



Student Representative Assembly Meeting 24J
Sunday, November 3, 2024 at 5:00pm (EDT)
Council Room, Gilmour Hall 111

Called to Order at 5:06pm

Call of the Roll

Present: Abbott, Arora, Batusic, Begun, Cheung, Dodd, A. El-Kadi, S. El-Kadi, Forbes, Hobbs, Khan, Long, Mahmoud, McKay, McLean, Modi, Naqvi, Newman, Olejarz, Pickering, Popovic, Qannam, Rahman, Ricafort, Schaub, Sweeney, Wang, Zeiler

Absence Excused: Jeyakumar

Absent: Black, Bolca, Hu, Issa, Kim

Late:

Others Present: Maheera Choudhury (AVP Finance), Kerry Yang (AVP Municipal Affairs), Meghan Rego (Ombuds Office), Carolyn Brendon (Ombuds Office), Elizabeth Yorke (Engineers Without Borders), Gopal Uppalapati (Engineers Without Borders), Alix Herrmann (McMaster Marching Band), Kae Montemayor (McMaster Marching Band), Rachel Chan (McMaster Marching Band), D. Stajcer (Recording Secretary)

Chair: Abigail Samuels (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 Long, **seconded** by A. El-Kadi that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as presented.

Amendment

Moved by Sweeney, **seconded** by Long to amend the agenda and move Business Items #1 and #2 (Committees of the Whole) to be directly after Delegations from the Floor.

- Sweeney said that this was for consistency, and so that presenters do not have to wait for the Assembly to go through procedural agenda items to get to Committee of The Whole.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

Vote to Adopt

Moved by Long, **seconded** by A. El-Kadi that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as amended.

Passes Unanimously

Announcements from the Chair

- The Chair welcomed all new Assembly members and thanked the Nursing member for joining. They asked everyone to fill out the merchandise form as they had not yet received everyone's responses.

Delegations from the Floor

Set Parameters

Moved by Sweeney, **seconded** by Popovic that the Assembly set parameters for the Ombuds delegation to be 15 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for questions, and for both the Engineers Without Borders and McMaster Marching Band delegations to be 5 minutes for presentations and 20 minutes for questions.

- Sweeney believed this was enough time for Ombuds. They added that the Bylaw 9 groups had been informed ahead of time on what the parameters will be and felt that this was enough time for all questions to be asked.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

1. Ombuds – Carolyn Brendon and Meghan Rego presented

- Ombuds reviewed their presentation with the Assembly.

Questions

- A. El-Kadi asked if they could elaborate on systemic trends. Brendon answered that one of the concerns brought forth by several people was AI being used to evaluate students/give them feedback on assignments, which was a privacy concern. Brendon added that the University is trying to grapple with this. They noted that there was a task force that made recommendations saying that AI should not be used to evaluate students and that it was recommended to put this in the Undergraduate Course Management Policy. Brendon noted that while it was their job to provide recommendations, it was very important for students to speak up and demand change.
- Sweeney asked if there were any recommendations that could be a part of MSU advocacy, or if there were any MSU policies that should be investigated further. Brendon answered that the MSU did an amazing job on their policies and although they did not have any recommendations now, they were always reviewing policies, especially as things evolve to reflect necessary changes.
- Sweeney asked if there was anything else they wanted to touch on. Brendon wanted to note that none of the recommendations made last year had actually been put in place and touched on the lack of student representation on the task force groups.

2. Engineers Without Borders – Gopal Uppalapati and Elizabeth Yorke presented

- Uppalapati and Yorke reviewed their presentation with the Assembly.

Questions

- Sweeney asked if they could explain why there was no oversight with their bank account for four months of this fiscal year. Uppalapati answered that when the president left, the bank card was still under one of their names. They noted challenges in finding a mutual time to go to the bank together to get the name transferred due to individual schedules. They added that they had received conflicting information from different bank branches about who needed to be present to complete the transfer. Uppalapati said they had since rectified the issue, the name had been transferred and that a good relationship was created with the University Plaza branch for future transactions.
- McKay asked that due to the fellowship not happening, was there a plan for future years to use the \$12,000 plus the surplus from this year. Yorke answered that they were working with their Vice-President (Finance) on a budget plan for the next two years, suggested events for the incoming presidents to run and creating smaller budget breakdowns for them to follow. Uppalapati clarified

that the fellowship is only on hold for this year and that EWB is currently restructuring their fellowship plan to be more involved with the ongoing projects, such as a solar powered project.

