

- 7.1. Call to Order
- 7.2. Territory Acknowledgement
- 7.3. Acceptance of the Agenda
- 7.4. Acceptance of the Minutes
 - 7.4.1 September 18th, 2023
- 7.5. Reports
 - 7.5.1. Executive Director's Report - *Roland G.*
 - 7.5.2. Executives' Update - *Executive Board*
- 7.6. Old Business
 - 7.6.1 Executive Director Search Process update - *Shelby W.*
 - 7.6.2 Heroes and Villains Halloween Event - *Justin S.*
- 7.7. New Business
 - 7.7.1 Committee Appointments - *Executive Board*
 - 7.7.2 Selection Committee Appointment - *Stewart M.*
- 7.8. Open Forum
- 7.9. Reminders
 - 7.9.1 Next Council Meeting: Monday, October 16th @ 5:30 pm in Council Chambers
- 7.10. Meeting Adjournment

Please refer to attached materials.

Executives: Joshua Luu – VP, Student Experience
Charlene Steeves – Chair, School of Health Sciences
Simran Anand – Chair, School of Business + Media
Jimmy Wang – VP, External
Shelby Woida – VP, Equity and Sustainability
Matthew Puyat – Chair, Downtown Campus
Vrishank Prabhu – Chair, School of Energy
Abdul Aziz Ansari – Chair, School of TCE
Justin Saint – Chair, School of Computing and Academic Studies
Mia Bui – VP, Finance and Administration

Staff: Margarita Gaidasheva – Executive Assistant
Roland Gagel – Director of Finance, Interim Executive Director

Regrets: Daniel Wong – Chair, Specialized Transport Campuses
Céline Lorient – President

Councillors:

Andrew Pham	Matt Kilpatrick
Jasmine Yang	Andrea Martin
Quoc Minh Nguyen	Owen Rains
Edward John Gatchalian	Su Yamin Tun
Kobie Smith	Shanti Stein-Gagnon
Kyla Cruz	Cora-Lynn Bell
Alexander Bridgeman	Fiona Wong
Parisa Saqib	Bobby Davidson
Xavier Delaney	Will Ondrik
Fahad Ahmed Doza	Aruzhan Basbulat
Muhannad Ahmad	Daniel Mah
Ho Yin Cheng (Pedro)	Jadon Matthias
Andrea Obnamia	

7.1. Meeting called to Order

The acting Chair, Mia Bui, calls the meeting to order at 5:35 pm (35 voting members of the Council).

- Noting that 2 executives are on temporary Leaves of Absence – Celine Lorient and Daniel Wong

7.2. Territory Acknowledgement

Matthew Puyat read the territory acknowledgement to begin the meeting.



7.3. Acceptance of the Agenda

Motion:

Be it resolved that the agenda be accepted as distributed.

Moved by: Matthew Puyat

Seconded by: Joshua Luu

Unanimous

Carried

7.4. Acceptance of the Minutes

Motion:

Be it resolved that the Council minutes from September 18, 2023, be accepted as distributed.

Moved by: Justin Saint

Seconded by: Matthew Puyat

Unanimous

Carried

7.5. Reports

7.5.1 Executive Director’s Report

- Roland G.

As submitted.

Q: Was there a profit from Bites and Brews?

- Analysis has not been done yet, but it was meant to be cost neutral.
- There was concern about the \$12 Uber vouchers – but not many people used them

Mia

- Soup & bun for \$5 deal is going well. Posters went up as well
- All are encouraged to try it and provide feedback

7.5.2 Executives’ Updates

Simran

- during September did 3 BCITSA presentations with Wellness & Advocacy, 5 overall.

Josh

- Working with Abdul to host mental health dinners, working on securing guest speakers for dinners
- Working with Abdul to promote the use of sunscreen to prevent skin cancers, working with a research team at McGill University to be part of the process, BCIT Alumni Association want to sponsor the research

Mia

- working with BMO to host a financial literacy workshop
- on November 16th, 2023, for a 2-hour talk from BMO about mutual funds and TFSA and other basic financial knowledge, beneficial for students to have
- Marketing materials are not out yet, will be sent out when ready



Jimmy

- over summer worked with the Government Relations Strategist, lobbying for student affordability issues: housing, tuition, transportation, renegotiation to improve and renew the U-Pass BC program
- As submitted.

