3rd meeting of the Executive Council 2023-2024 of the Science Students' Association

University of Ottawa

Meeting Minutes

Date: June 22, 2023

Time: 8 PM

Location: Online (Zoom)

Attendance:

**Executifs**Christina Bi (Present)

Anumita Chatterjee (Present)

Janet Smyth (Absent)

Autumn Shaw (Present)

Victor Boddy (Present)

Breana Sanders (Present)

Laura Wang (Present)

Neeharika Boni Bangari (Present)

Yassine Marhoum (Absent)

Pooja Narula (Present)

[Senator]

Reda Hamza (Present)

Simon Yang (Present)

Nina Tahvildar (Present)

Jenny Kwak (Present)

Matthias Mark-George (Present)

**Managers**Emily Wu (Present)

Joela Xhumri (Present)

Sienna Mery (Present)

Teagan Chant (Present)

Thalia Lamberti (Present)

Olivia Mendicino (Absent)

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1. Opening of the meeting
   * + The meeting starts at 8 PM
2. Land acknowledgement
   * + Land acknowledgment by Simon Yang
3. Motion to start the meeting
   * + Seconded by Autumn
4. Motion to adopt agenda
   * + ***Christina:*** Motion to add UROP after the Sinerama agenda point.
     + Seconded by Teagan

| Y: 18 | N: 0 | A: 0 |
| --- | --- | --- |

1. Approving last meeting’s minutes
   * + Motion to approve last meetings minutes
     + Seconded by Laura

| Y: 18 | N: 0 | A: 0 |
| --- | --- | --- |

1. Question period
   * + No questions
     + ***Christina:*** We had a vacancy on the board of directors. This person works with UOSU, has monthly meetings, and there are three positions that represent the Faculty of Science. UOSU asked us to recommend someone, and the applications were open on Instagram. The elections committee selected someone, and they selected the ombudsperson as well. The ombudsperson sits on the arbitrations committee, and is involved in member reviews and elections. They are a third party that has no conflict of interest. We also switched signing authorities. These are all the major updates for now.
2. Executive Updates
   1. Senator
      * Currently no senator
   2. Senior Advisor

* ***Reda:*** I went to the bank to change signing authorities, so I can no longer sign cheques. I’ve also been answering questions and helped Christina with the lab equipment order.
  1. Internal
     + ***Autumn****:* I handed out math hoodies, cleaned up items on Square, went to the bank with Christina and Reda to switch signing authorities, signed some cheques, helped in the selection of the science board of directors and ombudsperson. I helped Laura and Jenny with Shine donations, and gave Breana input on Gen Council Scholarship Applicants.
  2. External
     + ***Victor****:* I’ve been in contact with WISE prep, which is basically an online homework help company. They have classes specific to uOttawa, online tutoring, as well as some MCAT and LSAT courses. They reached out about promoting services to us as members of SSA, and some discounts to students that we could give away. I have been out of town, but am now getting things started for club applications for September.
  3. Academic
     + ***Breana****:* I attended a 101 week committee meeting, chaired the scholastics committee meeting, met with professors concerning UROP, briefly attended the integrity meeting, gave Jenny and Laura some advice, and I’ve been working with financial aid to distribute the amounts for the scholarships. I have also worked on creating an excel sheet for the scholarships and downloaded the appropriate documents into the various folders.
  4. Social
     + ***Christina:*** Absent, but gave an update. She met with VP social of the Faculty of Health Science to collaborate on a pool event, she’s writing a “letter from VP social” for the mailout. She’s been discussing guide numbers, summarizing each event with locations/times/supplies, and attended SRT meetings (UOSU buy-in kits will be $50 per 101er).
  5. Volunteer Coordinator
     + ***Nina:*** I have been going through all the guide applications we’ve received so far, and waiting for new applications to come in.
     + ***Christina:*** Are we reaching out to TMM?
     + ***Nina:*** Yea I’m a little confused. Do we reach out to them?
     + ***Christina:*** We’ve only just started doing it, so they probably aren’t as aware. It may be good to reach out to them and see if they would be interested in advertising for us.
  6. Bilingual
     + ***Christina****:* Absent, but he gave me his update: “Translated blurbs for mailout, translated the 101 week committee meeting, translated the 2nd exec meeting minutes, and voted for the ombudsperson”.
  7. Promotions
     + ***Neeharika****:* I am almost finished with the mailout, and I’m about to send it to get approved. I attended the 101 week committee, I updated the budget page on the website with the 2023-2024 graphs (when Olivia wasn’t here), made the bottle drive post for Shinerama, made the logos for 101 week, met with Janet, Pooja, and Thalia to discuss logos, and I contacted the lady at the printing store to talk about printing the mailout.
     + ***Christina:*** The student list will hopefully be out soon.
  8. Finance
     + ***Anumita****:* I answered any questions anyone had related to finance, sent Janet all the old 101 week budget files I could find, attended the 101 week committee meeting hosted by Janet. I attended the scholastics meeting hosted by Breana, had a meeting with Joela to discuss how to start the process of auditing, and sent the invoice for the grad ball buses to Autumn so she and Christina can process this payment, and update Laura about it. I also sent the budget to Neeharika and cc’d Olivia for it to be published on the website, and am going to set up a meeting next week with Teagan so she can teach me how to do the budget review.

