

PSAC 901 Steward's Council

Minutes for September 23, 2015

Meeting: 5:30PM

Attendance: Stéfy McKnight (Exec), Alexandru Sonoc (Exec), Pansee Atta (Exec), Meg Lonergan (Gender Studies member at large), Andrew Low (English), Jan E.S. Schier (ChemEng), Lesley Jamieson (Philosophy), Silja Freitag (Exec), Matt Scribner (Staff), Molly-Claire Gillett (Art History), Ashley Paolozzi (Art History), Christopher Bennet (Gender Studies), John Haffner (Geography and Planning), Samantha Twietmeyer (Polisci), Ahmed Al Hejami (Chemistry) Scott Greenhalgh (Math and Stats), Danny Rorabaugh (Math Postdoc), Andrew McEachern (Math Postdoc), Craig Berggold (Exec), Jodi MacKeil (Exec), Ayman Sabbah (Exec), Nathalie Butler (Exec)

Regrets: None received.

- Equity Officer, Nathalie Butler, read PSAC Policy on Harassment, copies distributed.

1. Introduction of the Department Stewards

2. Election of Steward to take Minutes

- Samantha Twietmeyer: Nominated self; Seconded by Craig, Election by acclamation

3. Approval of Agenda

- Moved by: Craig
- Discussion: None
- Agenda Approved Unanimously

4. PowerPoint Presentation

- Public Service Alliance of Canada, Local 901, is a Union of Student Workers (TAs, Fellows, Post-Docs) that works to ensure fair pay, health benefits, parental leave, protection, etc.
- Accomplishments: pay increases, health & dental, childcare, access to the grievance procedure. Recently, worked to achieve entitlement to overtime pay, including training not listed on official TA Forms.
- Bargaining Period Issues: Including the RAs; formalizing training for TAs and TFs, wages & benefits, childcare funding, etc. Member solidarity is key for attaining these goals.
- Also holds social events for promoting solidarity within the union and with other groups in the community and networking.
- Councils & Organizations: The Stewards Council, The Flying Squad, The Social Justice Committee

5. Executive Reports

A. VP Community Relations: Pansee Atta

- Position: Liason to other Unions & Social Justice groups; Solidarity with Queen's and greater Kingston community
- Over the summer, working with Kingston District Labour Council on Local gatherings and the upcoming election
- Flying Squad & Social Justice Committee meeting: looked at priorities of working with the subject of anti-racism, planning events etc. Also, increasing presence on west campus and finding ways to work in solidarity with the refugee crisis.
- Rock the Vote event: A campus wide collaboration with SGPS. This event is currently unconfirmed, waiting on confirmations from all candidates.

- An interim election for this position will be happening. Please get in touch for more information: vpc@psac.org

- Questions: None.

B. Occupational Health and Safety Officer: Alexandru Sonoc

- Sits on the Unity Council Health and Safety Committee. Monitors membership on the committee and raises any recurring issues.
- Liases with tri-unity council.
- They are looking for new committee representatives, applications were due Sept 27. See Alexandru for any questions: healthandsafety@psac901.org

C. VP Post-Doctoral Fellows: Silja Freitag

- The Collective Agreement is due next year, will need a bargaining team.
- Holding an October 15th lunch meeting to introduce 'bargaining' to the post-docs and discuss other issues of interest in an effort to connect post-docs across campus.
- Helping to host meetings re: transitioning from academia to the business environment

D. Equity Officer: Nathalie Butler

- Advocates for equity-seeking groups.
- Joint Flying Squad & Social Justice meeting. Looked at a series of events focused on racism and incidents in the Queen's community, possibly looking at bringing in speakers.

E. Information Officer: Stephanie McKnight

- Has the responsibility to inform Units 1 (TAs & TFs) and 2 (Post-Docs) about the goings on of the Union and other relevant campus events & issues. Call outs, social media, website design etc.
- Just hired an admin staff-member to help with this: Matt.
- Also responsible for bylaws – it is important to familiarize yourself with the bylaws, they are located on the website. These provide the responsibilities of executive members and stewards.
- Bylaw Committee meetings are held every year before the AGM in order to be discussed.

F. Treasurer: Ayman Sabbah

- Working to have transparency for members regarding accounts, hiring a bookkeeper and auditor in order to get information out to the membership by October.
- We currently have a surplus.

G. Co-Chief Stewards: Jodi Mackeil & Dan Samosh (Absent)

- Run the Stewards Council and communicate with the membership.
- Uphold and enforce the Collective Agreement.
- Please direct any questions about the role of a steward, any bylaws, or the content of the collective agreement to Jodi or Dan.

H. President: Craig Berggold

- Apologies for issues with access to the list of members. Proposing to send all reports to Stewards after the provision of emails.
- It is important to acknowledge differences between Unit 1 and Unit 2. For example, Unit 2 has no right to strike. The Post-Docs (Unit 2) are also one of the first organized post-docs in Canada.
- PSAC Ontario represents Queen's, Western, and U Oshawa Tech. The larger PSAC represents academic workers across Canada.
- Unit 2 Bargaining: The meeting for October 15th – see the report for more information – will be important for making plans for an elected bargaining committee.
- Other unions represent the staffs, including the Steelworkers, CUPE, etc.
- All other salaried workers, including Unit 2, have childcare benefits. Post-Docs should be entitled to these rights as well. PSAC's own allocation of \$20,000 is designed to demonstrate our dedication to this issue.

