



**Student Representative Assembly Meeting 18M  
Sunday, January 20, 2019 at 5:00pm  
Council Chambers, GH111**

**Called to Order at 5:01pm**

**CALL OF THE ROLL**

<b>Present</b>	Ahmed, Anderson, Arbess, Benzoni, Bertolo, Bishara, Emmanuel, Epifano, Florean, Gandzi, Grewal, Hackett, Ibrahim, Irfan, Isah, Lee, MacLean, Oketch, Reesor, Roshan, Salciccioli, Shingleton-Smith, S. Singh, Sykes, Tejpal, Villasis, Warwani
<b>Absent Excused:</b>	
<b>Absent</b>	Espiritu, Farah, Robinson, Senthilmohan, N. Singh
<b>Late</b>	Bonk, Reddy
<b>Others Present:</b>	Josh Yachouh (MSU Member), Sahil Karnani (MSU Member), Swaleh Hussain (MSU Member), Steffi Arkilander (University Affairs Committee Member), Raquel Deparinski (AVP Internal Governance), Miranda Clayton (PCC Coordinator), Uwais Patel (MSU CRO)
<b>Chair</b>	Elizabeth Wong

**TERRITORY RECOGNITION**

- The SRA would like to recognize today that we are situated on traditional Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe territories through the 'Dish with One Spoon Wampum Treaty'.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**Moved** by Shingleton-Smith, **seconded** by Epifano that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as presented.

**Amendment**

**Moved** by Epifano, **seconded** by Bertolo to add a closed session discussion before Report Period.

- Epifano stated that she did not need to give much context. It would be in closed session because the discussion would have to do with HR matters.
- Miranda Clayton asked if all parties involved would be in the closed session.
- Epifano stated that the Assembly can invite any individuals they like in to the closed session to make a statement. To do so the Assembly would entertain a motion. Epifano stated that precedent from Executive Board would be to have the individual(s) come in and make a statement/participate in what they would like to say and then leave for the remainder of the discussion.

**Vote on Motion**

**In Favour: 25 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 3  
Abstained: Oketch, Grewal, Hackett  
Motion Passes**

**Amendment**

**Moved** by Warwani, **seconded** by Roshan to open one (1) SRA seat on University Affairs.

**Passes Unanimously**

**Amendment**

**Moved** by Roshan, **seconded** by Warwani to move Business item #5 before Delegation from the Floor #1.

**Passes Unanimously**

**Vote to Adopt the Agenda**

**Moved** by Shingleton-Smith, **seconded** by Epifano that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as amended.

**Passes Unanimously**

**ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

**Moved** by Arbess, **seconded** by Warwani that the Assembly adopt minutes SRA 18L – January 6, 2018.

**Passes Unanimously**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR**

- The Speaker asked that those at the back please sign the observer’s list. The Speaker asked everyone to please clean up after themselves.

**BUSINESS**

**5. National Anthem**

**Moved** by Roshan, **seconded** by Warwani that the Assembly strike “Playing of the National Anthem” from the standing orders on the SRA agenda.

- Roshan stated that they had had many discussions with folks from the Equity and Inclusion Office about what purpose the national anthem serves. They stated that the memo took a lot of time and effort. Roshan read the memo to the Assembly.
- Warwani reinforced that the memo had taken a lot of time and effort. Warwani explained that everything the assembly does at these meetings have the potential to impact students. They asked if the national anthem furthers the goals of the assembly. Warwani explained that many elementary schools have moved the land acknowledgement before the national anthem.
- Benson asked why the anthem is not played at the Board of Governors (BoG) or Senate meetings. They asked if it was removed. Benson ceded their time to Roshan. Roshan explained that the BoG and Senate had never played it.
- Warwani explained that the SRA began playing the national anthem around 10 years ago after a motion was passed for it to be put on the standing agenda. There was not much discussion or reasoning on why it was added.
- Arbess thanked Warwani and Roshan for the time they put in and agreed it is important to reconsider what the assembly does. Arbess stated they were not sure how the playing of the national anthem could be harmful. They agreed that the land acknowledgement should come first, but in conjunction with the national anthem. They stated that McMaster is a Canadian university and it is important to recognize that as well.
- Roshan still did not see a tangible purpose to have the national anthem at an SRA meeting. Roshan stated that there is merit in having it in other occasions, like Remembrance Day. Roshan stated it was naive to say that the impact is not harmful to students, as some groups are saying that it is.
- Warwani stated that no decisions are affected by the playing of the national anthem at a meeting.
- Florean felt playing the national anthem was a way of showing respect and did not see how removing it would make a big improvement on student politics.

