**Student Representative Assembly Meeting 20M**

**Sunday, January 24, 2021 at 5:00pm**

**Remote Meeting, Microsoft Teams**

**This meeting was done remotely through Microsoft Teams, due to the unusual circumstance laid out by the response to COVID-19.**

**Called to Order at 5:05pm**

**CALL OF THE ROLL**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Present:** | Aminaei, Anderson, Au-Yeung, Baig, Birch, Chelverajah, Chopra, Da-Re, Del Castillo, Della-Vedova, Dixit, Fraser, Jones, Naik, Noble, Samson, Sariaslani, Seymour, Singh, Stathoukos, Tsai, Tse, Wang |
| **Absent Excused:**  |  |
| **Absent:** | Bagtasos, Koscak, Nakua |
| **Late:**  | Chui, Egbeyemi, Mesic, Violin |
| **Others Present:**  | Chen Liu (AVP (Finance)), Hasnain Khan (AVP (PFA)), V. Scott (Recording Secretary) |
| **Chair:** | Rhea Jangra  |

**Territory Recognition**

* The SRA would like to recognize today that we are situated on traditional Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe territories through the ‘Dish with One Spoon Wampum Treaty’.

**Adoption of Agenda**

**Moved** by Tse, **seconded** by Mesic that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as presented.

**Amendment**

**Moved** by Singh, **seconded** by Fraser to add Hong Kong Solidarity Statement to Business.

* Singh stated that they circulated everything earlier today. They explained that it was brought to their attention by their constituents and felt that discussion would help further human rights.

**Vote on Amendment**

**Motion Passes by General Consent**

**Amendment**

**Moved** by Egbeyemi, **seconded** by Fraser that the agenda be amended to include the following motion under Business: **Moved** by Egbeyemi, **seconded** by Violin that the Assembly move into Committee of the Whole to discuss a waitlist at McMaster.

* Egbeyemi stated that they would like for this to be added to have a discussion.

**Vote on Amendment**

**Motion Passes by General Consent**

**Vote to Adopt**

**Motion Passes by General Consent**

**Adopt Minutes**

**Moved** by Dhindsa, **seconded** by Noble to adopt the minutes from SRA meeting 20L – January 10, 2021, as circulated.

**Motion Passes by General Consent**

**Announcements from the Chair**

* The Chair reminded Assembly members to mute their mics when they are not speaking, and to please turn on their camera when they are speaking. The Chair stated that nominations for MSU Awards are now open and asked the Assembly to please promote to their constituents.

**Report Period**

**1. Health Sciences Caucus – Samson presented**

* Samson summarized the report.

**2. Humanities Caucus – report circulated**

* Birch summarized the report.

**3. Kinesiology Caucus – Violin presented**

* Violin summarized the report.

**Questions**

* Noble stated that they were happy to help if anyone else wants to do anything training related.

**4. Provincial and Federal Affairs Committee – report not circulated**

* Khan stated that Anti-Racism month was a great success and that everything is on the MSU Advocacy page. They reported that OUSA General Assembly delegation hiring will be happening soon. Khan stated that they will be working with the BC Federation of Students and UCRU for a knock-out campaign.

**5. Finance Committee – Chen Liu presented**

* Chen summarized the report.

**6. Executive Board – Noble presented**

* Noble summarized the report.

**7. Vice-President (Education) – Tse presented**

* Tse summarized the report.

**8. Federal Lobby Week – Tse presented**

* Tse summarized the report.

**Information Period**

* Da-Ré stated that the general purpose of the focus group that was mentioned in Tse’s report was two-fold. They explained that it was for the MSU and McMaster leadership teams to create a due diligence process and to put out resources across campus, as well as making sure they’re working towards the same goals. Da-Ré stated that the second purpose was for information to give to the public on getting rid of barriers with respect to getting involved across campus. They explained that themselves and Tse will be running the groups in February and that there will be one group for each Faculty. Da-Ré added that at the end of the groups, all of the information will be put into a public document for access.

**Question Period**

* No questions were asked.

**Business**

**1. Bylaw 12 – First Year Council**

**Moved** by Noble, **seconded** by Fraser that the Assembly approve the changes to Bylaw 12 – First Year Council, as circulated.

* Noble went over the memo with the Assembly.
* Da-Ré stated that they supported the changes to the Bylaw and that it would be easier for FYC to come to the President to ask questions.

**Vote on Motion**

**Motion Passes by General Consent**

**2. Open one Executive Board Seat**

**Moved** by Da-Ré, **seconded** by Fraser that the Assembly open one (1) seat on the Executive Board.

* Da-Ré stated that meetings are 9:30-11:30am on Thursdays.
* Noble stated that apart from the early meeting time, Executive Board was interesting as members get to learn about the inner workings of the MSU.