- Craig, Pansee, Christo, and Chantale were elected to attend the Tri-Annual Convention last summer in Quebec City. It was interesting to see the shifts between the 'old guard' public service workers and the 'new guard' of education-based employees.
- Matthew Scribner has been hired in our first paid, annual position, which allows for a formal office to be run by the Union. The contract is still in negotiation. The Staff management committee that delegates work tasks are collaboratively creating the contract and would like to bring this to a special meeting in October for transparency.

6. Staff Introduction - Matt Scribner

- Used to be the information officer of the union. The new role includes answering questions about and for the Union and supporting the executive.
- Office is Mac-Corry E324, Hours 10am to 2pm every weekday.
- info@psac901.org

7. Training Policy Grievance Update

- Craig: employers are legally bound to pay for training, including government mandated training. This training is not included in contracts.
- We sent out emails to identify those people within groups who had not been paid for their training. The official policy grievance allots 65 days to pay members, retroactively, who took the training. In the email is a survey asking for people who took the training and were not paid, approximately 75%.
- In the process of seeing where training exists on contracts and approaching this to suggest renewal training is considered further hours to be paid each year.

8. Childcare Bursary Update

- Nathalie: All other unions on campus are eligible for our current in-Union bursary. Our bursary is open for applications on the website now.
- Ayman: Research has showed agreements with the employer for 50-100 thousand per year have been made to provide childcare for employees.
- Our 20,000 is just not enough to cover for childcare needs, it is only to provide help.

9. Joint Health & Safety Committee Reps

- Alexandru: Numerous applications have been received but none from business, theology & law, or from any Post-Docs.
- Call for position (\$38.64/hr) was in mail-out to all members.

10. Unit 2 General Meeting & Bargaining

- Silja: October 15th, 12:30-1:30 in JDUC, McNutten Room
- Invitation by mail, but also inform any postdocs you know.
- It is important to bargain for childcare, this is very important for foreign postdocs who are here on visas and are unable to apply for provincial/federal funding. The child care bursary is a good start but this access is available everywhere else on campus so the postdocs are requesting the same set of benefits. This will definitely also help with Queen's attracting researchers.
- Further issues where post-docs do not have the access of other Queen's employees include:
 - Access to Career Counselling
 - Access to a doctor in Kingston. Looking at access to the health clinic on campus – this would both help the postdocs and the Clinic by assuring it has enough patrons to remain open.

- Discounted transit tickets and discounted access to athletic facilities. These are often offered to faculty and staff but not to postdocs.

11. Website Design and Working Group Report

- The redesign was a Stewards' Council motion. There were concerns about visual appeal, accessibility, and clarity.
- Hired out for a redesign with feedback from students
- Craig: Motion that the working link to the new website be sent to all stewards for their feedback.
 - Silja: Seconded.
 - Discussion: Do not reference this website until the official launch.
 - Motion carries.
- **Action Item:** Take a look over the new website for any issues in presentation, the information will be corrected later on. Direct any questions to Stefy (info.officer@psac901.org). Provide the parameters of the web browser, mobile device you were using to view the site.
- This is a continuous project, please continue to provide feedback as necessary.

12. PSAC DCL Conference Delegate Elections

- We need 2 delegates for Unit 1 and 2 Delegates for Unit 2
- Conference is in Sault Ste. Marie, October 22-25, 2015
- Various Locals come together to discuss issues in the academic sector.
- Questions: None.
- Open Floor For Election:
 - Craig (nom. by Pansee) – accepted.
 - Megan (nom. by Chris) – accepted.
 - Andrew, for post-doc position (nom by Craig) – accepted.
- Stefy: Clarification – national office will subsidize the loss of wages? Yes, according to the maximum 10 hours of work set out for TAs and TFs.
 - Nominations for alternates: Stefy & Nathalie (nom. by Craig) – both accepted.
- Discussion: None.
- Elections Carried.

13. New Business

- Ahmed: There was a fund to support TA/TF Childcare raised, but what about any other support such as a Professional Development Fund for travel expenses, further training, books, etc?
 - Craig: There are 2 other funds that the Union has helped introduce: 1) International Student's Bursary and 2) Emergency Dental Bursary, both of which are administrated by the SGPS but were begun by PSAC 901.
 - There are also professional development funds in the other unions at the university, including some for Post-Docs, TAs and TFs.
- Jan: The student population increasing and issues of class-sizes have raised concerns in engineering. In the past TAs may choose to double TA-ships but now it is enforced due to need. The numbers are 20% higher.
 - Craig: the collective agreement states that there should be a certain number of TAs per number of students. Classes over 50 get 1 TA, over 100 get 2 TAs, etc.
 - Meg: Who sets this policy? Is it University wide?
 - Craig: The understanding is that it is we the union who set this policy.
 - **Action Item:** The Stewards Council will report back on the issue of TA-Student ratios in our own departments. We can ask Matthew to run a survey as well.

- Please make sure you have provided your email before you leave.

Meeting Adjourned