

1st meeting of the General Council 2023-2024 of the Science Students' Association
University of Ottawa
Meeting Minutes

Date: October 17, 2023

Time: 6:00pm

Location: Marion 133

Attendance:

Executives

Christina Bi (Present)
Anumita Chatterjee (Late)
Janet Smyth (Late)
Autumn Shaw (Present)
Victor Boddy (Absent)
Breana Sanders (Present)
Laura Wang (Present)
Neeharika Boni Bangari (Present)
Yassine Marhom (Absent)
Pooja Narula (Present)
Valmik Duvadie (Present)
Réda Hamza (Absent)
Simon Yang (Present)

General Council

Rosita Yuen (Present)
Maya Zonneveld (Present)
Jennifer Lam (Present)
Matt Zander (Present)
Tai Adewoye (Present)
Julia Esber (Present)
Sarah Musca (Present)
Jessie Pearce (Present)
Nina Tahvildar (Absent)
John Surette (Present)
Gabriella Curkovic (Absent)
Paige Chan (Present)
Elsa Stiefeling (Present)
Dante Nicoletti (Present)
Anabelle Tian (Present)
Anita Suthakaran (Absent)
Victoria Flatt (Present)
Bettina Bourque (Present)
Suzan Kadri (Present)
Simon Larose (Present)
Elyse D'Aoust (Absent)

Managers

Emily Wu (Present)

Joela Xhumri (Present)

Sienna Mery (Present)

Teagan Chant (Present)

Thalia Lamberti (Present)

Olivia Mendicino (Late)

Hope Avramidis (Absent)

1. Opening of the meeting
 - The meeting starts at 6:10 pm
2. Land acknowledgement
 - Land acknowledgment by Simon
3. Motion to start the meeting
 - Seconded by Autumn
4. Motion to adopt agenda
 - **Christina:** Motion to move exec updates to the end.
 - **Breana:** I have something to add to the agenda, BIODIDAC. I would like to call it “funds concerning BIODIDAC”.
 - **Christina:** Okay sounds good. Anything else? Motion to adopt agenda.
 - Seconded by Autumn

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5. Question period
 - **Christina:** Welcome everyone. This is the general format of meetings. The agenda is sent to us by Yassine. This is how our meetings will normally occur.
 - No questions
7. Voting, Robert’s Rules, the Constitution
 - **Christina:** First thing we need to do is ratify Gen council and Senator. Motion to ratify them into council?

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- **Christina:** Robert's Rules is a list of general rules for the SSA. It’s also a little cheat sheet for everyone. You’ll see/understand it more as the meeting goes on.

8. Committees
 - **Christina:** Each committee has a group and a purpose. They are made to create and improve services for students. This is your chance to apply now, and you will be on the committee for the full year. They’re a lot of fun and a good way to get involved.

- **Elections Committee**

- a) To organize and successfully execute General Council elections and Executive elections for the Science Students' Association.
- b) To appoint a Chief Electoral Officer from within the committee for General Council elections.
- c) To appoint and provide a contract for an external Chief Electoral Officer for Executive elections.
- d) Successfully promote SSA elections to create a satisfactory nomination pool and voter turnout.
- e) To facilitate day-to-day operations of the SSA elections.
- f) Collect feedback from students at large as well as candidates to place in a transition report for future years.

Chair: President

VP Internal

Summer: 3 other members

Fall: 1 other Executive member, 2 other Gen Council Members

- **Constitution Committee**

- a) To periodically review and make necessary modifications to the Science Students' Association Constitution, with approval by majority vote of the Association council.
- b) To review any upcoming motions before presentation to the Association Council.
- c) To uphold the regulations and guidelines as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 10th edition.
- d) Successfully promote SSA elections to create a satisfactory nomination pool and voter turnout.
- e) To serve as guiding authorities on the SSA constitution.