- McKay asked if EWB still planned on having the selection process in which multiple universities apply for the limited spots and a student is sent if accepted, and if not, they still send money. Uppalapati answered that they could not say for certain if that was the plan. Yorke added that they assumed it would be the same kind of structure.
- Sweeney asked what the guarantee would be that a McMaster student would be chosen in a scenario where all ten send one representative. Uppalapati answered that each chapter is expected to send at least one or two options to National Office for this election but there was no guarantee that a McMaster student would be selected. They added that for the last two years, they have been selected to go on the fellowship.
- Sweeney asked what the funding was put towards if a McMaster student is not selected. Uppalapati answered that the funding would cover other costs such as travel, study accommodation, and food.
- Sweeney asked if they thought students would feel comfortable with their funds going towards other students from different universities. Uppalapati answered that although it was student money, they did not see it as a matter of whether it was a McMaster student attending, but rather having the money go towards supporting a greater cause such as helping other communities have similar rights or freedoms. Yorke added that they try to work collaboratively across chapters and although the chosen student may be from a different school, they are still peers they would be supporting.
- Sweeney asked if they believed the way they were structured still fulfilled their groups' original mandate in which they won their referendum on. Uppalapati answered yes, because even though they were restructuring, they were also going back to their roots which still follows the engineering mindset that was in their name. Yorke added that they were also shifting more towards a leadership focus which goes back to the roots of their initial mandate, focusing on building leaders within the McMaster community.

3. McMaster Marching Band – Kae Montemayor, Alix Herrmann and Rachel Chan presented

- Montemayor, Herrmann and Chan reviewed their presentation with the Assembly.

Questions

- A. El-Kadi asked what some of their biggest challenges were. Herrmann answered that because membership has grown so significantly, transportation costs have increased for their larger events. They added that there was a need for more instruments as, at times, more individuals were interested in a particular instrument than what they had available.
- Sweeney asked what the life cycle of instruments was. Chan answered that instruments usually lasted a long time, but there were instances in which they could get damaged. They added that they had 20 new members this year and therefore the need for new instruments had greatly increased to ensure a nice, full sound was achieved. Chan noted that they did not want to turn students away just because they did not have enough instruments as it was not fair.
- McKay asked if they thought their membership would continue to increase year-over-year and if so, would they be able to use up the surplus. Montemayor answered that numbers were similar to how they were pre-Covid and now that they were enough out of the pandemic, there was definitely a significant upward trend. They added that they would be able to use up the surplus but that it was taking a bit of time to bring it back to pre-Covid levels.
- Olejarz asked for clarification on how the band trip would be a benefit to the greater McMaster Community as per their mandate. Chan answered that it would help with visibility and by going around to different places, the word would be spread that McMaster was developing their marching band. Montemayor added that the locations were chosen to collaborate with those universities specifically, with the goal of building connections with them.

Business

1. Committee of the Whole – Engineers Without Borders

Moved by Sweeney, **seconded** by Khan that the Assembly move into Committee of the Whole to discuss the Engineers Without Borders presentation.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

Moved by Sweeney, **seconded** by A. El-Kadi that the Assembly move out of Committee of the Whole and into Rise and Report.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

Rise and Report

- Sweeney reported that the overall financial operational accountability and original mandate were discussed. They noted that concerns about the group as a whole were discussed, and felt there was a general consensus towards bringing forward a referendum motion to the next meeting.

2. Committee of the Whole – McMaster Marching Band

Moved by A. El-Kadi, **seconded** by Popovic that the Assembly move into Committee of the Whole to discuss the McMaster Marching Band presentation.

Vote on Motion

In Favour: 27 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0
Motion Passes

Moved by A. El-Kadi, **seconded** by Olejarz that the Assembly move out of Committee of the Whole and to Rise and Report.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

Rise and Report

- A. El-Kadi reported that the groups' trip was briefly discussed. They noted that the Finance Committee was comfortable with their operations and provided two recommendations. They added that the group had a strong presence in the Hamilton/McMaster community.

Report Period

1. First-Year Council – Lubna Ismail presented

- Ismail summarized the report.

Questions

- Batusic asked how FYC could improve themselves in terms of the first-year experience. Ismail answered that different committees were focusing on different aspects, such as the events team boosting the social aspect and the promotions team ensuring students were aware. They noted that the main goal was to be the voice for first years and to represent what they wanted to see.
- McLean asked what concerns would be brought to the Residence Life meetings. Ismail answered that they were meeting with the Hospitality Director soon to discuss concerns such as the temperature levels (heating/cooling). They added that another discussion would focus on equity and relating to what students received in their rooms, as they wanted to ensure all students had access to the same resources.

