

Students Nova Scotia	Board of Directors	students 
	<i>Meeting Minutes</i>	

Meeting Name:	Board Meeting		
Meeting Date:	April 22-23, 2014		
Meeting Time:	9:00 A.M.		
Venue:	Bloomfield Centre (Second floor), StFX	City:	Antigonish
Attendees			
Primary and Secondary Delegates:	Amy Brierley (Chair/StFXSU), Darcy Shea (ASU), Matt Rios (Vice Chair/ASU), Alexander Elderkin (Kingstec NSCCSA), Gorba Bhandari (SMUSA), Scott Byrne (Kingstec NSCCSA), Jeremy Mott (Kingstec NSCCSA), James Patriquin (SMUSA), Matthew Latimer (CBUSU/Treasurer).		
Other attendees:	Jonathan Williams (Executive Director), Bob Parker (Director of Research), Danielle Andres (Research Officer), Kayti Baur (Equity Officer), Amanda Kolwich (SMUSA).		
Absent:	ASTSU, Patrick Visintini (DAGS, regrets), Brennan Boudreau (CBUSU), Benjamin Gunn-Doerge (StFXSU), Sagar Jha (DSU), Ramz Aziz (DSU).		
Quorum (50% of Members represented?): YES			

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Roll Call
- 3) Approval of **agenda**

Agenda approved **by general consent**

#### 4) Admission of Kingstec NSCCSA as Full Member

MR (Vice Chair): Can I get a motion to admit Kingstec NSCCSA as a full member in StudentsNS.

#### **Motion Moved**

Be It Resolved that Kingstec NSCCSA be admitted as a full member in StudentsNS.

ASU: In favour.

CBUSU: In favour.

Kingstec NSCCSA: In Favour

StFXSU: In Favour

SMUSA: In Favour

#### **Motion passes unanimously.**

AB (Chair): I want to say that it has been a pleasure to work with Kingstec NSCCSA thus far.

SB (Kingstec NSCCSA): Thank you. I hope that as we go along more campuses will join StudentsNS as well and I look forward to working with everyone.

MR (ASU): I hope that StudentsNS will be much more than an advocacy resource for the NSCC colleges. There is a lot of potential for NSCC around policy discussion as well. I think this will be a relationship that is multi-pronged.

#### 5) Proposed GRR Campaign

#### **Motion to go in camera**

**Motion approved by general consent**

#### **Motion to go out of camera**

**Motion approved by general consent**

#### 6) Quality Position Paper

DA (Research Officer): First, I want to go through the principles, recommendations and concerns of the Quality Report.

#### **Resolution:**

##### ***Principles:***

- *Quality measurement must focus on both institutional accountability and educational improvement.*
- *Teaching, research and services are the fundamental responsibilities for university faculty and must be given appropriate emphasis.*
- *Faculty members have a right to dignified terms of employment commensurate with their training, the services they provide and the financial capacity of their institution.*
- *Student learning should be at the centre of quality assessments.*

- *Institutional differences and stakeholder needs must be considered in developing approaches to quality, and quality measurement should not impose a one-size-fits-all approach.*
- *Assessments of quality should consider the relationships between inputs, outputs, secondary and learning outcomes and external factors.*
- *Institutions have a responsibility to manage student expectations by establishing clear learning objectives and measuring the learning outcomes.*
- *A system approach is needed to support post-secondary education quality in Nova Scotia.*
- *Policies, programs, and services in post-secondary education should meet student expectations to help prepare them for lifelong success, including in their citizenship, careers, and personal well-being.*
- *Students, faculty, staff, and policymakers are all responsible for quality in post-secondary institutions and should all be active participants in an institution's quality culture.*
- *Nova Scotia students must be empowered to actively participate in setting their post-secondary system's direction via engagement through their representative student bodies, within the post-secondary institutions themselves, and through the broader democratic process.*
- *Commitment to continual improvement in teaching is fundamental to a high quality post-secondary education system.*
- *To promote cooperation and accountability, a centralized and independent body should provide external oversight to the quality assurance process.*
- *Quality assurance processes should not be so arduous as to impose an undue administrative and/or resource burden on post-secondary institutions and unduly divert important resources away from core activities.*
- *Institutional quality assurance policies should be student and learning focused.*
- *Articulated programs and credit transfer are important for accommodating diverse students taking diverse post-secondary education pathways.*
- *Quality assurance is integral to an effective credit transfer system.*
- *A commitment to continuous improvement in faculty teaching skills is critical to maintaining and enhancing quality of education.*
- *Students should be empowered to assess and recognize their own learning as they move forward in their education and/or careers.*

JW (ED): I think we have too many principles in this paper

DA (Research Officer): The idea was to make it as specific as possible and while making it as applicable and accessible to the greatest number as possible.

MR (Vice Chair): I think if we take out the principles that we like and use those statements they need to be value statements, and many of the principles we have are not value statements.