* 1. Equity
     + ***Simon****:* I was looking into the past presentations for the equity workshop for SSA and 101 week guides, and will keep working on that. The workshop will be at the exec retreat for SSA members.
     + ***Christina:*** For those who don’t know, the exec retreat will be August 25-27.
  2. Philanthropic
     + ***Laura:*** I am currently trying to figure out the Shinerama shirts with Pooja; asked Rayne from UOSU whether they would provide them for free so I am waiting to hear back. I planned the bottle drive (the post went out yesterday), called the beer store to give them a heads up. I read the applications and voted for the board of directors and ombudsperson. Jenny and I are looking into getting a horizontal mesh banner for Shinerama that we can hopefully use for many years. I attended the scholastic committee meeting and attended the PhilRT and took the meeting minutes for it. I got in touch with Nina and Melody from community engagement; set up a volunteer portal so that I can give and approve hours for people helping at events like bottle drive, etc. I sent Neeharika a Shinerama day blurb for the 101 week mailout, and met with Jenny a bunch of times to work on Shinerama stations, etc. I met with TMMSA President Xeius to plan RGN BBQ early August, and started looking for sponsors. I also contacted and got a response from both Spartan Race and 5k Foam Fest.
  3. Fundraiser Coordinator
     + ***Jenny****:* I attended the 101 week committee and PhilRT meeting, attended a meeting with Laura to plan Shinerama regarding city permits, and attended a meeting with TMMSA President Xeius with Laura to plan a summer BBQ at RGN campus. I started reaching out to sponsors with Laura and planned one meeting with a sponsor for next week.
     + ***Christina:*** You did ask about third party insurance, and I asked Rayne, she will be getting back to us, so I haven't forgotten about that yet.
  4. Logistics
     + ***Pooja:*** I talked with Neeharika, Thalia, and Janet about the theme and logo, got everyone’s sizes for 101 week shirts and placed the order, and am working on figuring out the exec merch. I also asked Matthias to find places where we can get bucket hats so we are looking into that and I attended the 101 week committee meeting.
  5. Summer Logistics
     + ***Matthias****:* I looked into bucket hats, and am sending the list to Pooja. I went to the 101 week committee meeting, and spoke to Breana about the scholastics meeting because I couldn’t attend.

* 1. President
     + ***Christina****:* I created the board of directors and ombudsperson applications and selected candidates. I am now signing authority, but cannot sign cheques right now because I am currently in crutches. I attended the PRT, and answered Joanne Benoit’s question about the graduated cylinders. I attended the academic integrity committee with Breana and Thalia, put in the order for lab equipment, and wrote the letter from the president for the mailout - in contact with UOSU about the student list. I also scheduled the sponsorship committee meeting.