**Vote on Motion**

**Motion Passes by General Consent**

**Nominations**

* Fraser nominated themself.

**3. Close one Executive Board Seat**

**Moved** by Da-Ré, **seconded** by Au-Yeung that the Assembly close one (1) seat on the Executive Board.

* Da-Ré stated that this was an appropriate time to close the seat.
* Noble stated that anyone can be an observer.

**Vote on Motion**

**Motion Passes by General Consent**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Candidate** | **Confidence** | **No Confidence** |
| Fraser | 22 | 0 |
| Spoiled | 0 |  |
| Abstained | 0 |  |

* Fraser was elected to the Executive Board with confidence.

**4. Hong Kong Solidarity Statement**

**Moved** by Singh, **seconded** by Fraser that the following statement be adopted:

***Whereas*** the Student Representative Assembly (SRA) acknowledges the previously adopted statement from SRA 19L on November 17, 2019, *In Solidarity of Hong Kong Student Protesters;*

***Whereas*** *The* [*National Security Law*](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-52765838) *(NSL) imposed upon Hong Kong by the Chinese government aims to constrain dissent, free speech and basic human rights in Hong Kong and* [*around the world*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/31/china-hong-kong-security-law-american-citizen-exiles) *by threatening life imprisonment for vaguely defined charges such as “subversion” or “collusion with foreign forces,” even if the alleged crimes occur outside Hong Kong1,2.*

***Whereas*** *on August 23rd, 2020, Chinese maritime police intercepted and seized a vessel with 12 Hong Kong youths aged 16-30, fleeing to Taiwan to* [*escape political persecution*](https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/3213/2020/en/) *and to seek asylum3.*

***Whereas*** *this seizure* [*likely violated*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/04/hong-kong-security-law-may-break-international-laws-china-human-rights-un) *these Hong Kong youths’ basic human rights under the UN Declaration of Human Rights to leave their own country and to seek asylum from persecution elsewhere4.*

***Whereas*** *for four months the* [*12 Hong Kongers*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/21/save-12-hk-youths-hong-kong-campaign-to-free-boat-detainees-goes-global) *were detained without charge,* [*denied access*](https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-hongkong-security/families-call-for-access-to-hong-kong-relatives-detained-in-china-idUKKBN26L0N8?edition-redirect=uk) *to their families and only given access to attorneys from a list that was pre-approved by the Chinese government5,6.*

***Whereas*** *the young Hong Kongers were tried in secret court, with foreign journalists and diplomats barred from attending, and were sentenced up to 3 years in prison, where they face a* [*high risk of torture and ill-treatment*](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/12/hong-kong-youths-risk-torture-after-unfair-trial/)*7****.***

***Whereas*** *the introduction of the National Security Law and the case of the 12 Hong Kong youths highlight the accelerating deterioration of* [*human rights in China*](https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/09/09/global-call-international-human-rights-monitoring-mechanisms-china?fbclid=IwAR31BO48rfrgiESJRRW-mfGgBJ8jrtWMUzK_rdq9W357JmOnMYFq2Di7G9Y)*, the continued violation of Hong Kong’s treaty-guaranteed autonomy, and the worsening* [*crackdown on pro-democracy activists*](https://globalnews.ca/news/7557559/hong-kong-50-activists-arrested/) *in Hong Kong8,9.*

***Whereas*** *the National Security Law, which* [*unilaterally asserts jurisdiction over Canada*](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/07/hong-kong-national-security-law-10-things-you-need-to-know/)*, and the maltreatment of the 12 Hong Kong youths, which serves to intimidate others from similarly exercising their basic human rights to freedom of speech or asylum, are both directly threatening and imperiling McMaster students from freely expressing their political beliefs or engaging in research deemed politically sensitive by the Chinese government, particularly those with family or research relations in Hong Kong10.*

***Whereas*** *a precedent has been set by Canadian student unions, such as the* [*Student’s Society of McGill University*](https://ssmu.ca/blog/2020/11/statement-to-save12hkyouths/)*, to stand alongside fellow students and community members around the world by condemning human rights violations, unlawful police violence, and authoritarianism, including in Hong Kong and China11.*

***Whereas*** *the dire situation in Hong Kong and the* [*extraterritorial overreach of the NSL*](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/07/hong-kong-national-security-law-10-things-you-need-to-know/) *is of grave concern to not only McMaster students of Hong Kong origin or heritage, but also to prospective McMaster students from Hong Kong, to McMaster students who do research in or related to Hong Kong, and to all members of the McMaster community who wish to speak freely about human rights10.*

