



## EMERGENCY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Students' Union UBC Okanagan, Local 12 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Board of Directors Meeting, May 22 at 12 pm, 2024, Zoom

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### Directors Present

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| President (meeting chair)                             | Danial Asif         |
| Vice President Finance and Administration             | Aryan Arora         |
| Vice-President External                               | Abby Newman         |
| Vice-President Internal                               | Rajat Arora         |
| Vice-President Campus Life                            | Saaim Imran         |
| Director-at-Large                                     | Mariam Al Barazi    |
| Director-at-Large                                     | Sheela Mbogo        |
| Director-at-Large                                     | Aliasgar Sakarwala  |
| Director-at-Large                                     | Ananya Bhattacharya |
| Faculty of Applied Science Representative             | Sahar Sowdagar      |
| Faculty of Education Representative                   | Elnaz Zamanzade     |
| Faculty of Health & Social Development Representative | Vacant              |
| College of Graduate Studies Representative            | Vacant              |
| Board of Governors Representative (ex-officio)        | Vacant              |
| Student Senate Caucus Representative (ex-officio)     | Vacant              |

### Directors Absent with Regrets and Approval

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Faculty of Creative & Critical Studies Representative | Amy Wang |
|---|----------|

### Directors Absent without Regrets and/or Approval

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|--|----------------------|
| Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Representative | Olivia Lai           |
| Faculty of Management Representative               | Riko Otsuka          |
| Faculty of Science Representative                  | Veeru Seethanaboyina |

### Staff Present

|                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| General Manager        | Jason Evans |
| Governance Coordinator | Cecily Qiu  |

## 1. CALLED TO ORDER AT 12:05 P.M.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TERRITORY

We would like to acknowledge that we are on the traditional, ancestral territory of the Okanagan Nation. We would like to recognize that learning happened in this place long before this institution was established. It is important to understand the privilege we hold to be living, working, and learning on Syilx territory.

## 2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND REVIEW OF MEMBERSHIP

24/05/22.01

Bhattacharya/Sakarwala

Be it resolved that the agenda be adopted.

Mbogo/Bhattacharya

Be it resolved that the agenda be amended by adding a discussion item "SUO Support for the UBCO Palestinian encampment".

Amendment carried.

Asif/Sakarwala

Be it resolved that the agenda be amended by striking the item 4.2 "Call for Nominations from Board of Directors to sit on the Oversight Committee".

Asif mentioned that the director should sit on at least one committee as per the Bylaw. He would like to see the appointed director(s) have a choice to sit on the committee.

Amendment carried.

Carried as amended.

## 3. INFORMAITON

### 3.1 Director Resignation

Asif stated that he received a resignation from the faculty of health & Social Development representative, and he approved it. They would place a call for this position and appoint an interim director until the by-election.

24/05/22.02

Asif/Bhattacharya

Be it resolved that the Students' Union of the University of British Columbia place a call for Faculty of Health & Social Development Representative applicants to sit on the SUO Board of Directors.

Carried.

### 3.2 Director Monthly Report

Qiu stated that directors are required to submit a monthly report to the President and the General Manager, indicating the work they have done. Usually, the report shall be submitted by the first Monday of each month. If the director could not meet the deadline, they should communicate the reason with the General Manager and the president. A grace period of 48 hours may be given to submit the report. For May report, the due date would be June 3, the first Monday of June. The orientation, the board meetings and committee meetings they attended in May can be included in the monthly report. She would circulate the report template after the meeting. Evans added that if the first Monday of the month is a statutory holiday, the due date falls on the next business day. He reminded them that the honoraria would be suspended if they do not submit the report on time.

#### **4. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **4.1 Appointment of Graduate Student Representative (Special Resolution)**

24/05/22.03

Asif/Sakarwala

Be it resolved that Mhamoda Akter Moli be appointed as the Graduate Student Representative.

Asif stated that Mhamoda Moli had research, budget, and policy experience. She was also actively engaged in the community through volunteer work. She worked for Canadian Red Cross and Central Okanagan Food bank. She was interested in student politics. He believed that she would be a good match for the position. Al Barazi asked Asif to disclose the information about the other candidate. Asif stated that he was not comfortable disclosing the information in public but could share some information with her via email. Asif stated that in the past, the President conducted the interview, and chose the candidate. However, this year, he would like to have more input on the selection process. He invited A. Arora to have the interviews and make the decision together. He stated that the position would be an interim position until the by-election. Graduate students could elect their representative in the by-election.

Carried.

#### **5. DISCUSSION**

##### **5.1 SUO Support for the UBCO Palestinian encampment**

Mbogo introduced the ongoing Palestinian encampment at the courtyard of the UBCO, which requested UBC to divest the funding from the companies with affiliations to Israel and the genocide of Palestinians. She mentioned that the SUO had sent a letter to the UBCO board of governors in response to the students' request at the 2023 AGM. She also provided some information regarding the BCFS letter to support students' right to protest, and the UBCO faculty for Palestine. She stated that UBC claimed that 0.28% of the endowment fund was invested in the companies complicit in the genocide of Palestinians. The percentage seemed not big; however, when the big amount of endowment fund was taken into consideration, there would be at least 8

million dollars invested in those companies. She also provided a breakdown of the investment calculated by the graduate students for Palestine. She stated that as an academic institution, UBCO should not fund the genocide and killings of women, children and men. She would request firm support from the SUO, sending UBC a letter including those breakdown numbers of the investment, and requesting them to divest from those companies. She thought in the letter the SUO should also support students' right to protest in a peaceful way and prevent the UBCO from calling military or police to harm those students, so as to ensure the safety of the students. Last, she suggested providing some mental health service for those students.

