impressed with everyone

Akshay: This ties in with Corey's motions. We need to be more intune with what the upper years are doing. The 1Ls do this. Osgoode starts to look at us as an amalgam as just upper years. But we are different, and we have distinct considerations. I want to get our 2L and 3L members have at least one town hall, so they know we are soliciting feedback from everyone

Karin: I want to push for L&L rep on the town hall. L&L would like to be on this idea. It would be great.

Akshay: I was thinking of the same way that we did 1Ls, where we have the SC rep and then the L&L rep. I want to hear your thoughts. I know it is adding to your plate but I think it is integral that we stay in touch with the student body in some way. I am not personally in favour of doing office horse, because I don't see anyone showing up. I just want a more formalized way for being in touch with people. What do you all think they didn't know that there was an issue and they are discussing it with Gus to see what courses are affected and to check back with the professors. This has to do with the additional time. If there is a specific prof, I would even say go to Gus himself

Library – the library space is closed as of now, and there was an application to use the space, but that was rejected due to logistical issues. Issues with the card reader and what not. They are trying to rejig it, but it doesn't seem like it is happening anytime soon

Printer – even if the library is opening, they can't sanitize the printers, so it would not be happening is my guess.

Winter Semester – any hope of anything opening up? They said their own internal staff is not prepared right now. So after sept 21st – they said they will request a few classes to be in person. Right now, they are looking at the seminars. No promises on that right now. Pretty sad updates.

They also asked for an idea to tackle this particular issue. If a student doesn't have an accommodation to get lecture recordings and they miss a class, typically you can ask your friend, but this doesn't work right. We said, we would look into it.

Corey: can we also ask if they will release the first two weeks of lectures recordings for transfer students

Akshay: Our response can't be recordings and it sounds like a Deans scribe thing, but we can do this. Also, when questions come to you about a professor, direct it to Gus. But if it is a student issue you bring it to Karen Drake. Come to me as well, but if you need an urgent issue go to them. Thanks for filing in for me Karin.

Karin: If anyone has any idea or solutions that we can potentially bring up, please let me know

Vice-Chairs Remarks & Items – General

Chloé: All of you would have received your email about the committee appointments. I have reached out to the committee chairs and have sent you emails. If you have any conflicts, you have to let me know. Is everyone ok with having a meeting next week?

Pri: Do we wanna choose a date?

Chloé: I was going to send out a poll to this effect. The students at large applications are going out tonight.

Akshay: If anyone has questions about applying. Direct them to Chloe. The only committee we have dates for is admissions. Be confident to say if the dates don't work.

Jordan: Sending out the applications tonight, but don't the 1Ls have to be placed on the positions they want?

Chloe: Many faculty members have reached out re being concerned because there are no students on the committees. We are going to do this immediately and then work with the 1Ls to accomplish our mandate.

Akshay: Thank you for giving us insights from last year's process

Director of Communications – Update on Social Media Presence

Corey: the next thing is the meeting minutes, before we post them, they have to be approved. I couldn't post the last ones because they have to be approved, but can we approve them?

Motion: All in favour of approving the minutes ? (Motion Carried Unanimously)

Also shout out to Pri, for reading the minutes

To that effect I also will be asking people to help out taking the minutes, because You all talk really fast.

The next thing I would like to talk about is a motion that I am bringing forward.

Corey: Shares Motion to Expand the Role of Year Representatives

Corey: Basically, this is a motion to help the year reps get involved more especially during an online semester. There is a minor change to the version that was sent out – to correct a copy paste error. The point of the motion is that I would like the year reps to purposefully go out to connect with leaders in the Osgoode community to collect feedback and engage with the student population. There may be students who are no part of the mainstream Osgoode community – it is important to connect with these people. Prior to the meetings it would be great to see the year reps to connect and disseminate information

The part that is more of an obligation, is because we are to be involved in everything that is going on. So, each year group should speak and give the basic rundown of what is going on. I would prefer if this rotated so we don't have the same person speaking at every meeting on behalf of the year reps

Akshay: I will be candid; I would prefer that this is non-executive year representatives

Corey: *made the changes to reflect non-exec members*

Chloe: I appreciate the sentiment, these are the obligations that we have for ourselves going in, so I am glad to see this. Happy to see that Corey (and Brittany) took the initiative to formalize this.