2. Health Sciences Caucus – Olejarz presented

- Olejarz summarized the report.

3. Humanities Caucus – Dodd presented

- Dodd summarized the report.

4. Kinesiology Caucus – Schaub presented

- Schaub summarized the report.

5. Provincial & Federal Affairs Committee – Abbott presented

- Abbott summarized the report.

6. Finance Committee – Maheera Choudhury presented

- Choudhury summarized the report.

7. Executive Board – report not submitted

- Schaub reported that Executive Board has continued looking at Students of Distinction Awards as well as service reports. They added that EFRT's report was worth noting as they have been very successful, have had an increase in staff. They noted that an honorarium has been started to complement their success.

8. President – Popovic presented

- Popovic summarized the report.

9. MSU Policy Papers (Winter Term) – Hobbs presented

- Hobbs summarized the report.

Information Period

- Sweeney informed the Assembly that they would be bringing the MSU audited statements forth to the next meeting, along with a few potential recommendations.

Question Period

- No questions were asked.

Business

3. Open MSU Seats on SRN Awards Committees

Moved by A. El-Kadi, **seconded** by S. El-Kadi that the Assembly open nominations for MSU member seats to the following SRN Award Selection Committees:

- Honour M (1)
 - MSU Merit Scholarship (1)
 - J. Lynn Watson (1)
 - MSU Spirit (1)
 - Rudy Heinzl (1)
- A. El-Kadi noted that this was a vital part of Student Recognition Night, as it could not take place without having these committees select the winners.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

4. Open SRA Seats on SRN Awards Committees

Moved by A. El-Kadi, **seconded** by Hobbs that the Assembly open nominations for SRA member seats to the following SRN Award Selection Committees:

- Honour M (1)
 - MSU Merit Scholarship (1)
 - J. Lynn Watson (1)
 - MSU Spirit (1)
- A. El-Kadi said that SRA members were needed for these committees. He added that it was an exciting opportunity, and the time commitment would be approximately ten hours in February.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

5. Close SRA Seats on SRN Awards Committees

Moved by Popovic, **seconded** by Long that the Assembly close nominations for SRA member seats to the following SRN Award Selection Committees:

- Honour M (1)
- MSU Merit Scholarship (1)
- J. Lynn Watson (1)
- MSU Spirit (1)

Nominations:

- Schaub nominated themselves for the Honour M Award selection committee.
- Qannam nominated themselves for the MSU Merit Scholarship selection committee.
- Arora nominated themselves for the J. Lynn Watson Award selection committee.

- Mahmoud nominated themselves for the MSU Spirit Award selection committee.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

6. Open one (1) SRA seat on the Provincial & Federal Affairs Committee

Moved by Hobbs, **seconded** by Abbott that the Assembly open nominations for one (1) SRA seat on the Provincial & Federal Affairs Committee.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

7. Close one (1) SRA seat on the Provincial & Federal Affairs Committee

Moved by Abbott, **seconded** by Hobbs that the Assembly close nominations for one (1) SRA seat on the Provincial & Federal Affairs Committee.

- Abbott said it was a really cool committee.

Nominations:

- Forbes nominated themselves.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

Time of Next Meeting

**Sunday, November 17, 2024
5:00pm EDT
Council Room, Gilmour Hall 111**

Call of the Roll

Present: Abbott, Arora, Batusic, Begun, Cheung, Dodd, A. El-Kadi, S. El-Kadi, Forbes, Hobbs, Khan, Long, Mahmoud, McKay, McLean, Modi, Naqvi, Newman, Olejarz, Pickering, Popovic, Qannam, Rahman, Ricafort, Schaub, Sweeney, Wang, Zeiler

Absence Excused: Jeyakumar

Absent: Black, Bolca, Hu, Issa, Kim

Late:

Others Present: Maheera Choudhury (AVP Finance), Kerry Yang (AVP Municipal Affairs), D. Stajcer (Recording Secretary)

Chair: Abigail Samuels (MSU Speaker)

Adjournment

Moved by A. El-Kadi, **seconded** by Hobbs that the meeting be adjourned.

Passes Unanimously

Adjourned at 7:19pm

/ds

DRAFT