Chair: President

Secretary

Summer: 4 other members

Fall: 4 other members with at least 3 non-executives

- **Scholastic Events Committee**

- a) To run a minimum of 3 scholastic events throughout the academic year.
- b) To ensure departmental diversity in each scholastic event.
- c) To ensure the quality of scholastic events run by the Science Students' Association.
- d) To work in collaboration with the Faculty of Science where applicable in the planning of scholastic events.

Chair: VP Academic

VP Social

VP External

VP Finance

Full-Year Logistics Coordinator

Summer: 2 other members

Fall: 2 non-exec members

- **Formal Committee**

- a) To plan, organize and run the year end formal celebrations for the SSA.

Chair: VP Social
President
VP Finance
3 other members

- **Services Committee**

- a) To maintain and improve current SSA services that are offered to Science students.
 - b) To create new services for Science students to ameliorate the student experience.
 - c) To frequently inform General Council of updates and changes to SSA services.
 - d) To ensure Science students are informed and aware of the services that the SSA offers.
 - e) To collect feedback on SSA services to place in the transition report for future years.

Chair: VP Internal
Summer: 4 other members
Fall: 4 non-Exec members

- **Clubs Committee**

- a) To review, approve or reject in the name of the SSA requests by club-applicants for certification

Chair: VP External
Finance Assistant
Auditing Manager
VP Academic
President

- **Grad Ball Committee**

- a) Organization of the year's Grad Ball event

Chair: VP Social
VP Finance
Logistics
Senior Advisor
President
2 other members in their 4th or higher year of studies

- **Charity Committee**
 - b) Aid with the SSA's philanthropic and charity initiatives.
 - c) Appoint and be responsible for the administration of up to 5 philanthropic event volunteers
 - a. Philanthropic volunteers are individual members of the SSA (science students)
 - d) Collect feedback from students with regards to philanthropic initiatives in order to add in a transition report for future years.
 - e)
 - Chair: VP Philanthropic
 - President
 - Summer: 3 other members
 - Fall: 3 other members, at least 1 Executive
- **Speaker Event Committee**

Aid VP Academic with planning of the speaker event.

 - Chair: VP Academic
 - Academic Assistant
 - VP Social
 - Logistics Coordinator
 - VP Equity
 - VP Promo
 - 4 other members
- **Social Committee**

Aid with the SSA's Vice-president of social affairs mandate of fulfilling a minimum of 2 social events per semester.

 - Chair: VP Social
 - Full Year Logistics Coordinator
 - (Advisory Roles:) VP Equity, VP Bilingual
 - Summer: 2 other members
 - Fall: 2 other members, at least 1 non-executive
- **Christina:** This year we were thinking that everyone would apply to the committees by sending out a google form saying why you want to join the committee(s) you applied for, and why we should choose you. Each committee lead decides and chooses.
- **John:** What are the time commitments for the committees?
- **Christina:** It varies.
- **John:** What about the speaker committee?
- **Breana:** Probably 20 hours a month.

- **Christina:** For example, for the formal committee, it will really get busy once you get closer to formal. It really depends on the chair, and who's on your committee. A lot are less demanding than others. I recommend choosing something you're interested in. So this google form process was what I was thinking, but first I want to open the floor to see what others think. In the past it would occur during the first meeting. You would nominate yourself, then say why you would want to join, then everyone votes. Normally it makes the meeting about 3 hours long. Let me know which way you like best.
- **Elsa:** What if instead of just the chair voting, we do another google form to see what everyone thinks and vote that way.
- **Christina:** That's a good idea, but that would take a long time, and some execs would like to know their committees by the end of the week.
- **John:** Did you want to make a vote to see which one people prefer more?
- **Christina:** It depends what other people think.
- **Breana:** I'm scared a lot of people will pick my committees, can I do the spinny wheel thing to choose?
- **Christina:** Sure. The main concern I'm hearing is that this could create bias, since it is only the lead exec selecting their committee. So, we could try to make the forms anonymous, so the chair would not know. We would try to block out the details about the person specifically.
- **Autumn:** I also wanted to say that if you're on a committee right now, it resets starting now.
- **Christina:** If everyone is okay, maybe we should do anonymous, or we could do non-anonymous.
- **John:** Vote?
- **Christina:** Option 1: Google form, response not altered, not anonymous. Option 2: Google form but anonymous, block out information so you can't tell who they are. Option 3: Voting in-person, right now.
- **John:** What about asynchronous, public option?
- **Christina:** I guess that's a 4th option. It would be a lot of work and take longer.
- **Valmik:** What would be the point of having someone vote if they're not on the committee?
- **Christina:** That's how it normally is, so it is not biased. You could argue the chair is the person working who will be working with them, which is why it also works if just the chair chooses.
- **Dante:** Yes, there would be no bias but if you don't know them then you might not choose that person. Either way I'm happy.
- **Laura:** If we do anonymous, we might as well do it here.
- **John:** How badly do you need them to be done?
- **Christina:** We need them now. Okay, lets bring it to a vote.
- Option 1

