



September 20th, 2022
UBC Board of Governors

Re: Student Representation on Policy Committees

Dear members of the UBC Board of Governors,

This submission is being made on behalf of the Alma Mater Society (AMS) of UBC Vancouver in regards to student representation on Policy Development Committees. Specifically, this is in response to the new Policy UP13 (*“Space Management Policy”*), proposed by the Office of University Counsel (OUC) to the Property Committee. One of the main purposes of this policy is to govern how the University manages and allocates UBC Space across both the Vancouver and Okanagan campuses.

We were disappointed to see that there are no students represented in the Development Committee, and that the AMS was not informed of this policy and there was no request for us to sit on this committee. This is a violation of Policy GA2 (*“Regulatory Framework Policy”*), which outlines the procedures for policy development that the Office of University Counsel must follow. For example, Section 2.2 of Policy GA2 titled *“Composition of Policy Development Committees”* states that “where the Policy may impact student interests, the OUC will also seek nominations of student members from the Student Union of UBC Okanagan, the Alma Mater Society, and the Graduate Students Society”.

As students are one of the primary users of UBC Space, Policy UP13 has a direct impact on student interests. The proposed policy is now going out for public consultation, which means there was no student representation in its development. This is the third time this year that the AMS has been excluded from policy committees. In June 2022, the new Policy HR13 (*“Workplace Accommodation Policy”*) was proposed to the Employee Relations Committee. It was noted that while the SUO and the GSS both had seats on the committee, the AMS did not. While the OUC did reach out to us for representation after this meeting, the policy is already out for public consultation, which means that the AMS, again, had no input in its development. Lastly, there was no student representation in the proposed amendments to Policy SC8 (*“Investigations Policy”*), which was brought to the Audit Committee in June 2022. As students can be, and often are, respondents of investigations, there is a direct need for student representation on this committee.

The AMS, as the largest student society in Canada, represents over 60,000 students, who are directly impacted by these policies. The Board of Governors has committed to including students in these processes where relevant and has a responsibility to fulfil the requirements in Policy GA2. We thus urge the OUC, and the University as a whole, to evaluate its approach to student representation on policy committees and ensure that student voices are not excluded in this process moving forward. Specifically, we expect to see AMS representation in the relevant policies targeted for Board approval in 2023, especially AP6 (“Academic Administrators Extension Policy”), AP12 (“Academic Administrators Appointment Policy”), and AP14 (“Administrative VP Policy”).

We appreciate the Board of Governors for their consideration of this submission.

Sincerely,



Dana Turdy
VP Academic and University Affairs
Alma Mater Society



Eshana Bhangu
President
Alma Mater Society