

MEDIA ADVISORY



UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' COUNCIL

31 October 2019

October Council Meeting Recap

The University Students' Council (USC) met on Wednesday October 30, 2019 for the fourth meeting of the 2019-20 academic year.

34 USC Councillors received two presentations from stakeholders across the Western community. First, a USC Allyship Network Representative, Nicole Dewey, introduced anti-oppression approaches to allyship on campus. Following Nicole's presentation, Student Programs Officer Cecilia Liu expressed her support for the network, stating that "allyship is an impactful practice that the USC is continually working to improve upon. Everybody deserves to feel safe on our campus and I look forward to supporting the Allyship team as they strive to break down barriers this year."

The second presentation was from the Western Marching Band Director, Quinn Fleming, who discussed the current state of the band, highlighting its growth and success on a national stage. Fleming also provided a brief history of the Marching Band and stressed the important role it plays in fostering school spirit. Secretary-Treasurer Declan Hodgins noted that he expects the Executive will propose an increase to this fee during the presentation of the 2020/21 budget in the new year.

Among action items on the agenda was the Ratification of a Member of the Board of Directors. Council voted unanimously to ratify Sophia Ge to sit on the Board, which manages the corporate side of the USC. Ge expressed her excitement stating, "this dynamic team is essential to informing the development of the USC's strategic plans; I am looking forward to working alongside my fellow Board members to continue the impactful work being carried out."

Motion 2, A Motion to Make Amendments to Advocacy Papers Policy, which sought to increase the number of papers published per year, passed unanimously. This motion will increase the USC's ability to advocate on issues that are pertinent to the student experience, on and off campus.

Council also unanimously passed Motion 3, a Motion to Provide Menstrual Products on Campus. This motion calls on the University to provide menstrual products in washrooms free of charge across campus. Vice President Cat Dunne noted that the provision of menstrual products aims to reduce stress, both in terms of financial accessibility and usage in emergencies, for all menstruators on campus. Dunne affirmed her support for the motion, stating, "Council's unanimous endorsement of this Motion illustrates the impact that the provision of menstrual products can have on our students. We hope the university takes this ask seriously as no student should have their learning negatively affected by affordability or stigma related to menstruation."

Motion 7, A Motion to Address Racism on Campus, was passed unanimously. This motion was added on Council floor and calls on the University to create an anti-racism and anti-oppression strategy in consultation with the USC, the USC's Ethnocultural Support Services, and members of on-campus racial groups. President Bardia Jalayer highlighted the importance of the Motion:

“This Motion will allow the USC to call on the university to truly tackle systemic racism on our campus. We are committed to advocating for a safe, inclusive campus for students from all backgrounds and we will continue to engage in conversations about the important work that must come to move our community forward.” Jalayer also highlighted the [joint response](#) released earlier today in collaboration with the USC’s Ethnocultural Support Services, the African Students Association, the Black Students’ Association, the Caribbean Students’ Organization, and the Society of Graduate Students.

Finally, the USC Executive provided their monthly updates to Council, including an update on their year-long roadmap. Communications Officer Nico Waltenbury highlighted the USC’s efforts to engage Council in gathering student feedback and tasked Council to bring their constituents’ perspectives on four topics to next month’s meeting: Academic Counselling, Fall Reading Week Date, Self-Reported Absences, and Off-Campus Housing. This feedback will be used to guide the USC’s advocacy efforts both on- and off-campus.

The 2019-20 Executive team is thankful for Council’s respectful and productive engagement, especially during a challenging time on Western’s campus. Councillors continue to play a critical role in representing and elevating the voices of our diverse student population. The next regular meeting of Council is on Wednesday, November 29 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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