7.6 Old Business

7.6.1 Executive Director Search Process update

- Shelby W.

- Shelby is chairing the Search Committee
- Roland has been the interim Executive Director since June of this year
- Search firm Boyden contracted to recruit a new Executive Director, same firm that found the new BCIT president.
- Executive Director Search Committee created to lead the process, they're just getting started. Search Committee needs to define what we're looking for, to set the scope of search, the type of applicants.
- Boyden is in early consulting stages. Process won't start until we do the Committee's Kickoff meeting in a couple of weeks
- Interviews should begin in January 2024 after the position description is developed, the role is marketed, and applications have come in.

7.6.2 Heroes and Villains Halloween Event

- Justin S.

- Based on the success of Bites and Brews, and what we learned from that event – will organize a Halloween party on Friday, October 27th from 4pm to 11pm.
- Halloween won't have a sponsor, so the ticket price will be \$20.
- There will be karaoke and DJ, Costume party at 7:30, raffle tickets will get you cool prizes.
- Needs volunteers: 1 for the door, 3 for costume judges, someone to watch the tabling promotions, encouraged to wear costumes. Info will be sent out.
- Since it's an SA event – would be great if councillors could participate in student engagement to help promote the event

Q: At the previous event – people had a hard time finding names on the list at the door, can this process be improved?

- Looking for better way to find names, might be easier to have a tablet, or just have a number assigned

7.7 New Business

7.7.1 Committee appointments

- Each year, Council appoints between two and four members of Council to each of the Standing Committees
- Overview of each committee was provided at the last meeting and information was circulated by email



- For each committee, any member of Council may apply to be a member of the Committee and Council will vote on applicants if there are more applicants than spaces
- At the end of the process, final motions will be adopted formally appointing members to the Committees

Motion:

Be it resolved that the following members of Council be appointed to the **Advocacy & Policy Committee** for a term ending May 31, 2024: **Cora-Lynn Bell, Bobby Davidson, Xavier Delaney**

Moved by: Jimmy Wang

Seconded by: Joshua Luu

Unanimous

Carried

Motion:

Be it resolved that the following members of Council be appointed to the **Bylaw Committee** for a term ending May 31, 2024: **Minh Nguyen, Aruzhan Basbulat, Parisa Saqib, Andrea Martin**

Moved by: Owen Rains

Seconded by: Matthew Puyat

Unanimous

Carried

Motion:

Be it resolved that the following members of Council be appointed to the **Student Spaces Development Committee** for a term ending May 31, 2024: **Fiona Wong, Owen Rains, Andrea Martin, Jasmine Yang**

Moved by: Matthew Puyat

Seconded by: Joshua Luu

Unanimous

Carried

Motion:

Be it resolved that the following members of Council be appointed to the **Finance Committee** for a term ending May 31, 2024: **Fahad Doza, Will Ondrik, Monika, Alexander Bridgeman**

Moved by: Matthew Puyat

Seconded by: Joshua Luu

Unanimous

Carried

Motion:

Be it resolved that the following members of Council be appointed to the **Clubs Committee** for a term ending May 31, 2024: **Daniel Mah, Jasmine Yang, Andrew Pham, Fahad Doza**

Moved by: Mia Bui

Seconded by: Matthew Puyat

Unanimous

Carried

Motion:

Be it resolved that the following members of Council be appointed to the **Equity & Sustainability Committee** for a term ending May 31, 2024: **Parisa Saqib, Kobie Smith, Shanti Stein-Gagnon, Bobby Davidson**

Moved by: Mia Bui

Seconded by: Owen Rains

Unanimous

Carried

Motion:

Be it resolved that the following members of Council be appointed to the **Ad Hoc Set Rep Program Committee** for a term ending May 31, 2024: **Pedro Cheng, Cora-Lynn Bell, Jadon Matthias, Owen Rains**

Moved by: Joshua Luu

Seconded by: Matthew Puyat

Unanimous

Carried

Q: Does every council member have to sit on at least one committee?