1. Managers Updates
   1. Secretary
      * ***Teagan****:* I completed the meeting minutes for the second meeting and sent them to Yassine for translation, and am planning to meet with Anumita next week to show her how to do the budget review.
   2. Social Media Manager
      * ***Thalia****:* I have been in contact with Nina and Neeharika to repost the guide application promotions. In case you haven’t seen it yet, we have decided to extend the date for applications to June 30th at 11:59 PM. Please repost if you can so that we can get as many applicants as possible. I attended the academic integrity committee meeting, and posted the bottle drive promotion. Please repost that as well, if you can. I have also answered the messages in the Instagram DMs.
   3. Webmaster
      * ***Olivia:*** Absent, no updates.
   4. Finance Assistant
      * ***Emily:***I received the spreadsheet from Breana about scholarships, and I am going to sign up for the ones I would like to help with. I sent a picture of myself for the mailout as well.
   5. Auditing Manager
      * ***Joela:***I met with Anumita to go over some specifics of my role and organizing the audits, I have been going over and comparing the old auditing manuals and based on that I’m compiling a list of what needs to be done, and I voted for the new board of directors member.
   6. Bilingualism Assistant
      * ***Sienna:***I translated for Shinerama and proofread your translation for you Christina.
2. Ratification of ombudsperson
   * + ***Christina:*** The Ombudsperson selected was Aliya Qureshi. Motion to ratify Aliya Qureshi.
     + Seconded by Laura

| yes | no | abstain |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 18 | 0 | 0 |

1. Shinerama (Laura)
   * + ***Laura:*** Other RSG’s are pairing up, exceptions are ESS and SSA; overall goal for UOSU is 15k but SSA’s goal is 10k including summer events. Our plan is to run on Elgin Street with stations at main intersections; looking into permits, it was made clear to the rest of the PhilRT that we would be taking Elgin. 7am-2pm, closing ceremony is 2-2:30. Stations to be confirmed but probably up to 10. Prize baskets at each station where you can enter by participating (prizes would be made up of sponsored items). Also going to get in touch with Joanne to see if we can do a pie in the face for the Dean, to get everyone involved. Discussed with Victor and decided we’d reach out to some of our own sponsors ahead of time (events earlier in the summer that need money too). Spartan and 5k: Aug 12-13, and Aug 19; proposed we recruit volunteers and receive $50 donation per person in return; got initial response from both. For the bottle drive, a reminder to message me if you can help Sunday July 2nd! So far I have Matthias, Christina, Autumn, Breana and Teagan (plus me and Jenny) available to help drop off mailbox notices on Friday night, and then Sienna, Yassine, Teagan (plus me and Jenny) for the actual bottle drive on Sunday afternoon. There are 2 volunteers in the form so far, it's only been a day so hopefully we will have more, and we’ve also sent the form and post to Nina so she can share with the guide applicants.
     + ***Christina:*** Since I am on crutches now, I unfortunately will not be free, and I am not in Ottawa on the weekend of Canada Day, but can give my roommates the bottles to give to you guys, sorry I cannot make it. If this helps you convince the Dean and Vice Dean, that St-Amant would do the pie in the face, so maybe say “to carry on the tradition…”. I also have a question about the races, is there a date they would start taking sign ups?
     + ***Laura:*** Not sure yet, we haven’t met yet to discuss anything yet, I just know we are collaborating. Hopefully I will have an answer by the next meeting.
2. UROP