**Concerns:**

- *Rankings fail to consider the unique missions and characteristics of different institutions.*
- *Rankings focus too heavily on inputs and outputs in their assessments.*
- *Rankings provide and promote a misleading representation of quality.*
- *Class size is not necessarily a direct indicator of education quality.*
- *Universities prioritize research output over teaching in assessing institutional quality and in recognizing and promoting faculty*
- *Research activity does not necessarily correlate positively with higher quality instruction.*

- *Informed discussion on the situation of sessional instructors is impeded by a lack of accessible, system-level data on the number of sessional instructors and the percentage of courses they teach.*
- *The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission's new Graduate Outcomes Survey has a more limited scope than the previous Graduate Survey.*
- *Institutions are not required to release the findings of the National Survey of Student Engagement, which limits access to the findings, accountability and the survey's usefulness in understanding and enhancing quality.*
- *The average literacy score in the International Assessment of Adult Competencies declined for Canadians aged 18-30 between 1994 and 2012.*
- *Mission statements are too vague to be used as de facto definitions of quality and insufficiently responsive to the needs of students and other stakeholders.*
- *Nova Scotia's university system lacks long-term system-level thinking, clear public policy goals and objectives, and accountability mechanisms.*
- *Nova Scotia's post-secondary institutions have not historically taken collaborative approaches to addressing common challenges.*
- *Tying funding to poorly developed key performance indicators can create perverse incentives and negatively impact on education quality.*
- *No formal mechanisms are in place to ensure student representatives at the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission's Board of Directors are actually accountable to the students they represent.*
- *The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission does not receive adequate funding to fulfill its mandate.*
- *Universities often fail to implement recommendations that emerge from their quality assurance processes.*
- *Not all institutional quality assurance policies explicitly outline the criteria and/or standards by which a program will be assessed.*
- *Not all institutional quality assurance processes assess non-academic units that are central to the overall student experience, such as libraries, learning centres, etc.*
- *Not all institutional quality assurance policies include a formal role for students.*
- *Not all institutional quality assurance policies explicitly outline the criteria and/or standards by which a program will be assessed.*
- *Not all institutional quality assurance processes assess non-academic units that are central to the overall student experience, such as libraries, learning centres, etc.*
- *Not all institutional quality assurance policies include a formal role for students.*
- *Institutional quality assurance policies are not always easily accessible and some lack sufficient detail to inform participants.*
- *Adjusting the program review schedule to the accreditation schedule saves resources, but may alter the aims of the program review process.*
- *Credit transfer processes vary significantly by institution.*
- *Acadia University and Cape Breton University are the only universities that charge fees to recognize transfer credits.*
- *It is difficult and often time-consuming for students to determine whether credits will be accepted when they seek to change institutions.*
- *More research needs to be conducted to understand post-secondary student mobility.*
- *A decline in participation rates undermines the benefits of conducting course/instructor evaluations.*
- *Instructor and course evaluations are administered too late in the semester to effect change.*
- *Students and faculty do not adequately understand the value of instructor and course evaluations and how they inform quality assessments.*

- *Insufficient information is available on faculty training and on-going professional development in pedagogical methods in Nova Scotia.*
- *Co-curricular records can unduly focus on university-approved extra-curricular activities at the expense of other activities.*

**Recommendations:**

- *The Province, in partnership with the universities, the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission, Students Nova Scotia and faculty representatives, should undertake a comprehensive review of the current state of teaching and learning in Nova Scotia universities.*

DA (Research Officer): We will be receiving university data from most of the universities except CBU as the request would take an unusual amount of time to complete.

- *A Teaching and Learning Envelope should be created within the University Funding Distribution Formula, tied to initiatives to train current and incoming faculty to develop instructional skills.*

MR (Vice Chair): Can we say that this should be tied to universities? I don't believe that it should be the province's sole responsibility.

JW (ED): It's the province saying that you have to meet these standards for doing this to get that money.

- *The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission's Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework should be used as a starting point to develop a set of program-level learning outcomes common to all universities.*
- *The Department of Labour and Advanced Education should work with stakeholders (including the Department of Education, post-secondary institutions, the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission, and students) to implement the Collegiate Learning Assessment to test first-year and graduating university students.*

JP (SMUSA): I like that recommendation, one thing I would like to look at in the future is where students are at Saint Mary's after they graduate. I think that would be really useful in assessing quality.

DA (Research Officer): The MPHEC does do that; however the new survey compared to the old survey does not include surveying grad students.

- *The Universities-Government Partnership should fund a pilot e-Portfolio project, to be introduced at one or more Nova Scotia universities in partnership with the Prior Learning Assessment Centre and Students Nova Scotia.*

DA (Research Officer): The idea for this was taken from NSCC. An e-portfolio would be a great way to showcase learning outcomes of your degree to potential employers.