- Yes. If we go through the list of committees and a councillor doesn't get on a committee, they can still apply to be a non-voting member of that committee.
- Per 7.2(c), each Councillor must be "willing to sit on at least one" committee.

Q: Can a Club Executive join a Club committee, or would there be conflict of interest?

- "No," a club executive may not join the Clubs Committee. This is in the Bylaws and was mentioned at the Sept. 18th meeting and is included in the meeting package that Margarita circulated.

6:30 pm – Matt Kilpatrick had to leave the council meeting to attend class.

6:32 pm - 5-minute break to verify if Bylaws allow a club executive to sit on a Club Committee.

Q: Is it allowed to be a Set Rep, a Councillor, and to be on the Set Rep Ad Hoc Committee?

- Yes, allowed, there's no conflict of interest.

A councillor asked about the Bylaw committee, Mia explains about Bylaw committee, frequency of meetings, duration, level of commitment.

Motion:

Move to extend the meeting by 15 minutes to get everything done today.

Moved by: Matthew Puyat

Seconded by: Vrishank Prabhu

Unanimous

Carried

7.7.2 Selection Committee Appointment

Fahad Doza and Aruzhan Basbulat submitted their names for the Selection Committee, after a vote – Aruzhan won.

Motion:

Be it resolved that **Aruzhan Basbulat** be appointed to the **Selection Committee** for the term ending May 31st, 2024.

Moved by: Matthew Puyat

Seconded by: Vrishank Prabhu

Unanimous

Carried

7.8 Open Forum

Q: Is there an Events Committee for BCITSA?

- There's no events committee, councillor can collaborate with their Chair

Jimmy Wang (VP External) and Stewart McGillivray (Government Relations Strategist) will go on a lobby trip for a couple days to Victoria with the BC Federation of Students and the UFV Student Union Society. They will have an update in 2 weeks for the next Council meeting.

7.9 Reminders

7.9.1 Next Council Meeting: Monday, October 16th @ 17:30 in Council Chambers

7.10 Meeting Adjournment

It was moved by Matthew Puyat and seconded by Bobby Davidson that the meeting be adjourned.

Unanimous

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm

Council Meeting – October 3, 2023

7.4.1 Executive Council Meeting Minutes

This is a standard motion to approve the minutes from September 11th, 2023

Attached materials: minutes from September 18th (7 pages)

Executive Council Meeting – October 3, 2023

7.6.1 Executive Director Search Process update

VP, Equity & Sustainability will provide an update to the Council.

Executive Council Meeting – October 3, 2023

7.5.1 Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director's report is included below. It summarizes recent activities of the Association as well as a more comprehensive overview of the summer months. The Executive Director may refer to the report and take questions from Council.

Executive Council Meeting – October 3, 2023

7.5.2 Executive's Updates

The Executives may provide a verbal update.