**Moved** by Epifano, **seconded** by Bertolo to table Business item #5.

**In Favour: 28 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 2**

**Abstained: Arbess, Bishara  
Motion Passes**

**DELEGATION FROM THE FLOOR**

**1. Meaning of the Indigenous Land Acknowledgement – Maggie Powless-Lynes presented**

**Parameters**

**Moved** by Warwani, **seconded** by Roshan that parameters be set at 15 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for questions.

**Passes Unanimously**

- Powless-Lynes presented:
  - Upwards of 300 indigenous students at McMaster.
  - Purpose of doing a land acknowledgement is to acknowledge the privilege you have for being a visitor on this land.
  - Recognize that it is a privilege to attend McMaster University and be on the land as a non-indigenous person.
  - Indigenous women are the lowest representation at university, while at the same time McMaster benefits from indigenous land.
  - The dish with one spoon wampum agreement predates contact and includes almost all of Southwestern Ontario and reaches Ohio and New York state.
  - Wampum agreements hold as much power as legislation and are international agreements. Wampum agreements are made between multiple indigenous nations as well as between an indigenous nation a non-indigenous nation. Agreements still apply today, just not from a colonial standpoint.
  - Dish with one spoon says that we share the land and while consuming the resources we are not taking more than we need. It is an agreement of peace because a spoon cannot be used as a weapon.
  - As student representatives you represent indigenous students and communities.
  - Many indigenous people do not identify with being Canadian. The national anthem states that the land is Canadian which is problematic. A land acknowledgement states that indigenous people never gave up the land. The land acknowledgement and the national anthem therefore do not work together as they say opposing things. It is fine to be proud of being Canadian, but it is built off of taking advantage of indigenous people and that needs to be accepted.

**Questions**

- Florean asked if there was anything the Assembly could do at meetings besides the land acknowledgement. Powless-Lynes stated that they should always make room for indigenous perspectives and how decisions could affect indigenous students.
- Ibrahim asked Powless-Lynes had thought of any ideas/solutions for reconciliation. Powless-Lynes stated that the Canadian government need to speak to indigenous leaders as equal to the prime minister and give equal say to how land is used.
- Ibrahim asked if there should be acknowledgement of Canada. Powless-Lynes stated that they felt the national anthem needs rewritten. Powless-Lynes did not personally see an issue with an anthem that reflects an equal relationship. Powless-Lynes added that it should not be indigenous people doing land acknowledgements.
- Grewal asked if the national anthem could be substituted with something that acknowledges Canada but does not cause conflict. Powless-Lynes stated that they could only speak for themselves, but an idea could be to write up a Canadian acknowledgement.

- Lee thanked Powless-Lynes for the presentation. Lee asked what an ideal process would look like at an SRA meeting. Powless-Lynes stated that they were not aware what the land acknowledgement currently looked like. They stated that land acknowledgements should provoke thoughts that may not have an answer. Land acknowledgements could be different every time, as long as they push non-indigenous people to think more and recognize and admit that they do not know or care enough.

**Moved** by Hackett, **seconded** by Gandzi to take from the table the motion to strike “Playing of the National Anthem” from the standing orders on the SRA agenda.

**Passes Unanimously**

**Moved** by Hackett **seconded** by Gandzi to pick Business item #5 up from the table.

**Passes Unanimously**

### **BUSINESS (cont.)**

#### **5. National Anthem (cont.)**

**Moved** by Roshan, **seconded** by Warwani that the Assembly strike “Playing of the National Anthem” from the standing orders on the SRA agenda.

- Isah stated that Powless-Lynes brought up a great points about the negatives of having the anthem. Iesha stated that they could discuss later what the replacement should be and keeping the discussion focused.
- Bonk stated it was important to them to play the anthem and have the land acknowledgement.
- Oketch stated that they are a first generation immigrant and coming to Canada helped them achieve a better life, but it does not matter what the anthem means to them if it has negative effects on other students.
- Bertolo stated that we are reminded of our Canadian identity quite frequently: money, passports, drivers license. However, it is very rare that we are reminded of the territory we sit on. For that reason, Bertolo did not feel the Assembly needed to play the anthem. Bertolo stated that when she hears the land acknowledgement it inspires her to think about students not around this table, and students who may not be able to attend McMaster due to barriers.
- Arbess stated that they did not see the clash between the land acknowledgement and the anthem, and felt they are both equally important. Arbess agreed that the land acknowledgement should be before the anthem.
- Warwani stated that it is easy to think of the reconciliation without thinking of all the wrong things we are doing such as sterilization, no access to clean water. Warwani stated that Assembly members can be proud of being Canadian but not at a cost to students. Warwani asked Assembly members to think about the purpose of their action and their impact, and think of the students they are representing without a voice.
- Anderson stated that if the motion to remove the anthem does not go through there should be time allotted to express the history of the anthem and how it effects certain groups, and recognize there are students negatively affected by it playing at these meetings.
- Roshan expressed concern with the way Assembly members were thinking. Roshan stated that the delegation explained the negative impact of the anthem and members were still debating the contradictor nature of the anthem and the land acknowledgement.
- Florean stated that the anthem should not be taken out completely, and that they should look at improving the land acknowledgement.
- Hackett stated that the idea of Canadian identity needs to acknowledge the good and the bad parts. Hackett stated that acknowledging the anthem is harmful but continuing to play it is like acknowledging you are being rude and not saying sorry.