Asif stated that he had conversations with UBC since the encampment started. UBC was trying to have a conversation with the encampment students. He reached out to AMS, the students' union in the Vancouver campus, trying to work on a statement together to emphasize the students' right to protest and their divestment request. Their meeting was scheduled for the next day. Al Barazi asked if any of them could join the meeting for a collaborative process and she could also appoint some speakers. Asif said that he and VP external would attend the meeting. Once they draft the statement, they could share it with the board. The board could amend it if necessary. Mbogo stated that she preferred a separate decision from the SUO; and stated it would be great if AMS supports them. Regarding the conversation between the UBC and those students, Mbogo stated the encampment students were not going to talk with the UBC until the UBC commits to divestment. Mbogo moved a motion regarding the SUO letter.

24/05/22.04

Mbogo/Al Barazi

Be it resolved that the SUO shall issue a statement, within 5 business days, to be published on its social media, and website, and sent to the UBC Board of Governors, President Bacon, and Principal Cormack, in support of the People 's University of Gaza encampment at UBCO. This statement shall:

1. support students' right to freedom of expression and assembly without fear of retaliation from the University.
2. support the encampment's demand calling on UBC to divest from all companies complicit in the oppression and genocide of Palestinians. Providing detailed numbers on what has been invested to directly show what we would like the institution to divest from.
3. support the encampment's demands calling on UBC to participate in the global academic boycott of Israeli universities and institutions, publicly condemn and demand an end to the genocide and scholasticide in Gaza, reaffirm Palestinians' right to resist and their right to return and ensure campus safety by keeping the RCMP off of campus premises.

Newman asked for clarification of "5 days" as the SUO office does not open during the weekend. Mbogo confirmed that it would be 5 business days not including the weekend. Bhattacharya asked Mbogo to clarify the RCMP point. Mbogo read it again and stated that it would not be right if the university used weaponized police forces to terrorize students. Asif stated that in the statement, rather than support the encampment, they should support students' right to freedom

of expression and reiterate the points as per the motion at the AGM. Evans stated that he would like the director to consider their position at the negotiation table in terms of the impact as the student representative. He did not want to see the directors put themselves in a position that shut the university from actively engaging with students because of its stand. As a union, he advised the directors to facilitate the conversations and help them reach the final resolution. This was one of the issues with the university that they have to advocate for. He would like the directors to handle it strategically and they are the mediate people. He stated that they could send the statement, respecting students' right to protest, respecting that the university should not retaliate against the students, and demanding the SUO and the UBC to come to the table to address the issue. Al Barazi expressed her understanding of some wording concerns. She suggested adding "students" before the words "the People 's University of Gaza encampment at UBCO". She also expressed her disagreement with Evans, thinking the union should strongly support its members instead of being a liaison. Newman was in favor of Evan's point. She reminded members of their fiduciary duties to the organization, which were mentioned numerous times at the orientation. She regarded the organization as a channel. When students come to them addressing an issue, as a union and organization, they should have a discussion with all parties involved to understand the point even before they start a negotiation. It is a long game to navigate the negotiation, and they would better not play all cards at one time. Newman also introduced what other students' societies were doing right now to deal with this situation. Mbogo saw the value of Al Barazi's suggestion on the wording and the strategy that Evans suggested. However, she stated that the university was given a lot of time to make the decision on the divestment since the last AGM. She thought the university had no intention of doing that. That was why she thought they should be firmer this time and provide all the data they collected about the investment. She reiterated the situation in Gaza and condemned the university for investing funds in those companies. She also mentioned the supporting voice of Faculty for Palestinians though they were employed by the university. Evans agreed that the students' union should take a stand, and he thought they could express their stand through engagement and negotiation. He would ask the directors to give Asif, who had been facilitating the negotiation, some leverage to work on the negotiation. Bhattacharya stated that as directors they need to understand what specific outcome or action that the SUO should anticipate having from this statement, considering there had been numerous letters or statements were sent in the past. Mbogo stated that firstly, the statement would highlight the exact financial numbers for the UBC, so the university knows the numbers that they are expected to divest. Secondly, she thought by supporting the divestment, the SUO would have a seat at the negotiation table and meantime ensure students' right to protest and ensure the university would follow through their statement. Thirdly, she thought the letter would let the university know the stand of SUO. She thought more numbers would bring more strength. Last, she stated that if the university divests those funds, the money could be used for other purposes to support the students. Asif expressed his appreciation for the detailed information that Mbogo provided. He stated that he understood the challenges and difficulties students were facing and their need, and they also have the fiduciary responsibilities to the organization, and as an organization, they need to follow regulations as

well. He thought the statement was necessary; however, he would like to make some amendments to the original motion.

Asif/Bhattacharya

Be it resolved that the SUO shall issue a statement, within 5-7 business days, to be published on its social media, and website, and sent to the UBC Board of Governors, President Bacon, and Principal Cormack, in support of the students right to protest at People's University of Gaza encampment at UBCO. This statement shall:

1. support students' rights to freedom of expression and assembly without fear of retaliation from the University.
2. reiterate the support for UBC to divest from all companies complicit in the oppression and genocide of Palestinians. Providing detailed numbers on what has been invested to directly show what we would like the institution to divest from, as in the letter passed at the Annual general meeting.

Mbogo would like to keep the words "keeping the RCMP off of the campus", and she stated that they could detail it as on a surveillance base to ensure the UBC would not use intimidating tactics. Newman explained different concepts of police forces in Canada. She thought it was important to add the point, but they may need to reconsider using the word "RCMP". Asif stated that students were protesting peacefully at that moment. However, if they are not peaceful in the future, UBC may take actions. If the situation goes out of control, there may be a need to bring in the police force. Directors voted on the amendment.

Amendment carried.

Carried as amended.

## **6. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:24 p.m.