Directors Report – Council Meeting October 3, 2023

- Executive Director Activities of Note
 - Sep 21 - There was a meeting with the Executive Director and SA President with Dr. Jeff Zabudsky, BCIT President and Lisa Collins, Associate Vice President, Students. Topics discussed were:
 - BCIT support for SA Food Security Program
 - Adding Flexible Learning (Part Time) students to UPass and Health and Dental Plan
 - The impact of the India-Canada situation on BCIT re International students
 - Confirmed there will be an invite to the SA Board to attend a part of the BCIT's Leadership Team meeting.
 - Had 1 and 1 meetings with most of the members of the Board to check in to see how they were all doing and how they were getting on with their objectives.
 - Bought 40 Shirts for Staff and Executives for National Day of Truth and Reconciliation to wear Thursday and Friday.
- Student Services
 - Upcoming Events:
 - Evening with Leaders – Oct 5 from 4pm to 6pm, Council Chambers. An opportunity for Execs, Council, Club Execs, and SA Volunteers to join the Student Services for an evening of networking, appy's and getting to know the programs and services that are here for students. There will be a Scavenger Hunt game for students to play. Invite/email notification has been sent
 - Tech Career Fair at Downtown Campus | Tech Collider – Oct 3, from 1pm to 5pm, Downtown Campus. Tech industry focused in-person career fair at the Downtown Campus! Get to know local employers, find out what jobs they are currently hiring BCIT students and grads for, and gain industry insights on the hiring process and employer needs.
- Retail
 - Started Selling Soup at Stand Central, \$4.49 per bowl and 50 cents for the bun – \$4.99 soup and bun, not including tax.
 - All locations are experiencing less customers/transaction than last year, down by about 10%
 - Revenue about the same as last year due to increase in prices
 - Transactions and Sales has 2 business days to go. Budget below is for month of Sep
 - Geared up - Transactions: 1,300 Sales: \$57,500 Budget: \$67,300
 - Stand Central - Transactions: 5,600 Sales: \$32,700 Budget: \$38,400
 - Stand South - Transactions: 7,300 Sales: \$46,000 Budget: \$61,800
 - Pavilion - Transactions: 12,750 Sales: \$107,600 Budget: \$125,300
- Habitat Pub
 - Brews and Bites Sep 22 party was a success. Sold out at 200 tickets. Was full at one point (capacity 302). Revenue for Sept is slightly higher than last year. New food specials will be coming in October
- Childcare Centre
 - No update
- People and Culture
 - Recruiting for Fund Development Specialist -
- Marketing
 - SA Specialty Campus Expos were completed. All were a success and were relatively well attended. Exploring idea of Expos for ATC and AIC for January 2024
 - The TD Bank Activation in the Great Hall happened Sept. 25 to 28 offering fun activities and opportunities for students to sign up for low-fee chequing accounts.
 - Began planning for Fri Oct 27 Halloween Party
 -

- Finance
 - No Update
- Business Systems
 - No Update
 - Other Items - None

2023-2024 Executive Objectives

Name	Position	#	Objective	Update 1
Celine Loriot	President	1	Improve students' mental health awareness through hosting 3-5 campus convos. JO w/ VP Student Experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Met with Alumni Association with Josh and Jimmy to secure tier 1 sponsorship.
		2	Enhance student life through collaboration on pre-planned student facing events on campus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In regular contact with MarCom and BCIT Student Life to see how the execs can support with events.
		3	Foster good governance principles and practices through supporting the BCITSA governance review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Been taking ICD (institute of corporate directors) governance courses this summer to ensure I have the foundational knowledge to support the BCITSA governance review.
Simran Anand	Chair, School of Business + Media	1	Host Ask Alumni Workshop pairing a graduate from a certain program working in the industry with a current student for lunch/coffee chat at least once a month to offer our students the opportunity to gain practical knowledge, career advice, and inspiration from alumni who have excelled in their respective fields.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 2023- Had a few meetings with Lisa and Heesu from the Accounting Association regarding initiating the workshop and set all the details of the event. Additionally, coordinated the budget and resources allocated from them and SA and currently working on creating a registration page for the students to sign up for a session.
		2	Reach the goal of 500 members in School of Business + Media Discord channel by the end of May 2024.	
		3	Host a Tax Clinic in collaboration with the VP Finance and Administration.	
Justin Saint	Chair, School of Computing + Academic Studies	1	Connect with two new industry expert event sponsors for QDS Hacks 2024 in order to increase capacity from 100 to 120 and sell 40 free tickets to students who identify as female, Indigenous, or LGBTQ+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aug 2023 – contacted and received responses from four previous sponsors and one potential new sponsor (Skybox Labs) Sept 2023 – connected with Indigenous Initiatives via Shelby, they can promote QDS Hacks and also have a list of Indigenous students in computing Women In Computing interested in promoting QDS Hacks Pride Committee meeting Sept 27
		2	Improve communications within the set rep program by creating new and updated documents about set reps that are concise and easy to find	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aug 2023 – worked on set rep info package for students with Margarita and Darla Margarita updated set rep info package for BCIT staff New documents live on BCITSA website Sept 2023 – Meeting with Giovanna to plan welcome email for new set reps who sign up
		3	Host one Computing social event and one karaoke event at the Pub each semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept 2023 – Computing Summer Social was a success! About 30 students attended, including four execs.