**Moved** by MacLean, **seconded** by Sykes to Call to Question.

**In Favour: 20 Opposed: 10 Abstentions: 0**  
**Opposed: Arbess, Bishara, Ibrahim, S. Singh, Grewal, Florean, Reesor, Ahmed, Bonk, Saliccioli**  
**Motion Passes**

**Vote on Main Motion**

**In Favour: 21 Opposed: 6 Abstentions: 3**  
**Opposed: Arbess, Bishara, Florean, Reesor, Irfan, Villasis**  
**Abstained: Ibrahim, S. Singh, Bonk**  
**Motion Passes**

**Moved** by Epifano, **seconded** by Bertolo that the Assembly move into closed session.

- Epifano stated that the Assembly wanted to have a conversation that was HR related and needed to be held in closed session. Epifano stated the conversation would bring up the topic of sexual assault and if any assembly members were uncomfortable, they could leave, and she would check on them.
- Oketch stated that a lot of people were unhappy with the discussion being held in closed session.

**Moved** by Hackett, **seconded** by Anderson that the Assembly recess for 10 minutes.

**In Favour: 26 Opposed: 3 Abstentions: 1**  
**Opposed: Ibrahim, Florean, Irfan**  
**Abstained: Reesor**  
**Motion Passes**

**Recessed at 6:25pm**

**Called to order at 6:35pm**

**CALL OF THE ROLL**

<b>Present</b>	Ahmed, Anderson, Arbess, Benzon, Bertolo, Bishara, Emmanuel, Epifano, Florean, Gandzi, Grewal, Hackett, Ibrahim, Irfan, Isah, Lee, MacLean, Oketch, Reesor, Roshan, Saliccioli, Shingleton-Smith, S. Singh, Sykes, Tejpal, Villasis, Warwani
<b>Absent Excused:</b>	
<b>Absent</b>	Espiritu, Farah, Robinson, Senthillmohan, N. Singh
<b>Late</b>	Bonk, Reddy
<b>Others Present:</b>	Josh Yachouh (MSU Member), Sahil Karnani (MSU Member), Swaleh Hussain (MSU Member), Steffi Arkilander (University Affairs Committee Member), Raquel Deparinski (AVP Internal Governance), Miranda Clayton (PCC Coordinator), Uwais Patel (MSU CRO)
<b>Chair</b>	Elizabeth Wong

(cont.) **Moved** by Epifano, **seconded** by Bertolo that the Assembly move into closed session.

- Miranda Clayton stated that as a peer support part time manager, they understood the need for confidentiality but did not support having this conversation in closed session.

**Vote on Motion**

**In Favour: 25 Opposed: 3 Abstentions: 0**  
**Opposed: Grewal, Roshan, Gandzi**  
**Motion Passes**

**The Assembly entered closed session.**

**The Assembly returned to open session.**

**Moved** by Hackett **seconded** by Reesor that all Reports and all remaining Business items #1-4 and #7 be moved to SRA 18N.

**In Favour: 25 Opposed: 1 Abstentions: 1**  
**Opposed: Bertolo**  
**Abstained: Epifano**  
**Motion Passes**

### **INFORMATION PERIOD**

- Miranda Clayton announced that the Pride Community Centre was having a history week focused on the impacts of HIV and AIDS. Clayton encouraged everyone to attend the remembrance event and to share on social media.
- Bertolo announced that Valedictorian nominations were opening on January 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Bertolo stated that if anyone had any concerns regarding the announcements from the government on changes to OSAP and ancillary fees that they could reach out to her. Bertolo stated that the board of directors were speaking to the government about the changes and looking into other means of advocating.