- *The Province of Nova Scotia and our post-secondary institutions should guarantee that all international graduates of Nova Scotia post-secondary institutions have sufficient language fluency to succeed in Canada's labour market.*
- *The Maritime Provinces should provide adequate funding to the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission so that it can provide reputable and reliable data on post-secondary issues in the region.*

JP (SMUSA): I think we need to be explicit about restoring funding to the MPHEC survey for graduates.

JW (ED): We could have a stand-alone recommendation that would explicitly state--restore funding to the MPHEC to allow them to continue with the graduate survey. What we have currently is to “*provide adequate funding to the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission so that it can provide reputable and reliable data on post-secondary issues in the region*”

JP (SMUSA): So can that recommendation say--to create or restore the graduate or post-graduate survey?

DA (Research Officer): The survey is done through MPHEC and included graduate students, which was the old survey.

- *The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission should maintain the scope of its Graduate Survey.*
- *The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission should conduct more detailed research into credit transfers between designated institutions.*
- *The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission should establish a database to show students the equivalencies of courses taken at designated institutions across the Maritimes.*
- *In partnership with universities, the Province and student organizations, the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission should develop a certification program to recognize universities that have met established quality assurance standards.*

DA (Research Officer): B.C currently does this already and it is especially useful for international students coming into the provinces and ultimately can lead to greater retention.

MR (Vice Chair): I guarantee that looking at the retention numbers are higher in B.C than in Nova Scotia for international students because of this program and for other reasons as well of course. The benefits of doing this are clear as can be seen in B.C.

- *Post-secondary stakeholders should collaborate to develop and implement a standard tool to report on Collegiate Learning Assessment results and a set of inputs, outputs, and secondary outcomes.*
- *Institutional quality assurance policies should be clear and explicit and provide guidelines for self-study and clear criteria for assessing academic units.*
- *Institutions should administer course evaluations at both the end and midpoint of courses.*
- *All post-secondary institutions' quality assurance policies should include a requirement for students to participate in and help lead program review activities.*
- *Non-academic units should be included on all institutional program review schedules and appropriate assessment criteria should be established.*

- *A Quality Assurance Envelope should be created within the University Funding Distribution Formula, be tied to institutions' adherence to the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission proposed quality assurance certification standards.*
- *The Province should require that universities obtain the proposed Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission quality assurance certification to be allowed to recruit internationally.*

JP (SMUSA): This could hinder the ability of universities to recruit students internationally.

MR (Vice Chair): The thing is universities such as Saint Mary's rely heavily on recruiting international students so they would have no choice other than to get the quality assurance certification.

DA (Research Officer): I think the universities would make sure to get the certification. The difficulty in being certified to recruit internationally has applied more to private institutions.

- *Students Nova Scotia should be empowered in the selection of Nova Scotia's student representative at the Board of the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission.*
- *The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission's Board should be expanded to include an international student representative, who should be selected by Students Nova Scotia and the primary student representative organizations of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.*

DA (Research Officer): I think we could get rid of the second board.

GB (SMUSA): You could join those two points together.

JP (SMUSA): Should it be expanded to include an additional representative not be confused with 1 representative only.

GB (SMUSA): Do we want the student representatives to be appointed by StudentsNS?

JW (ED): We want the student reps to be appointed by other students but that's a good question.

DA (Research Officer): My concern with these recommendations is that we do not represent all schools in the province. So if someone from a school we don't represent wants to be on the board will we be considering them as well?

GB (SMUSA): What about "selected by" instead of "appointed by" for the last recommendation. So just change the language a bit. Or, even "recommended" wouldn't be a bad word there.

JW (ED): We have to represent the majority of students in Nova Scotia and if we were to lose Dalhousie at some point in the future then we would have to change our thinking on things.

DS (ASU): I think that for the last recommendation it is somewhat confusing by saying *primary student representative organizations of New Brunswick* because there is a CFS located in New Brunswick.

JW (ED): I meant the single primary student organization that has the majority.

MR (Vice Chair): Can I get a motion to accept the proposed quality paper.

**Motion Moved**

ASU: In Favour

CBUSU: In Favour

Kingstec NSCCSA: In Favour

StFXSU: In Favour

SMUSA: In Favour

**Motion passes unanimously.**

7) CBUSU request to share legal fees pursuant to clause 54 of the Governing Policies

**Motion to move in camera**

**Motion approved by general consent**

**Motion to move out of camera**

**Motion approved by general consent.**

MR (ASU): Regarding the Presentation from CBSU on their ongoing litigation with CFS national, there will be a document circulated within the board regarding this. No decision at this time as to whether funding will be provided; more details required on the case in 2014-15, but money should be put aside to support CBUSU if the next Board determines that the case constitutes an egregious violation of StudentsNS Values and Principles.