2023-2024 Executive Objectives

Name	Position	#	Objective	Update 1
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two BCITSA Computing Clubs (Computing Club, Women in Computing) and two gaming club leaders (Board game association and e-sports) were represented, even mix of BBY and DTC Recruited 20 new members to the server for the Board Games Association About 20 people ordered the \$16 combo. Discussed karaoke event with Mike, possibly for Halloween
Matthew Puyat	Chair, Downtown Campus	1	Host a De-Stress Event every semester post-midterms for the DTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June - Reached out to Events Coordinator for Event planning and exploring the potential of having movie nights. Reached out to Tech Collider - Tech Collider free for BCIT Student events. The coordinator would provide a document detailing the steps required to book an event once it is updated and finished. Events coordinator was updated shortly and clubs were contacted briefly about the event. Submitted an official application for MarCom (email) and Events. Reached out to the Computing Club, WiC, and BCIT E-sports association. September - Applied for the Community Wellness Grant from BCIT to subsidize the cost of catering for the Tech Collider. Reached out to BCIT wellness to let them know about the de-stress event.
		2	Support Student Wellness via advocating for Gym and Rec Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June - Reached out to BCIT Rec Services and scheduled a meeting about the state of the gym. Low ceiling and no supervision render the gym to be limited in what equipment is possible. Ping Pong Table, Foosball and Fixed Barbells have been added for use. Rec Services has offered to ask the renovation team if a portion of the ceiling can be increased to accommodate the new cables equipment that would work the upper body. July - Notified of Gym closure due to all-gender change rooms renovation happening from August to October. September - Reached out to Rec Services for an update on the gym and the availability of foosball and table tennis when the gym re-opens. Reached out to BCIT Student Life to see what's in store for students and see what supports they would need. 09/12/'23 - Rec services mentioned that foosball table will not come until change rooms are finished. Gym ceiling height cannot be increased as it is a fire hazard. 09/13/'23 - Chair provides complimentary tea available at the student lounge to raise SA awareness.
Daniel Wong	Chair, Aerospace Campus	1	Water Bottle Filler	
		2	Specialty Counsellor Info Sheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Aug 2023 - Read through constitution 2-6 Sep 2023 - Compiled information from the constitution, from the transition document and other sources. Submitted to Margarita for review. 7 Sep 2023 - Begun sending out to potential candidates at BMC. Will also send to Kim from career services to send out at AIC. Info Sheet is COMPLETED!!!
		3	ATC Flag/Merch	1 Sep 2023 - Emailed Shaleeta. as of September 7, no response

2023-2024 Executive Objectives

Name	Position	#	Objective	Update 1
Abdul Aziz Ansari	Chair, SoTCE, Student Spaces	1	(Joint objective with Matthew Puyat) Create a feasibility report for the improvement of the DTC gym by January 1st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working on improving the DTC gym, assessing costs and possibilities of moving it to a different room, etc. (August) Sept. - Gym currently closed
		2	Working with Josh on his objective of hosting de-stress events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Josh has onboarded me (Sept.)
		3		
Joshua Luu	VP Student Experience	1	Support Student Mental Health through Campus Convos, organizing and hosting a series of events throughout the school year. w/ President, Céline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aug/Sept - Developed a sponsorship package and was sent to BCIT SOBM, BCIT HS, Gallivan, and BCITAA. BCITAA offered tier 1 sponsorship (\$2000). Working on gathering data and information required for BCITAA, developing marketing material, and connecting with interested speaker parties (Jack.org, Foundry, BCIT Counselling Services...). Talking with Kirk to finalize dates for first event. Waiting for Mike response for catering.
		2	Supporting student well-being through mini de-stress events throughout the school year. w/ TCE, Abdul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept - Created an objective/event proposal documentation detailing information about the upcoming event sent via email to Abdul.
		3	Improving the set rep program as Vice-Chair to the Ad Hod Set Rep Committee & Developing/purchasing merch for BCIT students to improve engagement and branding for BCITSA. w/ SOE, Vrishank	Sept - Met and discussed with Vrishank throughout Sept to discuss the set rep program, scope, and next steps to improve the program. Merch funding to purchase exists, need to discuss and improve on further.