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- Option 2

Y: 4	N: 19	A: 0
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- Option 3

Y: 1	N: 22	A: 0
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- **Christina:** So Option 1 was the highest vote, do we want to extend the deadline to tomorrow at midnight?
- **Breana:** Can chairs see who has submitted so far.
- **Christina:** Yes.

9. SSA Expectations

- **Autumn:** Okay everyone, here is a powerpoint of the SSA expectations/rules. If creating merch, SSA members will be able to help out during office hours, so everyone can help. This one is mostly for execs, but use your committees if you have them. Collaborate with other gen council members for events. YOUR EVENT WILL NOT HAVE A GOOD TURN OUT IF IT IS ONE GROUP OF REPS. If you need help/have questions don't be afraid to ask. Submit merch/event request form at LEAST 3 weeks in advance (to Neeharika). Make sure you are within budget (talk to Anumita with questions).
- **John:** Does every department have the same budget?
- **Autumn:** Yes. Now for office rules.
- **Autumn:** Try to come 10 minutes early so the person before you can get to class. The person holding office hours is in control AND should be sitting at the main desk. Non-SSA members should not be helping students with office hours. Clean the office/keep things organized. 1st priority is helping students. If a student comes in the office needs to be quiet enough for them to ask questions. Max 8 people in the office at a time. Majority of people can be in the back of the office! Students get scared when a lot of people are hanging out in the front. No food left behind overnight. Trading/covering office hours should be done a few days in advance over slack. Talk in the office needs to be appropriate! Students are around and listening. Key cards. I will send this information to Gen council. Anything else Christina?
- **Christina:** Everyone joins to get involved, to do good for students. We do expect a level of professionalism, so no bad talking to members about other members, if you have an issue/concern please talk to me so we can do something about it. All the perks we receive is to thank you guys for your hard work you do to everything that benefits our students. Because this is a privilege, it can also be taken away. Hopefully that won't be an issue, I think it will be a good year. Please do not skip class or anything other priorities for office hours. I just want to make that clear. You guys are students first. Autumn also mentioned when there are a lot of people in the office, if you are waiting outside wanting to come in for help, it's intimidating. So we try to make sure not a lot of people are in the office, especially those that are not in the SSA. Any questions so far?

10. Funds concerning BIODIDAC

- **Breana:** This is about the email I sent, I'm going to say some of the basics of it. BIODIDAC is an online basis of teaching biology. It was created by a professor who was well loved and passed away. He was a well-known prof, and many students benefited from this platform. It got hijacked in 2019, so some students were hired to help transfer the data into something safer. They want the data to keep the

platform going for years to come. They are asking for some funding to hire another student, and the email describes what they are accomplishing or plan to. I am asking to put it to a vote for \$1000, to help hire another student for the job. I would like to hear what others have to say. Can we bring it to a vote? Does anyone have any discussion or concerns? The cost for the new student is \$2500, so we could cover about half.

