



Student Representative Assembly Meeting 231
Sunday, October 29, 2023 at 5:00pm (EDT)
Council Chambers, GH 111

Called to Order at 5:15pm

Call of the Roll

Present: Ahmad, Arora, Batusic, Begun, Bolca, Dodd, El-Kadi, Ellis, Forbes, Gono, Hannan, Hu, John, Khandelwal, Otchere, Qannam, Shouldice, Su, Suganthan, Thusyanthan, Wang, Yao

Absent Excused: Abbott (OUSA GA), Khan (OUSA GA), Popovic (OUSA GA), Samuels (OUSA GA), Yang (OUSA GA), Zakkar (OUSA GA)

Absent: Keka, Pacheco

Late:

Others Present: Maheera Choudhury (AVP (Finance)), Emma Daigle (McMaster Marching Band), Claire Patterson (McMaster Marching Band), Aliyah Sumar (Incite), Sana Gupta (Incite), Ayesha Umair (Incite), Talha Yüksel (OPIRG), Fatma Samatar (OPIRG), Alisha Haseeb (OPIRG), Alina Pace (OPIRG), Kaleigh McGregor Bales (OPIRG), Diya Raj Nair (OPIRG), Sydney Szijarto (OPIRG - MacDivest), Mila Py (OPIRG - MacDivest), Fiona Sharpe (OPIRG), Meghan Rego (Ombuds Office), Carolyn Brendan (Ombuds Office), Saif Shammass (OPIRG), V. Scott (Recording Secretary)

Chair: Aiman Dhiloon (MSU Speaker)

Territory Recognition

- The SRA would like to recognize today that we are situated on traditional Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe territories through the 'Dish with One Spoon Wampum Treaty'.

Adoption of Agenda

Moved by Hannan, **seconded** by Otchere that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as presented.

Amendment

Moved by Otchere, **seconded** by Hannan to amend the agenda and move Business Items #2, 3, and 4 to be right after Delegations from the Floor.

Vote on Amendment

Passes Unanimously

Vote to Adopt

Moved by Hannan, **seconded** by Otchere that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as amended.

Passes Unanimously

Announcements from the Chair

- The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. They stated that today will be a bit of a chaotic meeting and that they will be trying to keep things moving quickly. The Chair let the Assembly know that the

printed packages didn't include Bylaw 3 – Student Representative Assembly and to follow along with the online documents. The Chair asked the observers to please sign the Observer's List.

Delegations from the Floor

Moved by El-Kadi, **seconded** by Otchere to set parameters for Delegation from the Floor #1 to be 20 minutes for presentation, and 10 minutes for questions.

- El-Kadi stated that Ombuds asked for 20 minutes, so let's give them the floor.

Vote on Parameters

Passes Unanimously

1. Ombuds – Meghan Rego and Carolyn Brendan presented

- Rego and Brendan went over their presentation with the Assembly.

Questions

- Forbes asked how the Ombuds Office catches their biases, and how they navigate that. Brendan responded that everyone has their unconscious biases. They responded that the Office does a lot of professional development and training, and they also sit on PACBIC and have close ties with EIO. Brendan explained that often, there are students experiencing barriers and running into issues due to trying to navigate through the University and that they're there to help.
- Hannan thanked Ombuds for the presentation. They asked if the office was well-equipped, in terms of workload, and if the office has the resources needed to handle cases. Rego responded that the office was only one person until a year ago. They explained that the role was created then, and that the office is finally getting to a point where they are finding balance. They added that the role is currently admin but will evolve into an Ombuds role, and explained that Brendan currently does all of the cases. Rego stated that their role deals with visibility and outreach. They explained that with the increasing footprint on campus will only increase caseload, which is something they are keeping an eye on and hoping that the Graduate Students Association will be incorporated. Brendan added that most of the time spent is on individual cases, which is the mandate of the office. They explained that the University has become complicated with overlapping policies and then cases start becoming longer. Brendan stated that the MSU is co-funding the Ombuds Office, but the Assistant Ombuds is funded by the President's Office. They stated that they have to also look into how much the MSU can realistically pay to fund the office, which is why they're looking into having graduate students pay into the service as well.
- Rego stated that the Ombuds Office has made their first report in several years, and it was exciting to put everything together and present it to Senate. They added that the Senate is putting together a working committee to address the issues laid out in the report. Brendan explained that the Ombuds Office makes the recommendations, but it is up to the University to implement any changes. They stated that if the student isn't driving the changes, then the Ombuds Office can't get involved with implementation until next year's report. Brendan explained that it was important for students to join these committees and put pressure on the University to implement said recommendations.