DECISION NOTE

September 28, 2023

PREPARED FOR:	BCITSA Council
PREPARED BY:	Government Relations Strategist
ISSUE:	Selection Committee Appointment

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council appoint one Councillor (a non-Executive) to the Selection Committee, the body responsible for selecting members for the independent Elections and Appeals Committees.

MOTION:

Be it resolved that _____ [a Councillor] be appointed to the Selection Committee for the term ending May 31st, 2024.

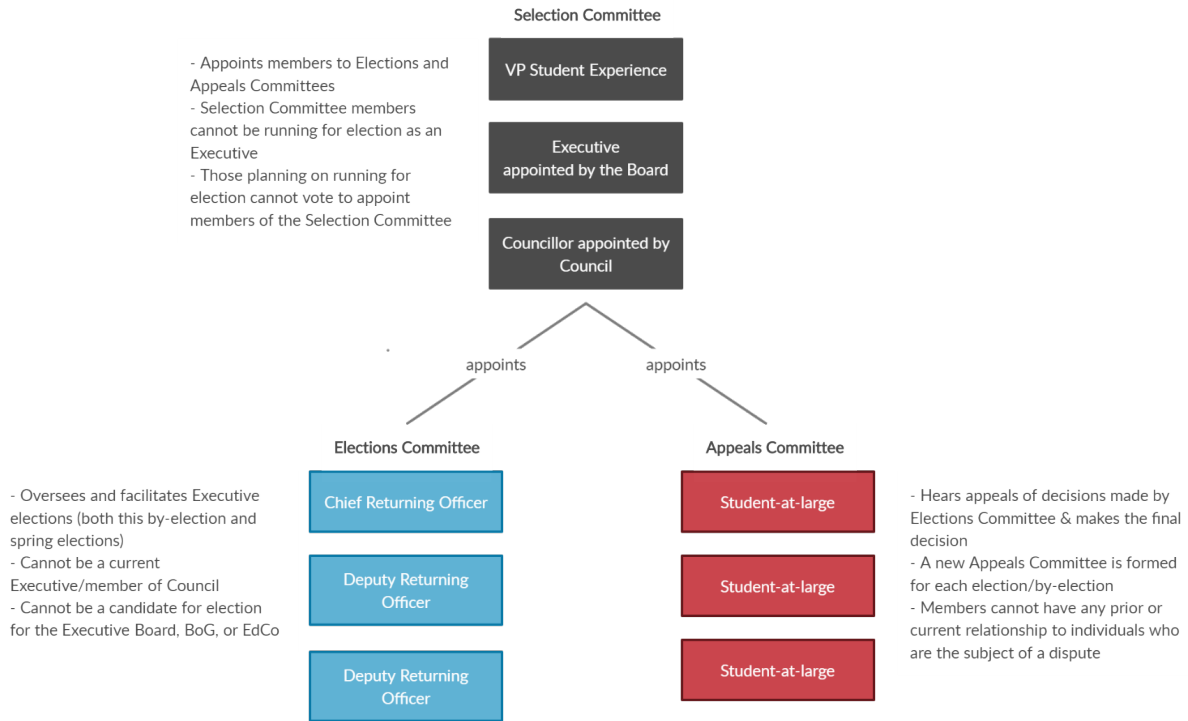
BACKGROUND:

The Selection Committee is how the Association ensures that the administration of elections is impartial. It is ordinarily chaired by the VP Student Experience (or another Executive, if the VP Student Experience plans to be a candidate in the elections) and includes one other Executive and one Councillor. All three individuals on the Selection Committee **cannot be running for election as an Executive**. Any members of Council still considering running in the elections should refrain from proposing, seconding, debating, or voting on motions to appoint members of this committee.

The committee's work involves reviewing resumés from students who apply for the Elections and Appeals Committees and deciding on the best candidates. These applicants must not be current Executives nor Councillors and they will be found through marketing efforts by BCITSA staff. The Selection Committee usually does not need to do any recruitment, although may assist if marketing efforts do not produce enough applicants.

The time commitment is about **two to three meetings** of about **one to two hours each**. This year, the committee is chaired by Joshua Luu, VP Student Experience; the vice-chair is Mia Bui, VP Finance & Administration. Often, the committee's work is done via email rather than during formal meetings.

