

Title of meeting: **SLS Executive Meeting**

Date: November 5th, 2020

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Online zoom meeting link

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**(1) Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 7:00

**(2) Roll Call**

Celina Bell  
Jaicee Payette  
Courtney McLaughlin  
Arwant Kang  
Emily Dishart  
Kimia Jalilvand  
Maximillian Cadillac-Molson  
Lucas Johnson  
Will Fraser  
Jana Chouinard  
Alex Johnston  
Azat Perengliyev  
Sydney Snape  
Professor Craig Jones  
Ali Mulji

**(3) Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting**

All in approval: SAGM minutes approved

**(4) President Report (Celina)**

**1. Clarification on financing from TRU situation**

- Professor Jones has been engaged in litigation against the provincial government on behalf of South-Asian law students at TRU, and the argument is centered on the failure of the gov't to provide equal funding to our law school, equating to discrimination against South-Asian law students.
- These documents are not on public record yet, but the government responded by saying that the funding given to TRU is NOT different than any other school.
- Documentation of the Skills Gap Program indicated that the law school received around 3 million dollars 2018/2019 in targeted funding to the law school.
- Brought to the attention of the administration.
- Provost released memo that doesn't seem to address the financial document that was released.
- Contrary to what the law school has been told for 8 years, there is money coming from the government that TRU would not be getting but-for the law school.

- Information will be passed on to the student body if received by Professor Jones.
- These documents show that in addition to whatever the extent the block grant includes the law school (we should be getting whatever per capita support from the university that everyone else gets)... there seems to be an amount that should go to the law school, instead of cutting the law school out of the bubble of government funding entirely as is being currently done.

### **Sydney Snape -Debrief**

- Knows the history of the law schools interactions with the government law society and law foundation back to 2018.
- As of 2018 there is a paper trail of communications between the law school, law society, and government requesting funding for TRU law.
- Administration/Dean was under the impression that there was no funding coming back.
- The University central administration told TRU that there is NO funding (included in two separate FOI requests).
- There seems to be a lack of transparency and possible mishandling of funding.
- There is a lack of transparency in how the government funding is divvied up.
- New building for the nursing school for example... we are able to see the breakdown of government support for that. The question is now, what other faculties in TRU have a more transparent process of how the money is being spent and why isn't it as transparent for the law school.
- Even if there are no conditions on the funding being given to TRU, is there not an obligation of greater TRU to be transparent about how that funding is being spent.

### **Question: What does this group want from TRU or the SLS as an end goal?**

- According to Professor Jones: On the current information as is there are no grounds for a class action, legal pursuit where damages could be requested, or tuition refund for past and current students.
- It was brought forward mostly for accountability and transparency reasons.
- This being brought out publicly is to force the university to address the issue of how this money is being managed right now. The specific issue is unknown at this time.
- An idea to pursue would be bringing the pay out from the law school down from its current 35%.
- The central administration should not shy away when students are asking for transparency when we are spending 22,000 dollars a year on our education.
- Potential change in the future is the end goal.
- The president of the university has put forward a 10 year plan, and the issue of how much the law faculty is paying out to greater TRU did not make it onto the 10 year plan in that it won't be addressed.
- Ali feels like law students are currently walking blind, and need the cards to be shown by the administration.

### **Question: How are Ali and Sydney involved in this, and what does that mean? What is meant when he says independent inquiry? And who would be funding it?**

- Was passionate about reform before coming to law school, made a coalition, and the motto of the campaign to make this coalition was "Transparency, transparency, transparency".
- Ali has been involved in the University Senate, board of governors, and TRUSU have been involved
- For the independent team question: it's a question that all law students need to answer, it will be a team effort.
- Sydney learned of this and wanted to get information out to students in a clear and transparent manner based on information from Professor Jones and her past work experience. She would like the SLS the communication of this issue over and take a step back.
- Dean has a fiduciary responsibility to clock tower, therefore we are not sure if they would have to get independent council, and independent council for ourselves as well.

- Ali has requested that the above statement be redacted.

### **Closing Remarks**

- The law faculty has asked clock tower for years for an explanation of where our funding is going.
- Has the faculty council reacted in any way to this news?
- There hasn't been a movement of any kind from the faculty.

-The law school administration has expressed surprise about the information that has come out. There was a conversation with the former Dean and he was aware of the job skills program but was told that there was not FTE money attached to it.

-Professor Jones likes the idea of an independent counsel being found to represent the students.

Ali: Takeaway from here... who is going to pay for this? Professor Jones mentioned that there is a likely option of finding a lawyer to do this pro bono.

## **(5) Reports from Internal Directors**

### **(a) Vice Presidents**

#### **(a.1) VP fundraising—Courtney Mclaughlin**

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#### **(a.2) VP Academic Alexandra Johnston**

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### **(b) Class Representatives**

#### **(b.1) 1L (Azat)**

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#### **(b.2) 2L (Maximillian)**

##### **Merch order**

-Almost ready to be sent out to students

-Arwant has been a huge help

#### **(b.3) 3L (Arwant)**

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### **(c) Chair of student life (Will)**

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### **(d) Events (Kimia)**

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### **(e) O-Week Leader (Lucas)**

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## **(6) External Reports**

### **(a) ILSA (Jana)**

#### **TRC notations on transcripts**

-There were plans to bring forth a 3 credit course, but doesn't really help anything with current students during the mean time.

-Can the SLS brainstorm to push this agenda forward.

-Professor Schabus has worked on this and we need to push this forward on behalf of students. It remains an ILSA initiative but could benefit from SLS support as well.

-Can we propose having the Dean issue each student a personal letter to say that current students have participated in TRC days in the meantime to accompany our transcripts when applying for jobs.  
-The SLS would like this to be brought up at the next faculty council meeting, the administration should be alive to this and the SLS will pursue this issue.

**(b) Communications and Marketing Officer (Jaicee)**

**(7) Financial Report (Lucas)**

**(8) Conference (Emily)**

**(9) Other Business**