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Student Caucus of Osgoode Hall Law School

# Minutes

25 November 2020 (12:30pm – 2:30pm)

Zoom (Online)

**Present:** Akshay Aurora (Chair), Chloé Duggal, Corey Fletcher, Rachael Glassman, Karin Kazakevich, Nushrah Amod, Arielle Masur, Tomislav Milos, Aya Fahmi, Jaylene Olson, Herman Wong, Annie Hu

*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** (12:38pm)

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

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

## COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE

### 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 long standing 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.*

Tomi: My background is in english literature so I will use this. Eden Robinson – member of the first Nations community and her work draws on her autobiographical history. *Discussed Monkey Beach, Tickster trilogy that has now been turned into a show on CBC.*

### Dean's Updates

#### Tuition Working Group

Akshay: Had a meeting on Monday; dean is back. The chair of the working group has given the Dean about our tuition updates. We are still waiting to hear back. There should be something rolled out in the new year. It should be pretty pain free. Little to know info at this point – just that something is happening. Karin and I will meet with Hutchinson

### Online Survey

Akshay: The survey that was sent out has been fairly impactful on faculty. Was sent to the APPC. They have been receptive to it and that is why the email was sent out on Monday in recognition of the difficulties. Something to focus on for the upcoming term is to be more proactive rather than reactive. We have come to these realizations fairly late. We are still keeping a tab, but it is also for the admin to do something. There are going to be multiple changes, so I have been promised.

### **Pushing the Term Back**

Akshay: Here is some info about the informal poll. A lot of other schools are pushing the terms by a week (Christmas break). There are a lot of considerations – but we just wanted to get an idea with the logistics about it. Brittany has a call with AD Drake and will update following that.

### **Exam Related Info**

Akshay: Direct persons to Nancy Sperling – if you get really complicated Examsoft related questions. So use the resources you have at your disposal

Karin: Mya is having a meeting today, to talk about the MH points. Mya is also getting many accommodations requests. We have also heard that some people want exams push back – but we don't really want to advocate on this because we don't know what all the students want.

The faculty really wanna see the raw responses from the feedback. Akshay did bring up the grades issues – but there is too much of a divided opinion. This is a difficult issue, but it is our responsibility to at least say we advocated. This is not very satisfactory but we did bring this up

Akshay: Has been told that if you have a covid related accommodation you do not have to submit paperwork. If you need a deferral, etc. Lenient on covid-induced issues, still looking for docs for other things.

### **Exams – when on the West Coast**

Have been receiving questions about people in other time zones and the time when they can write their exams. Profs were given an option to make it flexible but some of them have chosen

not to and that just means that you have to write it then. But if you need an accommodation related to timing, then reach out to Mya and an accommodation could be possible

## **LSO Application**

Akshay: There is no in person commission – so Osgoode is paying for it.

## **Library Space**

Akshay: They are really trying to get space for us and have people be able to write exams in Osgoode. So stay tuned about what Osgoode can do, but covid related.

## **Other**

Akshay: This year is very individualized to have a blanket decision about grades and anything.

## **Legal & Lit Updates**

## **Mental Health**

Nushrah: MH packages were very well received. People liked that we shared the positive and the transparency of MH in Osgoode. Something we talked about in L&L meeting – was how to keep the momentum going forward. This is our next step.

Akshay: On issue of MH, Mya talked about an adhoc committee for community engagement at osgoode.

Rachael: Just to follow up in the social media responses – it was overwhelmingly positive. There was one negative comment directed at the admin. It was contemplated that this is the only thing that Osgoode has done and this individual thought this was in response to the cries for help

Karin: Some more internal things going on, no end of the year pub nights but some small things happening in lieu of that. Figuring out how to support clubs moving forward, clubs are still trying and hosting panels. Winter budgets for clubs are coming out soon. If you are a part of clubs, look at how other clubs are operating right now.

Karin: 2L informal formal and law prom are not being planned and will not be done until there is a sense that they can actually happen.

### **Vice-Chair's Remarks & Items**

Chloe: No updates.

### **FRC Meeting with Business Law Appointment**

Chloe: has had a lot of FRC meetings for the business law candidate. Impressive candidates.

Corey : Admissions committee on Friday, first time to start looking at applications.