Please refer to the diagram on the following page, accompanied by those sections of Bylaws applicable to these appointments.



“Selection Committee

5.13. The Selection Committee shall be responsible for appointing members of the Election Committee and the Appeals Committee [...]. The Committee consist of the following individuals:

- (a) Vice President Student Experience;
- (b) one Executive, as vice-chair, as appointed by the Executive Committee [...]; and
- (c) one Councillor, to be appointed by Council,

subject to the following restrictions and exceptions:

- (d) any Executive running for re-election shall not be permitted to be a member of the Selection Committee or cast a vote to name a member of the Selection Committee;
- (e) no member of the Selection Committee shall be eligible to stand for election as an Executive;
- (f) in the event that the Vice President Student Experience is seeking election to an Executive position named in Bylaw 4.1, and is therefore ineligible to sit on the Selection Committee pursuant to Bylaw 5.13(d), an alternate member of the Selection Committee shall be appointed by the Executives subject to the procedures and restrictions of this Bylaw;
[...]

INFORMATION NOTE

September 29, 2023

PREPARED FOR:	BCITSA Council
PREPARED BY:	VP External & Government Relations Strategist
ISSUE:	External Lobbying Updates

OVERVIEW

Under the Bylaws, external advocacy is conducted primarily (though not exclusively) through the office of the Vice-President External, in conjunction with any other staff and Executives designated for such purposes. Although this occasionally involves TransLink and/or municipal and regional governments, BCITSA lobbying mainly targets decision-makers in the federal and provincial governments.

This Information Note provides Council with a broad overview of the activities of the office of the VP External during the first four months of the 2023/24 Executive Board term. Future updates are generally structured around motions from the Advocacy and Policy Committee, debriefs on lobby trips, or analysis regarding major government announcements or policies.

ONGOING PRIORITIES

The scope of external advocacy can sometimes be quite broad and numerous issues are described in detail throughout this Information Note. A couple general areas to reference would be housing, BC policies on sexual violence and misconduct, and recent government events.

The President, VP External, and Government Relations Strategist have been quite active on these fronts. They recently attended a consultation hosted by the City of Burnaby relating to a proposed affordable housing agency that the City is planning, which would help to approve and construct more affordable housing in Burnaby. In parallel, the team is also tracking BC policies on rent increases and will be engaging with BCIT on any proposed rent increases in 2024.

Numerous BCITSA staff and executives have been engaged in BCIT's ongoing review of the sexual violence and misconduct policy. The VP External and the Government Relations Strategist have been communicating with government about their broad expectations, and their review of the BC law on this subject. In tandem with this work, the President recently secured agreement from BCIT to extend their consultation and present to BCITSA Council in October.

Recently, the Premier of BC and the Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills held a student town-hall at BCIT's Aerospace Technology Campus. This provided the BCITSA President and VP External, with staff, an invaluable opportunity to pursue certain advocacy files with government and network with fellow organizers in the sector. Finally, the BCITSA President also secured agreement from BCIT's President that Presidential town halls with students would be scheduled for 2023/24, the first time a BCIT President has done this in many years.

OBJECTIVES

The VP External's 2023/24 objectives cover several areas of affordability affecting BCIT students: the U-Pass BC and measures to support international and domestic students with the rising cost of education. Each of these is detailed below, but can broadly be described as follows: for the U-Pass BC program, the BCITSA is working to get part-time students (currently excluded) included in the program. Similarly, greater exemptions would allow more students to opt-out of the program where they have no practical use for it, so this continues to be a priority.

On affordability, there are two priorities. For international students, BC must proceed with their long-promised and overdue regulations providing more predictability for international students' tuition increases. For domestic students, the focus (described below) is on increasing the levels of non-repayable student aid such as the BC Access Grant and the Canada Student Grant.

PARTNERSHIPS

Although BCIT Student Association retains its independence from other student coalitions and organizations, collaboration has been a huge part of the Association's success when it comes to advocacy. Indeed, this is a hallmark of any progress achieved by the student movement in the past two decades. These relationships have only deepened in recent years.