- **Christina:** Motion to contribute \$1000 to the BIODIDAC fund?
- **John:** I feel like I don't know enough about the budget to vote.
- **Christina:** Okay here's an overview of the budget. In terms of this motion, we would see where we can grab the \$1000 from the budget. We would ask Anumita for an overview and see if we can afford it.
- **Breana:** What if I motion to use the money I was supposed to use for the textbook sale towards this instead?
- **Autumn:** Also I wanted to mention you shouldn't be charging students to come to your events. You have a big enough budget, and shouldn't have to charge extra.
- **Christina:** Okay yea so overall we look at the budget and see if we can move it around. Any other thoughts before we motion?
- **John:** Do we have to do a blind vote?
- **Christina:** It's easier.
- **Breana:** So are we voting if it comes from the textbook sale? So I would lose that money.
- **Christina:** Yes. When do you need this decision?
- **Breana:** I would rather know if the council votes on it. Then we can see if we have the money.
- **Christina:** Okay we will. Motion to give \$1000 to BIODIDAC? Abstain is choosing not to vote at all, you would like to remove yourself from the decision making process.

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- **Elsa:** How do non-SSA members see when the meetings are?
- **Christina:** Through the website.

11. Next Meeting

12. Executive Updates

12.1. Senator

- **Valmik:** No update.

12.2. Senior Advisor

- **Reda:** No update.

12.3. Internal

- **Autumn:** I sent emails regarding closing the SSA office to non-members and important office hours topics, approved nomination forms and answered questions regarding elections, rearranged and cleaned the office and storage rooms, signed cheques, attended my office hours, did the performance review with Olivia, went to the all candidates meeting, set up the voting platform for elections, cut locks/put up

notices to retrieve contents, set up gen council emails/key cards, attend go karting, made committee selection google form, and hosted a meeting for a plan for event requests and worked on the form for that.

12.4. External

- **Victor [Absent]**: No update.

12.5. Academic

- **Breana**: I met with Dr. Ekker multiple times to discuss URSO, read through and transferred URSO applications, read through and transferred URSO applications, attended office hours, helped run the research info session, attended the research info session, chaired the scholastics committee, emailed C&R, met with Hope to work on scholastics committee menu, helped cut locks for lockers, attend UART, met with VP academic for Eng, discussed with VP academics for Crim and IPPSSA, attended curriculum committee, went to the Shaw center with Janet, attend fraud committee, worked on creating the part-time scholarship with Stephanie, been in contact with Julie about excellence awards ceremony, and assigning tasks to various execs.

12.6. Social

- **Janet**: I did performance reviews with Christina, attended SRT's, visited venues for Grad ball, looking into venues for grad, and planning an alternate Halloween event.

12.7. Bilingualism

- **Yassine [Absent]**: No update.

12.8. Promotions

- **Neeharika**: I attended my office hours, made the posts for Instagram, and sent out the monthly newsletters.

12.9. Finance

- **Anumita [Absent]**: I am reevaluating the budget, went to the USRO meeting with the professor, help cut locks with Autumn, went to the bank with Christina and Autumn to switch over signing authority and deposited some cash, had my meeting with my managers (Emily and Joela), wrote out the self/peer evaluation for 101 week, done writing the Shine day cheque (figuring out how to mail it), writing cheques for reimbursement (is up to date), attended office hours and Waycool. There was a Saunders farm payment mix up (tacking it down) - request has been sent to the bank for the cheque will receive it by the 24th of October (in contact with Janet about it).

12.10. Equity

- **Simon**: Attended my office hours.

12.11. Philanthropic

- **Laura**: I met with Stephanie Bealauc, pied the last of the professors (Flynn), reached out to a professor who also works at CSA to ask if any of her colleagues (astronauts) could be a guest speaker at Wine and Cheese, got the response that it would take over a year to book them, made sponsorship package for Wine and Cheese, and attended office hours. I have been doing some brainstorming for Movember; reaching out to different places to try to find a good option (no solid plans yet but likely something early in the last week of November).

12.12. Logistics

- **Pooja**: I sent up the merch sale and sent the order in.