Set Parameters

Moved by Otchere, **seconded** by Arora to set parameters for Delegations from the Floor #2, 3, and 4 to be 10 minutes for presentations, and 15 minutes for questions with a 30-second cap on answering questions.

- Arora stated that these were the parameters set for the other Bylaw 9 groups last week.

Vote on Parameters

Passes Unanimously

2. OPIRG – Talha Yüksel, Diya Raj Nair, Fatma Samatar, Kaleigh McGregor Bales presented

- OPIRG went over their presentation with the Assembly.

Questions

- Hu asked how big the community garden was. McGregor Bales stated that it was about the size of Council Chambers and that they will be expanding to a second site later.
- Begun stated that 75 students opted out of funding OPIRG this year. They asked OPIRG if they thought this meant that they did a good job publicizing this. Samatar responded that this was an increase from last year, and they felt that they did a good job promoting due to the increase in numbers.
- Forbes asked how OPIRG measured the impact an action group was having on the community. They added that they wanted to make sure the groups were benefiting those within McMaster. OPIRG responded that the groups don't just focus on awareness, they actively try to get students involved.
- Hu asked how much produce is produced by the garden. McGregor Bales responded that it was probably around 500 lbs.
- Thusyanthan asked about the budget of \$11,000 for the community garden. They stated that the garden would only be growing produce from April until Fall, and that OPIRG is investing a lot of money into something that is only available a couple months of the year. Thusyanthan asked if OPIRG was doing anything outside of the growing season that would add worth. McGregor Bales responded that the space was provided by the University, and the money was an investment in staff and events. They explained that the Coordinator was in charge of developing the garden, moving food to the community fridge, overseeing volunteers, and the writing of grants.
- El-Kadi thanked OPIRG for coming to present. They asked OPIRG to clarify how they will be using the surplus, as it shouldn't be just sitting around. McGregor Bales responded that the surplus came from less on-campus programming during COVID, but they will be spending \$49,000 of the \$100,000 surplus on the garden and experiential learning. They added that they will also be working with Commerce on how to utilize and leverage the student funds.
- Hannan thanked OPIRG for their presentation. They asked to hear more about the frequency of new students approaching OPIRG, who have worked with them before. OPIRG responded that they have six action groups this year, and that they do have to reject quite a few groups each year. OPIRG added that they want to utilize the impact that they have on the community and have many volunteers who would like to work with the groups.
- Hu asked if there was a way to increase the efficiency of the garden to get more out of it. OPIRG stated that the goal was to do educational events within the McMaster Community, as well as partnering within the larger community. They stated that it wasn't just about the produce.
- Arora asked how the Fair-Trade Fest went. McGregor Bales responded that they do generate revenue, but that wasn't the point. They stated that the essence of the event was to bring students together, and showcase talent and environmental issues. McGregor Bales added that they haven't closed the books on this event yet, but thought that the event brought in \$3,000.
- Gono asked how OPIRG advertises for their volunteers, and how many they had this year. Samatar responded that they don't have the specific numbers on how many volunteers OPIRG has right now. They explained that OPIRG had their application open and promoted on Instagram, and added that applications are open all year. McGregor Bales added that the Resource Centre had 40 volunteers for the MUSC space.
- Thusyanthan asked if OPIRG considered making the documentary accessible online or having a showcase on campus in case students don't want to go into Westdale to view it. McGregor Bales thanked Thusyanthan for their suggestion. They responded that the documentary project was still filming and the launch will be in January or February. McGregor Bales stated that they will pass this info on to the project.

- Batusic asked if OPIRG expects a large turnout for the documentary. OPIRG stated that it hasn't been finalized, but they did do a few on campus last year with a strong turnout.

3. Incite Magazine – Ayesha Umair, Aliyah Sumar, and Sana Gupta presented

- Incite went over their presentation with the Assembly.

