



APSA General Council Meeting

November 16, 2020 at 16:00

(Google Meets <https://meet.google.com/bzv-wdmj-mht>)

1. Call to order (17:00)
2. Roll call (2 min): Megan, Ayush, Garrett, Melody, Angel, Rachel, Navjot, Anthony, Makboolee, Kevin, John, Jared, Cody, Marzena, Eliana, Akshita, Jackie, Mandy, Leah, Matthew, Monica, Prof Bharadia, Nicole, Brianna, Nathan
 - a. Regrets: Colleen, Scott, Dr. Sanghera
3. Additions to the agenda (1 min)

Motion: To approve the agenda
First: Angel **Second:** Ayush
4. Review last meeting's minutes (1 min)

Motion: To approve the previous Council Meeting Minutes
First: Ayush **Second:** Makboolee

New Business:

5. Campus Sexual Violence - Navjot (5 min)
 - a. Navjot - As VPA I also get to sit on the COFA Advocacy Board. The SU VP Student Life wanted to create a position and hire someone to fulfill the role of sexual violence prevention coordinator. At our meeting, they presented a number of stats in terms of sexual violence on our campus has been like over the last year vs. how many people have reported, and then some of the concerns with it as well. They had 3 main concerns that they brought forward. The first was sexual violence between students and faculty, the second is with Greek culture, and the third is our reporting system. Right now on campus we only have the sexual assault center, they deal with concerns that come up in cases that come up but when it comes to a campus as a whole and in preventing sexual violence, there isn't someone who is at that higher level where they're able to intervene and give this type of advice and help navigate these things. For example, when it comes to issues regarding sexual violence between students and faculty, the individual who gets to decide is the provost and the campus will hire a lawyer for the faculty but the same doesn't happen for the student. One of the concerns that they brought up is should it be the provost who gets to make those decisions? When it comes to Greek culture, some other campuses across Canada have mandatory education policies in place for Greek culture, as well as a place where student leaders can go when it comes to certain groups, when it comes to helping navigate a lot of the concerns and policies. UofA doesn't currently have anything like that besides the sexual assault center and that is a lot of work for them. Over the last 4 years, UofA has been working towards hiring someone for this position and it looks like as of this year it might happen. The position is a sexual violence prevention coordinator and they'll do high level policies and work on campus on those types of issues and concerns. This position will come out of students pocket, so it will affect our tuition moving forward. Right now, it'll be part of the health and wellness fee. The increase in tuition will be \$2-3 each semester to help fulfill this role. This is something that they brought up to the COFA Advocacy Board this past week and it will be going through a number of other consultation pathways and will come up in a lot of other conversations as well. I wanted to share this all with APSA and take back any thoughts anybody had. From my perspective, I think it's well worth having the position, especially with some of the issues that were brought up. I wanted to open it up to questions and see if there are any concerns.



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6. Course Workload - Navjot (7 min)
 - a. Navjot - I will share my screen so you can see this document. Another thing that came up at the COFA Advocacy Board meeting is the increase in workload that has been seen across faculties and students, especially with the move to online learning. Listening to David, who is the SU VP academic, talk about how there are guidelines and structures around how long certain things should take and how much time you should be budgeted for schoolwork in a regular student course load. So even with all of that, set as it is, this semester, especially, has been quite heavy for quite a few students. I know that all the class reps, including Colleen did do their mid-semester feedback and that was something that was a trend across at least all 3 years doing online learning. We did get a chance to kind of bring this up to the faculty already, we met with Dr. Cor, and it's something I've been in conversations with other faculty as well. In this letter, it essentially is a joint call to standardize the course workload. You can see that APSA's name is currently on here. I think this is something that we should sign given the trend that we've seen and the comments that I have heard from the class reps but I want to open the floor up to any questions or concerns. If there is any feedback in terms of how you would like it structured or anything else feel free to speak up.
 - b. Ayush - My question is that a lot of advocacy is done for undergraduate or non-professional programs. I think that is something we should consider before signing something like this. I can't necessarily speak to the whole student body in terms of increased workload but it would be interesting to see if medicine and dentistry are also signing just because I think part of being in pharmacy and a professional program is you are going to have more work than you did in undergrad. It is difficult that there is a pandemic on top of it but that's something we should consider. I don't know if that was brought up in discussions with COFA and if there is any differentiation between professional and non-professional programs.
 - c. Navjot - I had asked David some questions and he did reply to me. I don't know if he answered that question per se, but I know that we are considered an undergraduate program and that the MSA is also on here as well, I don't know about dentistry but I can quickly check to see if that was a question he did answer.
 - d. Anthony - Just to clarify since I wasn't at this meeting, when they draft a letter like this do they automatically put every faculty association on there and then from there the faculty association has to say no I don't agree with this and ask to be removed?
 - e. Navjot - Yes that is correct.
 - f. Anthony - Ayush you bring up a very good point that I think also ties in nicely to the next document that Navjot is going to share. Please keep in mind that although we are an undergraduate program, being a professional program expectations are different. I don't know if this is entirely true in regard to what control the faculty has over programs and timeframes, etc. but it is my understanding that the Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences has a bit more control and a bit more leeway in what they want to do with their program based on what the rest of the university is doing. So as an example, I believe we would have had the opportunity to move to a pass-fail system this fall if we would have gotten unanimous student support. Since we didn't get unanimous student support, the faculty decided that it would continue with the graded system and this was independent of what the rest of the university was doing. I think when we're signing these things as well we need to consider what perspective we are coming from, who are we advocating to? If the letter isn't going to impact pharmacy students, then it doesn't seem right to put our names on it.
 - g. Kevin - Despite the fact that we are a professional program, you will notice that law, education, nursing and med are all also listed on the letter. What I'm thinking is that despite