12.13. President

- **Christina**: I have been in contact with new members, organized committee selection, done performance reviews, 1-on-1 meetings with execs, met with Professor St-Amant to discuss initiatives for the year, attended the curriculum committee, signed cheques, ordered more cheques, organized Waycool.

13. Manager updates

13.1. Secretary

- **Teagan**: I attended my office hours and Waycool, and sent out the WIG regarding everyone's weekly availability. I plan on sending an email for office hours tomorrow and will create the new schedule over reading week.

13.2. Social Media Manager

- **Thalia**: I attended my office hours, went to the meeting Autumn scheduled, and posted on the Instagram and answered peoples DM's.

13.3. Webmaster

- **Olivia [Absent]**: I put up and put down merch sale, put up and took down election promo and platforms, and posted results, took down club forms, been dealing with locker refunds, added grad photos page, and attended office hours. I will be sending out a google form sometime in the next week or so regarding submissions for our team page, so look out for that.

13.4. Financial Assistant

- **Emily**: I attend my office hours, and had my performance review.

13.5. Auditing manager

- **Joela**: I attend my office hours, helped verify club applications, had my performance review, helped with elections, and I am working on auditing stuff.

13.6. Bilingualism Assistant

- **Sienna:** I translated last meetings minutes as well as stuff for the website/Instagram, attended office hours, and went go karting.

13.7. Academic Assistant:

- **Hope:** I got a jazz band for Wine and Cheese, helped with URSO, and met with Breana

14. Departmental updates

- No updates

15. Varia

- **Christina:** I'll talk about the faculty council. We only have a 10 people voting capacity and there's 11 of you, so we don't need that many Departmental representatives there. Our first meeting is from 1-2pm this Tuesday the 24th, in person at STEM 224. It's all members from the faculty. It's a big group of people, I'll be there, and some exec members as well. Good to have your voice heard.
- **Elsa:** Will there be meeting minutes for that as well?
- **Christina:** There should be, yes. If more than 10 people go, you can go but you won't have voting power.
- **Autumn:** I wanted to mention key cards. They have access to Marion, Biosciences, and STEM when it is closed during the evening. PLEASE do not abuse this power, it has been taken away before. I also did want to mention that the faculty can see where you have scanned your key card and when, so please be careful and don't do anything sketchy. Your key card is also tied to your name.
- **John:** Does it allow you to have access to specific rooms?
- **Autumn:** No, just the SSA offices.
- **Christina:** Also, we have special permission to be here, and recognize this is a privilege that only SSA members have.
- **Breana:** For example I once let someone into a building and it was a homeless person. They let more people in, then protection came, so please be aware.
- **Christina:** Yea just so you know you're responsible for who you let in. Also don't leave the office unattended.
- **Janet:** About the Halloween event. I had one planned, but I had to change it. But there is a student that asked UOSU if we can do a haunted house event. Would we want to participate?
- **Christina:** UOSU is the student union, RSG is a recognized student group.
- **John:** What does the contributing entail?
- **Janet:** Not funding, just volunteers. Once I know more I will tell people.
- **Christina:** Anything else? Varia is anything that isn't on the agenda. It's any last minute, quick topics.
- **Laura:** If a committee is full, can people take others as help on the side, or does it have to be specifically that number of people?
- **Christina:** It depends. For constitution committees we would vote on it, for ad hoc voting doesn't have to happen.
- **Paige:** Can we use the Instagram for our department?
- **Christina:** Yes, your content has to be appropriate and bilingual.

- **Paige:** Okay, just wanted to make sure if we needed to approve anything by you guys before we post.
- **Autumn:** Yea it doesn't really matter, if you guys want to you can, but it's up to you guys.

16. Next meeting

- **Christina:** Next meeting will be early November, then will try to meet again at that time each month, for the rest of this semester. Remember that school is first, if you have some other valid reason to not make it, please let us know in advance. You are expected to attend as much as possible.

17. Motion to end meeting

- **Christina:** Motion to end meeting?
- Seconded by Autumn
- Meeting ends at 7:57 PM