Questions

- Hannan stated that Incite continues to produce beautiful works of art and that they were proud to have Incite as part of the community. They mentioned that Incite brought up the point that the magazine was gaining in popularity and getting competitive and asked what has changed. Gupta responded that they usually take six people on their team and that the magazine received over 40 applications to be on the team. They stated that since they're becoming more popular, they've had to reject applications to be on staff. Umair added that popularity dwindled down during the pandemic as there weren't any in-person publications.
- Hu thanked Incite for their presentation. Hu stated that in the presentation Incite mentioned that they reached out to students who were interested in Incite about pricing. Hu asked if Incite thought about sending out a survey as some might not be interested due to the high price. Umair responded that they did ask students about this, and a lot weren't familiar with Incite. They stated that they might not have looked at the web publication but those who did felt it was a good amount to spend and thought it was fiscally reasonable.
- Batusic asked if there was a possibility of having students pre-order their copies instead of printing as many as Incite does to keep costs low. Gupta responded that they ordered 800 copies last semester, with the space to keep ordering more. They added that this was a good idea though to help with an idea of how many to order. Umair added that they're printing less copies than what students want, so it might be a good idea to see if Incite was under-ordering and if they need to spend more.
- Hu asked if Incite considered getting any sponsorships or help from the Art Faculty. Gupta responded that they have collaborated with a class. They added that this was an interesting idea, and they will keep collaborating with the Art Faculty. Umair added that they could look into collaborating with other organizations.
- Hu suggested collaborating with the McMaster Art Museum.
- Forbes asked how Incite creates a space for students to express themselves. Gupta responded that they do have a space where students can come and talk about ideas. They added that the Incite team would be there to help the students navigate in a non-judgmental way.
- Batusic stated that they believed the Art Museum was an under-utilized building on campus and thought that it would be a good idea to host something there.

3. McMaster Marching Band – Claire Patterson and Emma Daigle presented

- McMaster Marching Band summarized their presentation.

Questions

- Arora stated that it was a great presentation, and it was nice to see the breakdown of the budget. They asked if the instruments had not been purchased before. Patterson responded that they do have instruments that keep getting carried over. They stated that members need their own instruments, whether that means the member owns their own, rents, or MMB owns the instrument. They gave the example that MMB needs a baritone saxophone, but it's \$3,000 so the purchase hasn't been made yet as they're still shopping around. Patterson added that they don't ever get rid of their instruments.
- Forbes asked if there was a 'bring your own instrument' plan and have something in place for those who can't provide their own. Patterson responded that they own their own instrument, but others might not have their own and MMB would provide the member with an instrument for the year.

Moved by Otchere, **seconded** by Arora that the Assembly recess for 10 minutes.

- Otchere stated that it has come to their attention that some people may need a break.
- Arora agreed.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

Recessed at 6:44pm

Called to Order at 6:55pm

Call of the Roll

Present: Ahmad, Arora, Batusic, Begun, Dodd, El-Kadi, Ellis, Forbes, Gono, Hannan, Hu, John, Khandelwal, Otchere, Shouldice, Su, Suganthan, Thusyanthan, Wang, Yao
Absent Excused: Abbott (OUSA GA), Khan (OUSA GA), Popovic (OUSA GA), Samuels (OUSA GA), Yang (OUSA GA), Zakkar (OUSA GA)
Absent: Bolca, Keka, Pacheco
Late: Qannam
Others Present: Maheera Choudhury (AVP (Finance)), V. Scott (Recording Secretary)
Chair: Aiman Dhiloon (MSU Speaker)

Business

2. Committee of the Whole – OPIRG

Moved by Hannan, **seconded** by Gono that the Assembly move into Committee of the Whole to discuss the OPIRG presentation.

- Hannan stated that they hoped that the Assembly could have a fruitful and concise conversation.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

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

Passes Unanimously

Rise and Report

- Hu reported that there were plenty of discussions about OPIRG, one being about the community garden. Hu reported that everyone had a chance to speak their mind, and thanked those who clarified certain situations.

3. Committee of the Whole – Incite Magazine

Moved by Otchere, **seconded** by John that the Assembly move into Committee of the Whole to discuss the Incite Magazine presentation.

Passes Unanimously

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

Passes Unanimously

Rise and Report

- Otchere reported that the Assembly thought the overall presentation was good. They added that the Assembly felt that Incite filled the gaps and provides a platform for artists to be creative. Otchere explained that the magazine is bouncing back from COVID and had a few issues within their budgets that were fixed before coming to the Assembly.