### **BUSINESS (cont.)**

#### **6. OPERATING POLICY – VALEDICTORIAN SELECTION**

**Moved** by Bertolo, **seconded** by Hackett that the Assembly approve the changes to OPERATING POLICY – VALEDICTORIAN SELECTION as circulated.

- Bertolo reviewed the attached memo.
- Isah asked who was spoken to in social sciences. Bertolo stated that she contacted the Deans and Associate Deans but were unsure who in their staff they communicated to.
- Reesor stated they felt valedictorian should be a display of academic excellence.
- Ahmed stated that someone be an exemplary student in their later years and not their first years, and the change speaks to that.
- Roshan stated there a lot of other factors consider, such as needing more than one job to support themselves, and valedictorian should be an accessible position.
- Bertolo explained that after a student has a 7.0 average grades are no longer supposed to be considered. Bertolo stated that in her own experience on a selection committee they did consider grades further, but that is not in line with the bylaw.
- Benzon asked if a student could drop their year with the lowest average.
- Bertolo stated that could be an option. They could also do either a 7.0 in the final year or across all academic years.
- Reesor asked if the accessibility would cause a large influx in applications.
- Bertolo stated that potentially more people will be able to apply, but did not think they would see a drastic increase.
- Warwani stated that the idea of valedictorian being the student with the highest academic standing has changed over the years, and it was time to look at someone who inspired their graduating class and motivates the graduating class.

### **Amendment**

**Moved** by Bertolo, **seconded** by Hackett that section 9.1 be changed to state: “Nominees are required to have either an average of at least 7.0 in their last academic year OR a cumulative average of at least a 7.0 in order to be considered eligible for Valedictorian.”

- Bertolo advised that the last full academic year would be considered your third year if graduating after your fourth year.

**Vote on Amendment**

**Passes Unanimously**

**Moved** by Bertolo, seconded by Hackett that the Assembly approve the changes to OPERATING POLICY – VALEDICTORIAN SELECTION, as amended.

**Passes Unanimously**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Moved** by Warwani, **seconded** by Hackett to consider the following motion:

“Moved by \_\_\_\_, **seconded** by \_\_\_\_ that the Assembly tasks the VP Administration to develop an amendment to the constitution with the Equity and Inclusion Office and Meaghan Ross, to be brought to GA to develop emergency responses and survivor centric processes.”

- Florean asked the VP Administration if this was feasible.
- Epifano stated that it was, but the Assembly needed to recognize that there were limits to her time and energy and focusing her attention on this would take away from other projects.

**Vote to Consider**

**In Favour: 24 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 2**

**Abstained: Arbess, Bishara**

**Motion Passes**

**Moved** by Warwani, **seconded** by Hackett that the Assembly tasks the VP Administration to develop an amendment to the constitution with the Equity and Inclusion Office and Meaghan Ross, to be brought to GA to develop emergency responses and survivor centric processes.

- Warwani stated that the VP Administration has a close relationship with Meghan Ross and the Equity and Inclusion office. Warwani stated that the VP Administration could choose to delegate this task to Internal Governance.
- Epifano asked again that the Assembly be respectful and understanding that she would need to reprioritize her year plan. Epifano stated that due to her relationship with Meghan Ross she would not be delegating this to Internal Governance committee.

**Vote on Motion**

**In Favour: 24 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 2**

**Abstained: Arbess, Bishara**

**Motion Passes**

**TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**Sunday, February 3, 2019  
5:00pm  
Council Chambers, GH 111**

**CALL OF THE ROLL**

**Present** Ahmed, Anderson, Arbess, Benzon, Bertolo, Bishara, Emmanuel, Epifano, Florean, Gandzi, Hackett, Ibrahim, Irfan, Isah, Lee, MacLean, Oketch, Reesor, Roshan, Saliccioli, Shingleton-Smith, S. Singh, Sykes, Tejpal, Villasis, Warwani

**Absent Excused:** Grewal

**Absent** Espiritu, Farah, Robinson, Senthillmohan, N. Singh

**Late** Bonk, Reddy

**Others Present:** Josh Yachouh (MSU Member), Sahil Karnani (MSU Member), Swaleh Hussain (MSU Member), Steffi Arkilander (University Affairs Committee Member), Raquel Deparinski (AVP Internal Governance), Miranda Clayton (PCC Coordinator), Uwais Patel (MSU CRO)

**Chair** Elizabeth Wong

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved** by Epifano, **seconded** by Bertolo that the meeting be adjourned.

**Passes by General Consent**

**Adjourned at 8:59pm**

/ef