8) Discussion and Approval: 2014-15 Budget

**Revenues:**

ML (Treasurer): As you can see there wasn't a lot of change in revenues. Other than that we don't know what will happen with special projects. We expect that we will obtain student assemblies revenue, leader lab revenue and the mental health project revenue.

In the past DAL and DASA have had their revenues separately submitted and documented through MPHEC and we use MPHEC statistics in order to determine what we charge our members based on their full-time enrolment. Now DASA stats and data are being aggregated with Dalhousie's therefore we don't know what separate item to charge DASA as opposed to DAL. I sent an email to Dal asking if they could send some sort of credible documentation on the full-time and part-time student numbers from DASA for last year. The way that we bill and what we charge this year will determine what we will charge for next year. That way they can see information from MPHEC and it is a third party and is independent.

JW (ED): The issue is that DASA has left StudentsNS and we have no way on knowing how much money DASA was contributing to StudentsNS.

ML (Treasurer): Right, in 2011-12 the data from DASA and Dalhousie was aggregated so we don't have the information in those years.

AB (Chair): I think if we assume DASA is contributing a certain amount based on a previous year we are opening ourselves up for flack.

JW (ED): The issue is we don't know for sure, if say their enrolment numbers went up.

ML (Treasurer): Let's move forward today based on the numbers that we have.

JW (ED): Kingstec was an associate member and is now a full member. Why don't we just drop Kingstec from the budget and just put NSCCSA?

MR (Vice Chair): If we start adding individual NSCCSA campuses it creates the connection to votes as well that they are completely autonomous. I think let's just be fair with our messaging.

ML (Treasurer): Can I get a motion to go in camera to discuss HR issues?

**Motion to go into camera**

**Motion approved by general consent**

**Motion to move out of camera**

**Motion approved by general consent**

ML (Treasurer): By passing the budget today, individual members are confirming that they will contribute funding to StudentsNS based on these enrolment numbers. Moving on, looking at project revenues.

### **Payroll Subsidies:**

In terms of payroll subsidies, each time we get special project, a portion of that--5 percent or so--is applicable to payroll. This year we received a good deal of funding from payroll subsidies and we are anticipating receiving really good funding again next year.

### **Special Projects:**

In terms of project-by-project, the Mend the Gap campaign, we are not certain the amount of funding we will receive but this is sort of the best estimate, keeping in mind that we might not get this funding. This funding is from D250. We could get more funding as well.

### **Communications and Campaigns:**

ML (Treasurer): Since this was discussed last, we were able to get the grant for Kayti to stay on and do type-setting for us and that's great. The rent at the Hub is going up. We are on a six-month contract; my sense is a lot of people are going to want to shift into a different space. If rent exceeds \$800 a month, we are going to try and find something else.

JW (ED): For minute taker, we have \$500 bucks a semester. I also think that a tremendous amount of time has been put into the minutes and they are highly detailed as of right now. We need to have a discussion in the future about whether they are too detailed. For the honoraria we are committing

to the chair is \$700, \$350 for the treasurer and \$350 for the vice chair, to claim if you are in your roles until the AGM.

MR (ASU): In terms of transparency of the minute taker, you ideally want someone who has minimal conflict of interest.

ML (Treasurer): There is a carry-over estimate that you made based on what we have spent this year. Considering what we went through the past year, I am not 100 percent sure on that carry-over number.

JW (ED): I am optimistic that that number is accurate but we are still waiting to hear regarding other expenses. We have saved on travel and a number of other areas. We have also made money from the special projects, such as over \$2,000 from the Summit on Youth in the Economy and around that for the Student Wellness Conference and this is money that we don't have to give back.

MR (Chair): Jonathan are there major changes that we are seeing in the budget that would carry over to next year?

JW (ED): The biggest thing to keep an eye on is the carry-over amounts from year-to-year. Other than that the salaries are up from the previous year.

MR (ASU): The change in salary is due to funding.

ML (Treasurer): What is the biggest carry over for next year?

JW (ED): There is a \$500 a year contingency fund. Currently we have a \$1,000 contingency fund.

GB (SMUSA): Putting a limit of \$5,000 for the contingency fund is a good idea.

MR (ASU): I'd say \$10,000 is more reasonable as a limit.

ML (Treasurer): There really isn't anything else to bring up in terms of the budget for the board.

MR (ASU): Can I get a motion to approve the budget for 2013-2014.

**Motion approved by general consent**

9) Review: What was learned with the 2013-14 Student Assemblies

MR (ASU): We are looking for feedback from each member

JW (ED): I wanted to know what worked and what didn't in terms of student assemblies.

DS (ASU): We only had one student assembly as it was asking a lot for students to come out to two events. I think it would be beneficial to have one day--just longer.

MR (ASU): I think StudentsNS is still trying to figure out what role it has in terms of facilitating discussion. I think it is one the best things StudentsNS does.