Over the summer, the VP External and the Government Relations Strategist engaged in planning meetings with the Federal Student Advocacy Alliance (FSAA), of which BCITSA is an affiliated member. The FSAA brings together two large student groups from BC and Alberta, along with the BCITSA and the Saskatchewan Polytechnic Student Association (SPSA), making it one of the largest student organizations in Canada. Student aid and more federal involvement in student housing will be among the priorities of FSAA this year. Provincially, the President and VP External held introductory meetings with the Alliance of BC Students, an advocacy partner of the BCITSA. The VP External has also attended training with the BC Federation of Students at the start of his term, and collaborations continue, including the upcoming lobby trip to Victoria.

ADVOCACY AND POLICY COMMITTEE

The Advocacy and Policy Committee, "AdPoCo," is one of the six standing committees of Council, chaired by the VP External. The Executive Board has selected Charlene Steeves, Chair of the School of Health Sciences, as the vice-chair for the Committee, and Council may appoint between two and four members of Council to complete the membership roster.

The Committee's work this year will be co-developed with input from Committee members. Most of the Association's 10 external policies (EXT-1 through EXT-10) were adopted or reviewed in the past eighteen months so the Committee will be able to focus on the development of new policies and the execution of advocacy campaigns relating to existing policies.

SPECIAL FOCUS: U-PASS BC

The current U-Pass BC contract runs from January 2020 to April 2025; it provides price certainty by limiting annual increases to the monthly fee to approximately 2%, well below recent levels of inflation and certainly below the rate of increase for regular transit fares in Metro Vancouver.

Due to the complexity of renewing the contract and running a referendum on fees, negotiations fall in 2023/24 so that everything can be in place prior to the 2025 expiration of the current contract. The VP External has been selected to join the smaller Working Group, alongside a few other post-secondary and student union colleagues, to drive the negotiation forward.

The Student Association has been successful so far in promoting a common negotiation position around increased exemptions - the program would still be universal but it could work for a lot more people if more exemptions were possible. This is a highly complex area but is generally informed by the BCITSA stance found in policy EXT-9 ([link](#)).

A particularly unique BCIT-BCITSA complication with the program currently is that all BCIT Flexible Learning (formerly PTS, Part-Time Studies) students are excluded from the program. In order to overcome this challenge, additional agreement will be necessary with BCIT (logistics), other U-Pass schools (potential modification of the program), as well as TransLink and the BC Government (extraordinary funding request).

In order to pursue the complex objectives of BCITSA on the U-Pass BC program, multiple pathways are being explored. The President and Executive Director have raised the matter directly with the BCIT President and AVP Students. The BCITSA Chair of TCE has also reinforced the climate action arguments in favour of adding more student to the program, and the BCIT President has been receptive to this. Finally, the President and VP External and Government Relations Strategist will be meeting in October with BCIT's VP External and government relations team in order to convey the need for a united front lobbying government.

SPECIAL FOCUS: BC FUNDING REVIEW

The Student Association participated in the BC Government's funding review ([link](#)) launched in spring 2022, in conjunction with other student unions, faculty and support staff labour unions, and the post-secondary institutions. The BCITSA submission ([link](#)) was tabled in summer 2022 and those in the sector have been relentlessly following up with government in order to clarify the next steps in the process. This work will continue over the coming year.

SPECIAL FOCUS: STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

There are many parallels between the BC government and federal government approaches to student financial assistance. In recent years, both have reduced interest rates to 0%, and both paused payments for six months back in 2020. The BC government promised in fall 2020 that they would increase the BC Access Grant further, but this has not happened. The student union movement is unanimous that this needs to happen no later than the next Budget (February 2024) so that it's in place prior to the next election.

The federal dynamic is slightly different. After promising to increase grants by 40% in 2019/20, they actually doubled grants for several years during the pandemic. This doubling expired and student lobbying was successful in getting the federal government to implement the 40% increase for 2023/24. However, the government's budget indicated that this was for only one year, and that they would be collaborating with student leadership across Canada in order to develop a sustainable permanent amount for Budget 2024. As with the BC Access Grant, pursuing this file will be a major focus of external advocacy this year.