Akshay: To clarify, whenever you do go out to solicit, be careful that you are not making promises that need to be approved – “we will get this done language” bring it to SC so that we can get view points from everyone about this. This will help you bring back better advice to the students that you are reaching out to

Chloe: Akshay, Corey and I are happy to work with you. We know that navigating at Osgoode is hard, by all means come to us if you feel like you do not know what to do. I appreciate the sentiment of the motion and I like the updates and the fact that we will have a formalized process

Corey: I know L&I created a list of all the clubs so the year reps can reach out, this is meant to help you do the job (in a more robust way). Questions/comments?

Gaby: I have a question, logically. I am thinking about how the first initial messages will come out.

Brittany: *explains a few options*

Corey: we didn't want to make it so prescriptive, as long as you are bringing up the concerns and talking to people

Akshay: the logistics of this are something I will leave to you – we would cyclically post in the years to get the feedback and to deliver updates. This was really effective last year.

Karin: I would be mindful about what their issues are and the VP external and be mindful of what they are telling you. There are some concerns coming from L&L on this, so I am not opposed but I am going to abstain

Akshay: I think logistics are something that can be worked out.

Brittany: I completely respect the work that L&L does, and I think we see that as separate from the point of this motion. As Corey stated, the spirit behind this is so that reps can have a better temperature read on the needs and concerns of students. We don't have the ability to be in hallways to have those face to face conversations. SC members sit on very important committees and it's important that they understand first-hand the needs of the student body especially when it comes to diverse perspectives – so equity seeking groups is a great way to stay informed and understand what the community at Osgoode would like to see.

Pri: process wise, can we have a group chat, excel sheet for the non-exec year reps and sign up for our clubs that we can communicate with or sit on. I'm really excited that this is streamlined and more formalized process. We can do this offline on slack.

Akshay: All in favour of approving the Motion to Expand the Role of Year Representatives?
Corey/Brittany) CARRIED – Karin Abstaining; all in-favour

New Business

Corey: We have funds, we still need to find a way to use them

Akshay: yes, they are there

Corey: Ok if anyone has any suggestions – feel free to raise this or message me.

Akshay: Someone brought this up to us, but this is a Nushrah issue. Someone wanted to find a method of collating diversity resources that the equity seeking clubs found were relevant and to source them into one area, because no one goes to the website.

Karin: I don't think it makes any sense to make something new, we can promote something, but our website is doing well. I would not suggest making a new website.

Akshay: I think that the person was asking more that we push people to go to this website once all the resources are collected

Corey: if they want a centralized thing, a link to L&L on e-class?

Nushrah: We recently made an equity page on the website. We started working mid-summer and we started working on the website. I will reach out again and add to that. A lot of it is focused on the BLM website. It is not necessary to have another platform to use.

Akshay: I will leave this to you.

Brittany: Karen Drake has been a really great contact and support. I am sure Karen Drake can push this

Akshay: I hope everyone knows about her updates page

Gaby: My question had to do with the L&L page. I'm on the L&L website now and I'm not seeing the resources yet

Nushrah: It has not been published to the website as yet. I was just recommending that it be published.

Akshay: Ok, this brings a close to the meeting.

Motion: Motion to conclude the September 16th Student Caucus Meeting? (Corey/Akshay)
CARRIED

Osgoode Hall Law School of York University

Meeting of Student Caucus 16 September 2020

Notice of Motion

Moved by Corey Fletcher seconded by, Brittany Town.

FINALIZED MOTION READS:

WHEREAS, the 2020 Fall and 2021 Winter semesters are almost exclusively online;

WHEREAS, members of the student body at large have expressed a disconnect between them and Student Caucus; and

WHEREAS, Year Representatives are expected to solicit and represent the views of their constituents and take leadership on issues of import to their constituents. Year Representatives are expected to carefully consider and weigh all issues that come before the caucus, to voice the opinions of their constituents and to vote, advocate, and conduct themselves in the best interests of Students.

Let it be moved that in acting beyond the normal course of classroom discussions, non-exec Year Representatives shall purposively reach out to constituents within their respective years, within equity seeking groups, clubs and other Osgoode communities. It is further moved that prior to every Student Caucus Meeting, non-exec Year Representatives will discuss and share the general consensus, attitudes, and concerns of their respective years between one another. Unless approved by the Student Caucus Executive, one non-exec Year Representative from each year shall speak at Student Caucus Meetings to provide insights, clarity and updates regarding their Year (**1L, 2L and 3L Updates**).