ML (Treasurer): Two suggestions from CBU: Create at least one agenda item for the student assembly, don't just decide to have an assembly. Have the student assembly near a place where there is normal student traffic and put notices where students go.

AB (StFXSU): It was successful in terms of timing and having a student running the student assembly.

JP (SMUSA): We had never done student assemblies before StudentsNS came in and started facilitating them, but we like the idea. It was poorly advertised the previous year but I think we should keep doing them. One of the main takeaways from the student assemblies was students would bring up issues and it would turn out that those issues would already be being addressed but the communication was poor so students would not realize what was being done.

JM (Kingstec NSCCSA): If it was done during Frosh Week that is the time when the students are most engaged at least in terms of the community colleges.

### **Motion to recess**

**Motion approved by general consent**

**Motion to move out of recess**

**Motion approved by general consent**

### 7. Special Meeting of the Membership: Proposed Bylaw Amendments

JW (ED): We have talked through much of this already, but quickly to go through it.

### **Definitions**

*“Ordinary Resolution” means a resolution or motion passed by not less than 50%+1 of those Directors present at a regular Board meeting with voting rights.*

Before the language around this was not clear as to whether it referenced the Directors present at the meeting.

### **Membership**

Bylaw 7:

*A Member may disaffiliate or withdraw from Full Membership to Associate Membership status for the subsequent fiscal year by resolving to do so in accordance with its own By-Laws and by informing the Chair in writing no later than March 1st of the current fiscal year.*

JW (ED): Previously there was no reference at all to disaffiliation.

DS (ASU): What does disaffiliation mean? (*Disaffiliation means full withdrawal from membership*).

JW (ED): We would like to create a new ninth by-law of an item that was a part of by-law 8 but we wanted to apply to by-law 7 as well.

Bylaw 9:

*Students Nova Scotia Association must receive notice of a referendum or other motion to disaffiliate or downgrade membership at least 30 days in advance. Members must follow their own policies around pursuing a referendum, if applicable.*

## **Board Officers**

By-law 27:

*Any dues paying student of a member is eligible to serve as an officer.*

Previously it said all primary or secondary delegates. This means that any non-primary or secondary delegate can be eligible serve as an officer. The issue being if you are elected to serve as an officer then you are still a primary or secondary delegate for your members and that causes some trouble and is confusing.

By-law 28:

*The term of each Officer shall be from the Annual General Meeting to the subsequent Annual General Meeting, unless the Officer is filling a vacant position or otherwise determined by the Board of Directors.*

JW (ED): This is cleaned up previously as to what was written before.

By-law 29:

*The chair or vice chair may not be a primary or secondary delegate.*

## **Board of Director Meetings**

By-law 38:

*A minimum of three (3) days (72 hours) notice of all regular meetings, and the business to be transacted, shall be communicated to all Board Members by the Chair. Previously it was 7 days.*

By-law 39:

*Directors must provide materials for discussion in Board of Directors meetings to the Chair at least three (3) days in advance of all regular meetings.*

JW (ED): It should be noted that (4) days' notice is required for materials for those meetings. Should it be changed to 3 days for both? Is that okay with everyone? *Yes.*

By-law 41:

*Quorum shall consist of Directors representing at least 50%+1 of Members. No business shall be conducted at any meeting of the Board of Directors unless a quorum is present to open the meeting and, upon request, before any vote.*

Before the by-law had said six members and we had six members at the time. This is just cleaning up the language.

Any question about any items?

MR (ASU): I have strong opinions that you have to be at the table to express concerns in relation to the DSU.

JW (ED): I think it's worth mentioning this.

Thinking through the DSU specifically what the by-law says where you don't outline a specific process for disaffiliation so there could be an amendment there "from full membership to associate membership status, in their own bylaws or membership policies"

Regarding the by-law 8:

*"a downgrading of a member's membership status (disaffiliation or moving from full to associate membership) must be supported through the same mechanism by which the organization's current membership status (including fee amounts) was approved, with a referendum necessary to fully disaffiliate if a referendum was used to approve a membership status (including fee amounts) at any point."*

JW (ED): The thing to note about this is that it says it has to be the same mechanism by which the organization's current membership status (including fee amounts) was approved... and they need a referendum to disaffiliate if a referendum was used to approve a membership status (including fee amounts) at any point. In the context of the DSU they had a referendum two years ago and they withdrew by a 16 for and 15 against at council before this bylaw could be in application on Feb 26<sup>th</sup> and then they rejoined two weeks later. My understanding of this by-law is it applies to the DSU is they need a referendum to leave because they had a referendum two years ago.

MR (ASU): Because they don't have a specific governance policy around this.

JW (ED): It doesn't matter that they left and rejoined StudentsNS. Because the policy says if you had a referendum to approve fee amounts at any point, it doesn't matter if it was this membership or another membership. The other element is DSU had a referendum on reallocating money from the StudentsNS pot to their independent advocacy pot, so that would technically apply to a fee amount to StudentsNS. The by-law is fairly unclear in certain points.