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us being a professional program that doesn't mean the faculty can give more than 8 hours of work a week. There is a reason why we get credit hours for what we do because the amount of work associated with the credit should be around 8 hours correct? We may have to take extra time to study which is reasonable but limiting assignments that are constantly going on, along with classes and then pre-reading portion, having to watch a pre-video and then discussion in class. I understand that pre-reading is expected but if your lecture is done previously in a pre-recording and then you also have a lecture during lecture time it seems like that is too much. I'm not sure if John can speak more to the numerous assignments being due at 11:59. It's not being done properly and courses are properly condensed and material is organized in a way that is concise for students and I don't think that is acceptable. As an association of students, I'd assume and hope that we would advocate for the right thing. Even if some students are doing fine in this program I think we need to advocate for the student who is struggling because not everyone is a high achieving student in this program.

- h. Anthony - That is another good perspective.
- i. John - I already relayed those thoughts and ideas to Navjot and the faculty through Ken. I might be a pessimist here but I agree with Anthony that nothing will change unless it is a unanimous thought by the student body and I think it clearly is not going to be that way. There are always going to be some students who genuinely are enjoying the way that online school is going or they don't feel like the workload is increased and so the faculty is not going to respond. On the ground level, they already think that it is a professional program and we're held to higher standards. It's as if they think they went through the gauntlet, so they believe that we should go through the gauntlet. Whether or not you agree with that is up to you but that is just my current sentiment right now.
- j. Anthony - I don't want to get ahead of ourselves. Navjot and I spoke before the meeting and we both agreed that this workload letter is something we don't want our name on because we do feel strongly about it and it is very relatable to pharmacy students. I think it is also good to keep in mind that we are held to a bit of a higher standard and I think the faculty really does try their best to accommodate as much as they can. There are accreditation standards that they are held to and we don't really know what that's all about. There is a lot that goes on in the background. I know it can be frustrating having to watch a pre-lecture before a lecture or the lecture goes 10 minutes past when it is supposed to or there's more pre-readings than expected associated with each lecture. I also agree at times it can be overwhelming but it is also part of trying to shape your professional identity, realizing you can't do it all and trying to structure your day and prioritize things that you can do.
- k. Leah - I was just going to say that everybody has brought up some valid points and these things have been brought up with the faculty already. Maybe if we sign APSA's name on this letter we can send a follow-up letter specific to the Faculty of Pharmacy because we do have that kind of connection and we can direct our ask in a more specific manner for our program. This letter is currently very general and like you said it is applicable to us. If we're going to go down this route it might be best to follow-up with something a bit more specific as well. Like course loads is one issue, but I also see some things about synchronous courses going over and I would agree those are good points to bring up because student's aren't superhumans. That 10 minutes in between classes, even if they are in their own houses, they still have to use the washroom and things like that. Just bringing up those concerns because those kinds of things couldn't happen if we were having in-person classes. I understand that it is a pandemic and everything is new for everyone but at the same time we do need to advocate for students who are struggling.
- l. Anthony - That is a great point.



