

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**



### **UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' COUNCIL**

**25 September 2019**

## **September Council Meeting Recap**

The University Students' Council (USC) met on Wednesday September 25, 2019 for the third meeting of the 2019-20 academic year. 46 USC Councillors participated in a packed meeting which included several presentations and nine motions.

Council received a presentation from the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance's (OUSA) Executive Director and USC alumni, Eddy Avila, and USC Vice President and OUSA President, Catherine Dunne. The presentation highlighted the student-facing, evidence-based advocacy that the organization carries out. This year's OUSA priorities include mental health, financial aid, preparing students for the workforce, and sexual violence prevention and response. They also spoke to OUSA's current projects, including a letter writing campaign to the provincial government against OSAP cuts. "The annual OUSA presentation is a great opportunity for Council to learn more about OUSA and our advocacy priorities for the year," said Vice President Dunne, "we were especially happy to welcome former USC President Eddy Avila back to campus to speak in the capacity of his new role at OUSA."

Councillors Adewusi, Hunter, and Keenan shared information on the Student Outreach Strategy for the upcoming 2019 federal election. Representatives from Elections Canada will engage with students on campus ahead of voting day, and support External Service Points (ESPs) and advanced polls in the coming weeks. The Vice President portfolio will also launch the USC's Get Out the Vote campaign next week, which will include an on-campus debate, information about voting, and educational materials on key electoral issues related to post-secondary students.

Nineteen candidates ran for seven positions to represent the USC at OUSA's General Assembly (GA) in November, a conference that facilitates the passage of standing policies and directs the focus of the organization. Online voting will occur on Thursday and results will be released by Friday. "Our team was thrilled to see so many incredibly qualified students run to be an OUSA Delegate this year," said Vice President Dunne, "seeing these candidates speak gives us great confidence going into the Fall GA and we're so thankful for the level of engagement and passion of our students." Council passed Motion 1 to Elect Delegates to OUSA.

Motion 2, a Motion to Elect the Clubs Governance Committee was approved by Council. Seven students, including Kevin Lee, Samantha Khaouli, Shehryar Aamir, Raf Abecassis, Faran Khalid, Ronit Sharma, and Xinyou Zhou, were elected to the Committee, which is committed to setting strategic, long-term goals for the clubs community to facilitate future growth and the development of clubs and their student leaders. "Institutionalizing Council oversight to the Clubs Governance Committee will allow councillors to engage more meaningfully in the USC's clubs system and improve accountability in clubs governance," said Secretary-Treasurer Hodgins.

Council also passed Motion 3, a Motion to Elect the World University Service of Canada (WUSC) Councillor. Councillor Adewusi was elected to represent Council on the Committee, which serves to improve education, employment, and empowerment opportunities for refugees across the country. "Integrating international students into the Western community is a cause that is close to

my heart,” said Adewusi, “this school has become my home over the past few years, and I want to make sure that incoming students have the same wonderful experience that I have had thus far.”

A Motion to Elect Orientation Advisory Board Representatives (Motion 4) and a Motion to Elect Council Representatives to the LGBTQ2+ Committee (Motion 5) were also passed by Council. The Orientation Advisory Board’s student-at-large position will be filled by Allan Muriuki, and the internal representative position will be filled by Councillor Reesor. Councillors Campbell, Hunter, Kamenetsky, Morrison, Quang, Vijay, and White were selected to serve on Council’s LGBTQ2+ Committee.

Finally, Council approved Motions 6 through 9, including the approval of the Womxn’s Policy Paper, an amendment to the Grants Committee Terms of Reference, an update to Council Resource Members, and an update to the Hiring Committee.

The USC Executive provided written and oral executive reports to Council. Councillors had a number of questions regarding the recently announced Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the London Police Services and Western University relating to the sharing of information from Police to Western for Code of Student Conduct investigations. President Jalayer answered councillors’ questions, conveying that the USC has concerns about the scope of the MOU, but noting that Western’s administration has told the Executive that the spirit of the MOU is to address only the most serious charges related to student safety. He acknowledged that many councillors and students-at-large have concerns about this issue and encouraged them to reach out to him to inform the USC’s advocacy strategy moving forward. “We know this is an important issue to our students,” said Jalayer, “we have already communicated our concerns to Western’s administration and we will continue to advocate on behalf of our constituents as we gather more feedback about students’ perspectives.”

The 2019-20 Executive team is thrilled with the level of enthusiasm and engagement of this year’s council and are looking forward to a productive year collaborating with councillors to effectively represent the USC’s 30,000 constituents. The next regular meeting of Council is on Wednesday, October 30, 2019 at 7:00pm in the UCC Community Room - all are welcome to attend.

*The University Students’ Council (USC) is a student-led organization that exists to advocate for and represent the over 30,000 undergraduate students at Western University. Our mission is to enhance the education experience and quality of life for all undergraduates at Western University and our vision is that students have the power to change the world.*

**To enhance the educational experience and quality of life for all undergraduates at Western University**

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