***Whereas*** *the international community has reacted to the events in Hong Kong with condemnation, including in a* [*cross-party statement*](https://www.hongkongwatch.org/all-posts/2020/11/16/24-canadian-parliamentarians-call-on-the-foreign-affairs-minister-to-urge-china-to-return-the-12-hong-kong-youths-detained-for-over-eighty-days-in-shenzhen) *from 25 Canadian MPs, statements from the* [*Canadian foreign minister*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/foreign-ministers-statement-hong-kong-arrests-canada-1.5867774)*, as well as measures from countries* [*including Canada*](https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2020/11/canada-announces-immigration-measures-supporting-hong-kong-residents-and-canadians-in-hong-kong.html) *to support refugees and immigrants from Hong Kong12-14.*

***Be it resolved that:***

*The SRA reaffirms the previously adopted statement from SRA 20L on November 17, 2019, In Solidarity of Hong Kong Student Protesters.*

***Be it resolved that:***

*The Student Representative Assembly (SRA) supports and stands in solidarity with students and activists in Hong Kong who face police violence and political persecution for speaking up for human rights and democracy, especially those who are trying to seek refuge in other countries.*

***Be it resolved that:***

*The SRA stands in solidarity with McMaster students of Hong Kong or Chinese origin or heritage who are being actively harmed or threatened by the National Security Law and other human rights abuses perpetrated by the Chinese government.*

***Be it resolved that:***

*The SRA affirms its commitment to supporting current and prospective students who are refugees or are otherwise seeking safety in Canada, including those from Hong Kong.*

* Singh stated that the goal was to reiterate the statement done in the previous year, as there have been developments that have happened since then. Singh went over the memo with the Assembly.
* Tse thanked Singh for bringing this forward. They stated that they knew a lot of research went into the document as they have been in conversation together this week. Tse asked Singh to elaborate on why the MSU should take a stance on this issue and why it directly concerned students of the MSU and McMaster. They stated that the MSU doesn’t speak on other political issues of the day and they haven’t made political statements in other situations where democracy wasn’t being held up around the world.
* Singh stated that this was important as it was brought forward by their constituents and that it should be discussed. They added that there was a large student body who come from Hong Kong and are in Canada. Singh stated that with the amount of support already received, they felt that it should be brought forward as it was close to the hearts of other students.

**Vote on Motion**

**In Favour: 24 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 2**

**Abstained: Tsai, Aminaei**

**Motion Passes**

**5. Committee of the Whole – McMaster Wait Lists**

**Moved** by Egbeyemi, **seconded** by Violin that the Assembly move into Committee of the Whole to discuss a waitlist at McMaster.

* Egebeyemi stated that they would like to give credit to the University Affairs Committee on the work done earlier this year on the course waitlists. They felt that this was important to move into Committee of the Whole to discuss.

**Vote on Motion**

**Motion Passes by General Consent**

**Moved** by Egbeyemi, **seconded** by Violin that the Assembly move out of Committee of the Whole and to Rise and Report.

**Vote on Motion**

**Motion Passes by General Consent**

**Rise and Report**

* Egbeyemi reported that the Assembly had a discussion on wait lists for classes where they found out that there was a pilot program in the past, but it was not successful. They reported that some SRA members voiced their discontent with the current course registration and solutions were proposed including: reaching out to Deans, course sizes being fixed, and bringing it to the attention of Faculty Societies. Egbeyemi reported that they would like to get more information with University Affairs and the Vice-President (Education).

**Time of Next Meeting**

**February 7, 2021**

**5:00pm**

**Remote Meeting, Microsoft Teams**

**CALL OF THE ROLL**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Present:** | Aminaei, Anderson, Au-Yeung, Baig, Birch, Chelverajah, Chopra, Chui, Da-Re, Del Castillo, Della-Vedova, Dixit, Egbeyemi, Fraser, Jones, Mesic, Naik, Noble, Samson, Sariaslani, Seymour, Singh, Stathoukos, Tsai, Tse, Violin, Wang |
| **Absent Excused:**  |  |
| **Absent:** | Bagtasos, Koscak, Nakua |
| **Late:**  |  |
| **Others Present:**  | Chen Liu (AVP (Finance)), Hasnain Khan (AVP (PFA)), V. Scott (Recording Secretary) |
| **Chair:** | Rhea Jangra |

**Adjournment**

**Moved** by Chelvarajah, **seconded** by Stathoukos that the meeting be adjourned.

**Motion Passes by General Consent**

**Adjourned at 6:47pm**

/vs