4. Committee of the Whole – McMaster Marching Band

Moved by Hannan, **seconded** by Hu that the Assembly move into Committee of the Whole to discuss the McMaster Marching Band presentation.

Passes Unanimously

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

Passes Unanimously

Rise and Report

- Otchere reported that MMB did a good presentation and was a well-organized group. They added that MMB needs more support and spaces to practise, and that it was a good group to keep supporting.

Report Period

1. FYC – report circulated

2. Arts and Science Caucus – John presented

- John summarized the report.

3. Business Caucus – report circulated

- Shouldice presented.

4. Engineering Caucus – report not circulated

- Yao stated that their caucus now has three more people, and they are hoping to get started on working to represent their constituents.

5. Internal Governance Committee – report circulated

- Begun summarized the report.

6. Services Committee – report circulated

- Su summarized the report.

7. Executive Board - El-Kadi presented

- El-Kadi summarized the report.

8. Vice-President (Education) – not circulated

Information Period

- No information was shared.

Question Period

- No questions were asked.

Business Arising from the Minutes

1. Close nominations for MSU members to the Teaching Awards Committee (min. 2)

Moved by El-Kadi, **seconded** by Otchere that the Assembly postpone closing the seats until SRA 23J.

Passes Unanimously

2. Close nominations for one (1) MSU member to the Services Committee

Moved by El-Kadi, **seconded** by Dodd that the Assembly close nominations for one (1) MSU member to the Services Committee.

Nominations

- Stephanie Henry

Passes Unanimously

- Stephanie Henry won the MSU Seat on the Services Committee by acclamation.

Business

1. Recess into meetings of MSU and CFMU Inc.

Moved by Begun, **seconded** by El-Kadi that the Assembly recess into meetings of the Full Members of MSU and CFMU Incorporated.

Passes Unanimously

Recessed at 7:39pm

Called to Order at 7:54

Call of the Roll

Present: Ahmad, Arora, Batusic, Begun, Dodd, El-Kadi, Ellis, Forbes, Gono, Hannan, Hu, John, Khandelwal, Qannam, Otchere, Shouldice, Su, Suganthan, Thusyanthan, Wang, Yao
Absent Excused: Abbott (OUSA GA), Khan (OUSA GA), Popovic (OUSA GA), Samuels (OUSA GA), Yang (OUSA GA), Zakkar (OUSA GA)
Absent: Bolca, Keka, Pacheco
Late:
Others Present: Maheera Choudhury (AVP (Finance)), V. Scott (Recording Secretary)
Chair: Aiman Dhiloon (MSU Speaker)

Committee Business

1. Proposed Changes to Bylaw 3 – Student Representative Assembly

Moved by El-Kadi that the Assembly approve the proposed changes to **Bylaw 3 – Student Representative Assembly**, as circulated and attached.

- El-Kadi went over the memo with the Assembly.
- Hu stated that iBioMed has many specializations. They asked if this would all go under the same caucus.
- Arora responded that this program does have a lot of specializations, but the Committee decided to focus primarily on community and the program itself. They stated that it should be under Engineering as a whole, instead of many faculties.
- Hannan praised those who worked on the bylaw and stated that it was a shining example of what the SRA can do in terms of producing discussion and hearing people out. They added that it looks different than what was originally presented. They congratulated everyone on working together.
- Dodd thought that it was great that a consensus was reached, and that it is in writing.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

Time of Next Meeting

**November 12, 2023
5:00pm (EST)
Council Chambers, GH111**

Call of the Roll

Present: Ahmad, Arora, Batusic, Begun, Dodd, El-Kadi, Ellis, Forbes, Gono, Hannan, Hu, John, Khandelwal, Qannam, Otchere, Shouldice, Su, Suganthan, Thusyanthan, Wang, Yao
Absent Excused: Abbott (OUSA GA), Khan (OUSA GA), Popovic (OUSA GA), Samuels (OUSA GA), Yang (OUSA GA), Zakkar (OUSA GA)
Absent: Bolca, Keka, Pacheco
Late:
Others Present: Maheera Choudhury (AVP (Finance)), V. Scott (Recording Secretary)
Chair: Aiman Dhiloon (MSU Speaker)

Adjournment

Moved by Hu, **seconded** by Otchere that the meeting be adjourned.

Passes Unanimously

Adjourned at 8:02PM

/vs