MR (ASU): I want to interject that, in my opinion we have one of the clearest and simplest forms of disaffiliation. All we ask for is that you do it by a certain date. We are voting on it and all consent to this as members of the board. I just want to make clear that I think this is the easiest disaffiliation process that is reasonable and responsible that I have seen.

ML (Treasurer): I completely agree. However I still feel that 30 days' notice is too short. I mean an organization like us can get caught up with other this during that time.

MR (ASU): I understand, but the reality is that we could be given 6 months' notice but it would not matter, it's going to impact our bottom line.

ML (Treasurer): I understand, but I just feel we would have more time to prepare and allocate our resources properly.

MR (ASU): It's certainly not perfect but it is the reality for us.

JW (ED): What about that they would have to give us 30 days' notice of the motion and then they have to pass it before March 1<sup>st</sup> so we will have 3 months' notice at the very least--that is a

possibility and 2 months' notice that it is actually happening before we have to deal with the subsequent fiscal year.

ML (Treasurer): What if that coincides with a major political event that is going on at the same time, and our resources are already stretched?

MR (ASU): That is one of the realities of our organization. I know exactly where you are coming from in terms of fiscal responsibilities; we have to remember that our organization and the origins of our organization are very unique. We have to remember that these by-laws were made with the specific intent of not allowing what previously happened in other organizations to occur again unless we are going to have a discussion around amendments to this bylaw and change those dates of notice of which I oppose. Currently the by-law says you must do that if there is no language in your own constitution. You are required to disaffiliate via the process that you joined. Regarding this by-law there is a lot of intention and Jonathan, Amy and I worked hard on the language.

ML (Treasurer): Agree, I just think it could easily be 60 days instead of 30 days.

Alex (Kingstec NSCCSA): I see both sides of the argument and both are valid. I think the 60 days' notice does not impose on the students' organization rights.

MR (ASU): For me it's not about an arbitrary number, it's about a principle. We can't control the democracy of a student union. At the end of the day we have to trust the student organizations.

JP (SMUSA): At Saint Mary's we see the value of an organization like this and we have taken it upon ourselves to limit the way we can leave an organization like this. I think that is the current discussion around this. If it satisfies the board, 30 days is a short period of time and I think 60 days would be equally reasonable.

ML (Treasurer): I still think even 60 days is a short amount of time to give notice. I would prefer more like 6 months. The reasoning behind this is when you have a large member such as the DSU who contributes a great financially to this organization; if they are allowed to just leave with such a lack of notice it will upset the financial stability of this organization. As a matter of principle, we have all joined this organization on faith. There are budgetary considerations though. The reality is that 30 days' notice is not enough time to prepare for a major reallocation of resources.

MR (ASU): What we saw this year was not a failure in our by-laws; it was a failure in process at another member. What we saw was a failure in process by another member school. We cannot as an organization mandate or prescribe to an organization what their by-laws should be. We started this by-law by saying we are open to 2 months and then 3 months and 6 months--that's my issue with this slippery slope we are heading down or the other option is are we going to be a organization based on a fiscally responsible organization. In my opinion, we need to be a principled organization.

AB (StFXSU): In my opinion 60 days might be more fitting, it is kind of arbitrary in a sense even if we have 60 days there are going to be members who want to disaffiliate and will go through what ever lengths to do so. When we start getting into changing this, I agree it is a slippery slope and it is a principled thing and this was a conversation that we had previously in the process of developing this by-law.

JW (ED): Maybe split the difference between 60 and 30 days, so there are 2 months on top of that since it is no later than March 1.

DS (ASU): I have three concerns—first, we need to leave this decision up to every school to follow their own by-laws. We all joined in democratic faith that each other would do the right thing. I also don't think we should be holding members or forcing members to stay based on fees that they give us because if we force them to stay. We are not being the voice to students. I think 60 days is enough for four bi-weekly meetings that would allow for good discussion of the board. I think 60 days is a good number but I don't disagree with 30 days either. I do agree that it is a slippery slope.

AE (Kingstec NSCCSA): So what you are saying is that you would rather have an easy-in easy-out process Matt Rios?

MR (ASU): For me it's based on principle. It's a value system.

AE (Kingstec NSCCSA): I understand what you are saying Matt but there is a financial side of this and this goes back to backing quality and in order to do this our financial system has to be protected and I agree 30 days is not enough time.

JW (ED): What needs to be kept in mind is that the by-laws--are we willing to enforce these? So what is the point in stepping up the requirements if as an organization you are not going to enforce them? So for instance, DASA left this year and there was no notice given and we were not going to apply the by-law to that situation. The only other thing I think is that if you increase the 60 days I don't know how much it helps with planning. The last thing is thinking strategically if a member gives us 60 days that they are making a decision like this is that going to lock us into making a decision? On one hand, they may have more time to decide no we are not going to do this, on the other hand maybe not. I think 45 days sounds great.