* ***Breana:*** UROP is officially canceled. It’s been over a week since the decision has been made. There is no replacement for it at the moment, and on Monday, the science professors were informed about it. Some professors suggested just keeping the program and not giving the money. The professors do want to keep this, and most of them don’t care about the money, they just want to do it for the students. There is a list of professors who would back us up, and want us to do something about this. I’ve been talking to them, seeing if we can create something similar for the Faculty of Science. They were thinking of forming a committee of SSA people and professors who would give their time. The requirements would probably change to make the selection more narrowed down, such as needing a cGPA of 9.0 or an 8.5. The first step is if you guys agree in creating a trial program for students, Christina and I will email the Vice Dean expressing our concerns, because UROP was a big thing for science students, and we would like to keep a similar program. I’ll take any ideas now as to how we want the committee, and we will express that we have professors to back us up. I think they agree, but they will want a game plan. I’m here asking what you guys think, get opinions, especially those who have done UROP, so we can find maybe something similar, less intensive.
* ***Matthias:*** If we were to be doing this, UROP has tons of people applying. It’s a lot to commit to, and might be hard because we already have so much going on with the SSA. Is this something we could collaborate with execs from other faculties? And wouldn’t this also just be the same thing as going to a prof and asking to do research with them.
* ***Breana:*** Yea we were thinking of limiting it to two students for each professor, and the higher GPA as well. It would help make it easier to pair up, give it a better structure, especially when checking up on the progress of students. It would give some credibility and make sure the professor isn’t taking advantage of students.
* ***Christina:*** I also believe there is a poster they have to make.
* ***Victor:*** I know there was no poster session this year, a two page report had to be sent to a specific committee. Speaking to previous UROP students, they all enjoyed the poster so I believe that would be a good thing to bring back. As Matthias said, it was an achievement, something you could put on your resume as prestigious.
* ***Breana:*** Even the professors were upset about not doing the poster this year.
* ***Matthias:*** I did UROP too, and I know there were a lot of different steps involved, so I think it would be too difficult with just professors and the SSA. Is there any way we could recruit other students such as people who have done UROP or previous SSA members? Even grad students interested? I feel like we already have a lot going on but another committee could help establish this well.
* ***Breana:*** UROP is an undergrad research opportunity, 75 hours for the academic year, and I was going to do mine in conflict and human rights. It can be done with any professor or faculty, and there was the poster competition at the end. Throughout it is different steps where the professor has to write a description and give their progress, a good stepping stone to get an idea of research which was why it was really cool.
* ***Thalia:*** I believe the UROP CGPA requirement was a 7.5. I understand the limit of 9.0 limiting the number of students applying, but I think it really would impede a lot of students. It was nice having a lower GPA requirement because it still gave students an opportunity to still do research with a lower GPA. Could we have another requirement other than a different CGPA? I think it might cause a lot of disappointment with students.
* ***Christina:*** I agree with that, it's a lot less competitive than NSERC, which is still happening. We could limit it to students who have not received NSERC as well.
* ***Breana:*** That may be even harder, just a lot of searching/requirements.
* ***Thalia:*** I feel like the academic component is very important, but unfair to students, because they can’t do NSERC, and then they wouldn’t be able to do this.
* ***Christina:*** Yea it wasn’t as competitive as NSERC which was an advantage.
* ***Jenny:*** I know Matthias mentioned the money part was a big factor, maybe we could establish a scholarship or something for this to help make it more prestigious.
* ***Joela:*** Thalia has a good point, why would we restrict opportunities to make it easier for us. I don’t know if professors would like this, but what if we did recruit other people and train them how to do the selection process so it's less work for us.
* ***Christina:*** That is true, we could have previous UROP participants.
* ***Breana:*** Yea I could do a separate meeting for those interested, draft what was said today, then email the Dean and work on the steps because this will take a long time to come to a final decision.
* ***Christina:*** I just have one more thing to add, the poster presentation wasn’t limited to just UROP, it was for honors students as well, so we could invite them to present at the mini TED talk idea you suggested.

1. Next meeting

* **Christina:** Our next meeting will be July 6, 2023.

1. Varia

* ***Christina:*** Any vaira?
* ***Joela:*** Have we decided where the exec retreat is?
* ***Christina:*** Yea it is in Marmora a good in between for everyone. I already booked the cottage, it looks very nice and is within budget. I will prepare an email to send out shortly.

1. Motion to end meeting

* Seconded by Autumn
* The meeting ends at 8:57 PM