Akshay: One question to pose to admin is excessive amounts of applicants because people deferred from last year.

### **FRC Meeting**

Tomi: has had faculty appointment committee meetings, they have given lectures and they have so far been going well.

Rachael: I def went to the seminars last year and spoke to the potential candidates

### **APPC Meeting**

Akshay: APPC meeting, talked about the survey

Brittany: Main points were at the APPC: ELGC anti-Black Racism Module, discussed a draft survey that will be sent to the 1ls in response to the module; Revised the language of the Indigenous and Aboriginal Law requirement for transfer students; reviewed academic rules for ELGC and it is to be continued

Nushrah: Any update on when the equality committee should meet. Arielle and I havent gotten updates.

Chloe: It appears that committees this year are delayed in meeting, no clarity on when the first meeting is happening for the Equality Committee.

Academic Standing Committee

Rachael: Might be helpful to put out what has changed because of Covid.

Jaylene: *to reach out Phillip Gerard to see how we can disseminate information out to make this more accessible to students*

## **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS**

Corey: Discussed the release of an Anti-Black Racism Solidarity statement written by Nushrah and Chloe and myself, in response to BLSA's Statement and the ongoing event around Ontario and other universities

Corey: Brittany and I did an amazing 1L instagram chat re Examsoft. We received a lot of positive feedback and the 1Ls loved it

## **1<sup>st</sup> Year Update**

### **Section A**

Annie: Have had town hall since last meeting. Did not have a big turnout, but messages have been ongoing. Concern about examsoft but that was also before the IG live took place, I heard good feedback from that session. Felt like that session could have been more accessible if on a different platform. They also wanted to hear about it from Admin. It is nice to hear from 3Ls but still. We are still interested in having an o-week version in person once that is a possibility. Some concerns around class structure and assignments, exams, and how certain classes have been delivered. These concerns are ongoing and *Annie is working on them.*

Akshay: This reminds me about something that came up. Deans and profs thinks that more works keeps people engaged and this is not working

### **Section B**

Aya: Also had town hall since the last meeting. We have been getting a lot of emails since the start of the term. This needs to be consolidated. General questions about examsoft and the usual suspect professors. Just the general venting of how online school sucks

Akshay:

## **Section C**

Jaylene: Student reached out with a concern about cheating during examsoft and how Osgoode deals with this. Interested to know your thoughts/the conversations that happened about this when exams were done virtually for the first time.

Akshay: This is a Mya concern, but I can assure you that 3Ls cannot help you. But there are ways to check in the background about cheating. They do however just assume there should be no cheating

## **Section D**

Herman: Things have settled down. People are busy. No negative feedback since the townhall

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Year Update**

Arielle: no updates.

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Year Update**

Corey: mixed messages from the LSO about whether you can submit an application in person.

Chloe: Do we need to bring up issues about deferral especially with people in Passy.

Akshay: There will be an email from Mya and I have made it an important feature that it should be entirely clear.

More General 3L Updates

Brittany: received good feedback about the Instagram live session. Page from admin about exam info also helped the murmurs. Me and a few other students have daily zoom meetings with zoom in the background. Perhaps this is an idea that Osgoode can do.

## NEW BUSINESS

Akshay: Let's chat about pushing the start of the semester back

Chloe: Will this push back our grades, because this could affect the recruit ?

Akshay: No, this will only push back our summer grades

Brittany: Winter grades being impacted would ultimately depend on how it rolls out.

Akshay: This would also affect the reading week. 1st years would not get a reading week and one week off.

Brittany: From what I have seen in other schools, they also keep a reading week but I have a meeting with associate Dean Drake to see how this would affect.

Rachael/Tomi: Prefer the reading week be pushed back. Worried about professors cramming in too much work

Corey: knows public school is being pushed back

Brittany: McMaster, Waterloo, Laurier from the universities perspective it was just about giving people a break.

Akshay: The start of school might be linked to union agreements

Karin: They should be able to do it.

*BACK AND FORTH DISCUSSIONS ON THE PROS AND CONS – purely speculative.*

**Motion: Motion to conclude the November 25<sup>th</sup> Student Caucus Meeting (Akshay/Tomi)**

***CARRIED***