ML (Treasurer): I think changing the bylaw to 60 days' notice will give us a little bit more time to schedule meetings. As you know it is hard to schedule an in-person meeting that we are all available--given our individual schedules, it is the nature of student politics.

JW (ED): The point I wanted to raise is there might be some vulnerability around the by-law applying to the subsequent year and not to the current year. So if we added that you couldn't leave in June for example. This was obviously the intent of everything.

MR (Vice Chair): In the interest of facilitating this discussion, is there a motion you would like to put forward?

ML (Treasurer): I would make a motion to move the days' notice from (30) days to 2 months (60) days.

### **CBUSU Motions**

#### **Kingstec NSCCSA seconds**

#### **Motion not approved**

MR (Vice Chair): Can we have some discussion around 60 days' notice in general?

JW (ED): With the 60 day requirement you could not launch a disaffiliation campaign in the winter semester, after New Year's. As you have to give 60 days before March first.

MR (Vice Chair): As a member of this organization I want to make very clear that in my opinion we cannot dictate the terms of in which our organization allows its members to operate. It is not the job of StudentsNS to do so. In my mind if a member organization has a problem with the notice given then go to your schools and make the necessary changes. I want to create a culture that that creates value for StudentsNS and its members.

ML (Treasurer): I am going to play devil's advocate. We are allowing member organizations to dictate whether or not we can sustain ourselves financially.

MR (Vice-Chair): On that principle it should work the other way around when a student union wishes to join StudentNS they should take 6 months to decide.

ML (Treasurer): No joining an organization is 100% different then leaving an organization, you are adding to our resources compared to taking them. The point I am trying to make is you cannot cripple an organization by joining them but you can by leaving.

AB (Chair): Inherently I think the bigger question is the fact that we are depending so much on one school for our budget, I think the larger conversation is being sustainable in that situation.

ML (Treasurer): When DSU left our organization it caused us to have an in-person board meeting and to travel from our respective schools. Then to have that just turn around it was a waste of resources on StudentsNS part.

## 8. Review and discussion of proposed 2013-14 Annual Report

### **Improve representation**

DS (ASU): Representation on our board this year has been way more diverse than previous years. I think that it does really help the discussion the board is having.

JW (ED): If you look at the numbers specifically in reference to gender it is significantly better than last year. If you note the larger campuses it is not different really. Most of the gender changes have come from AST and DASA.

AB (Chair): I think in terms of student leaders reaching out to other students to get them involved that can allow people to see how we run our organization and I think that is very important.

### **Strengthening policy and Research**

AB (Chair): In terms of the report, the accommodations for students with disabilities report was started in October of 2013, there were some human resources issues, but the research overall was quite good.

JW (ED): From my understanding, Kayti will have a draft out within a week. We are hoping to get both drafts for both reports in the start of April or end of May.

AB (Chair): The off campus housing report was obviously released, it was noted that we did not receive significant media coverage on that but it has led to other great things. The student financial and tax credits report was released in November of 2013 and it did receive significant media coverage. The accessibility of the campus environment report is behind schedule as well as the campus health services report.

JW (ED): The reality is this was an ambitious plan and not everything would get done. Interestingly, we did increase the staffing and did more position papers than last year. However, we have not completed one position paper on time this year. Obviously we have had some significant staffing issues during the year and those did have implications.

AB (Chair): Graduate students retention paper is in the works. The quality paper is completed and to be finalized. The rest of the priority themes have yet to be completed. Some work has been done on the Social Determinants of Access to Post-Secondary Education.

DS (ASU): Do we think any of those papers will be done before October 2014?

JW (ED): We are looking at the health services report for this fall and the Social Determinants of Access to Post-Secondary Education report and the NSCC report and then whether or not I have flexibility to do one more report.

AB (Chair): From our pre-budget submission, the province did implement the recommendation for graduate student scholarships. The review of student union practices around alcohol and the review of student union practices around sexual assault prevention have both been contracted out and we had successes from the steering committees driving those.

JW (ED): In terms of the Survey of campus sexual health needs and services, my understanding is the authors are in the process of finalizing those reports. We gave them some help on these reports.

AB (Chair): Survey of campus mental health needs and services, this was not successful but we are looking into funding through alternative sources. In terms of the initiative, volunteers mobilized to help complete research, the graduate student report is a good example of this. I think engaging students in this research is really important. For creating an online library of student research related to StudentsNS values, this idea was to have a database on StudentsNS website and would allow students to look at current issues affecting them. While we didn't achieve everything, the reports we did produce were of really high quality.

MR (Vice Chair): Jonathan, do you think we are setting realistic goals for this organization especially in terms of staff and setting realistic expectations.

JW (ED): We are definitely getting more realistic, it will be interesting next year to see how things develop. The output in the annual plan this year was realistic if a series of things went right. Realistically it was more than we could achieve for one year. In terms of staffing expectations I think we're doing alright considering.

ML (Treasurer): I think what the staff was able to achieve given the constraints was realistic, I mean there isn't a lot of red on the annual plan.

## **Conduct impactful campaigns and communications**

AB (Chair): Looking at *Provide consistent media commentary during the election*

JW (ED): I think we didn't get much media coverage during the election at all compared to our usual standards. Some of these results and measures we put in are really difficult to measure; party commitments on the whole were very vague and disappointing.

AB (Chair): Members use StudentsNS questions for candidate debates and surveys; this one is a little bit unknown because we didn't get specific feedback from each campus.

MR (ASU): We used them out at the debates.

JW (ED): SMU didn't have a debate and I'd be surprised if Dal handed them out.

## **Motion to Recess**

**Motion Approved by general consent**

**Motion to move out of recess**

**Motion approved by general consent**

## **Expand partnerships**

AB (Chair): Accommodations for students with disabilities and Accessibility of the campus Environment.

JW (ED): For those we have reached an agreement with the National Educational Association of Disabled Students.

AB (Chair): I think in terms of building relationships with the off-campus housing report was really effective and moving forward I see more strategic partnerships.

The item *partner organizations join steering committee of youth employer award program*, some really good connections were made there and *partner organizations support youth employment campaign*, no progress on this.

*Partner organizations support Summit on Youth in the NS Economy* and *Partner organizations collaborate with sexual assault prevention campaign*; there are really great partners for the Youth in the Economy Summit. For the sexual assault prevention campaign, there was some really great collaboration on that as well. These organizations were really invested in the progress.

*The NSSSA agrees to be identified as a partner on the StudentsNS website.* No response regarding this.

Final analysis: I think we did a really good job this year expanding our partnerships this year and I think you could see it in both the position papers that we are writing and the engagement pieces.

## **Maintain strong internal governance and operations**

AB (Chair): *StudentsNS has a clear and workable definition of Quality*; we have a paper about this. *The office manager is hired*; we brought in an internal office manager to handle our bookkeeping. *Professional development monies are spent*, I am not optimistic that we had spent the full amount. I know we spent more than last year but I don't have a clear sense of this.

JW (ED): It is one of those items that you either did you didn't so that is why I put it in yellow on the annual plan. We need to get our final spending numbers.

AB (Chair): *StudentsNS has a database of former board members*

JW (ED): We have a database but it is not a great database. We are definitely in a better position to maintain it moving forward--especially using tools like SurveyMonkey.

AB (Chair): *A code of ethics is completed*. This was done this year, seen in Governing Policies and Board-Executive Director Relationship Policies.

*Internal operations ensure effective transfer of policies and knowledge*, this is kind of hard to measure--we do need a better indicator for this. It might come from setting up stricter guidelines.

JW (ED): This will become more important in the next year.

AB (Chair): *Projects are not rushed because of late funding*; I would say the Leader Lab was impacted from this. I know it didn't end up happening because of the funding issues around that. The Summit was also affected because of funding issues. It does reflect on our ability to host events that have a lot of people coming out to them.

JW (ED): For the Summit we received \$10,000 of initial funding and another \$10,000 from the province. I feel it was a mixed bag. It was better than the previous year. Going forward, there is still room to do better.

AB (Chair): *StudentsNS finishes the year with positive net assets*, we are not certain of precise numbers at this time. But we are expecting \$11,000 profit in carry-over to next year.

*All appropriate StudentsNS documentation is available on the website*, these are all updated, there are a few minutes that need to go up there but in general it has been pretty good.

*Documentation is consistently made more transparent*--have fallen behind on completing minutes and occasionally been behind in posting amended policy manual.

Final Analysis: *StudentsNS has made further progress in improving organizational governance and internal operations structures. Responsibility for maintaining the website and ensuring all appropriate documentation is available--needs to be adjusted on the staff-side however, to ensure the organization is meeting expectations.*

AB (Chair): I will circulate this, and if there are any questions or anything that you feel needs to be included let me know.

MR (Vice Chair): I want to thank all the staff for all their hard work; it has been a very good year.

JW (ED): It is a nice approach to the annual planning and report, a serious improvement, thank you Veronica McNeil.

MR (Vice Chair): We are hiring her at our student union; I have recommended that we hire her as she is very thorough.

9. Executive Director Performance review

**Motion to move in camera**

**Motion approved by general consent**

**Motion to move out of camera**

10. Presentation: Employment Position Paper

**Motion to Recess**

**Approved by general consent**

11. Presentation: Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Position Paper

**Motion to Recess**

**Approved by general consent**

ADJOURNMENT