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- m. Ayush - I think that's okay, I was going to ask what Navjot wanted out of the conversation? What was your goal? Do we need to redirect this conversation?
- n. Navjot - I wanted to make sure that we were okay with the letter the way that it is,, if we wanted to change anything, change the order of things, etc so I could take that back to David. For context, behind the scenes when I met with the class reps and we met with the faculty, we did talk about a lot of these things. Again, it's the first time learning curve for the faculty and students. A lot of these things have been brought up and moving into the next semester we will have these conversations again. Life does happen and sometimes classes will go 5 minutes over and that's okay but just making sure that we're being cognizant of things like that. This letter is directed at the pandemic situation. We've had pre-readings before as well but this is in context of what changes have come into place since going to online learning. The other thing I wanted to share that is going on behind the scenes is we've been working with the faculty to look at what the anticipated workload is going to be next semester, week-by-week, day-by-day, and though feedback had been given last week I know discussions are taking place as to things like what should the timeline on quizzes be or can we change things around if it looks like this is a really heavy week. I think we're really lucky in our faculty where we have that connection and the ability to give feedback. To come back to your question, I just wanted to get everyone's sense in are we okay with how this letter is worded and re we okay putting APSA's name on it knowing that we've already put work into this and this is already something that we've had discussions over and that it is a working relationship with the faculty and APSA. This would just be more of a formality.
- o. Ayush - I was just going to add, the approach the faculty has taken has been very inclusive, I can speak to the 10 schools across the country and it has not been the same for all students. Some students got all the lectures asynchronously recorded on day one and the faculty said okay we will have a checkpoint in the middle of the year. So I think we need to keep in mind that when we have concerns we also have a lot to be grateful for and that the faculty is working with us and I think that is very important.
- p. Matthew - To touch on the earlier topic of advocating for students, I know something that has been done in the past has been town halls. Clearly this a concern that is affecting across all the years and students from all the different groups. I'm wondering if that might be an option we can bring to the faculty about having a town hall at the beginning of next semester either to take direct questions or address concerns directly in conversations with students. I know there have been a lot of people coming to me as class rep and then I would go to the faculty from there but if there can be a period of faculty answering questions to students directly it might alleviate some concerns.
- q. Anthony - That is an idea we can look into.
- r. Morgan - if there's anyway I can support that, or kind of bridge the gap between the faculty, I am more than happy to do that. I think that sounds like a really good idea and the more that we can all talk and discuss is really the best thing. Overall, I am happy to help in any way I can.

Motion: BIRT APSA General Council approves the signing of the COFA Advocacy Board Standardized Course Workload letter.

First: Navjot. Second: Ayush.

All in favour. None opposed. Anthony abstains. **Motion carries.**



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7. Online Proctoring - Navjot (9 min)
 - a. Navjot - The next item is another letter that is a joint call to ban online proctoring for exams. With this one, I had a couple of concerns. The letter talks about the flagging system that SEM has, and I know we've already had these discussions with our faculty where if you don't get recognized or if something does get flagged, they go through it and make sure that everything was okay and we're not getting locked out of our exams. I also don't know if these are all concerns that have come up in our faculty and I don't know if their call to ban online proctoring tools would work with accreditation and the way our program is structured so I'm not sure this is where we want to go. They also don't have any suggestions here, so there is nothing suggestions for what we should do if we're not doing proctored exams and what that would look like, while still maintaining things like the Student Code of Conduct and academic integrity. I personally do not feel comfortable signing this one just because I feel like there are some things that are missing and I don't know if they are very applicable to us. Again, going back to the fact that we've had that direction with the faculty and they've been able to make sure we don't get locked out of exams, and things are running smoothly on that front.
 - b. Anthony - Mirroring what Navjot just said, I think the letter she previously shared I was more comfortable putting APSA's name on but this one not as much. As Navjot mentioned, they don't really provide a solution and this doesn't feel as faculty specific. I could be wrong and there could be concerns that go on and we don't know. I knew about the issue with professors going time, increased workload, etc. and we know that those were a legitimate concern within our faculty so it was great to see that COFA recognized that and gave us the ability to get on board with that. With this specific letter they do raise legitimate concerns however, my biggest worry would be COFA advocates for this to the University and the University actions on this and remove remote proctoring, I still think that the faculty has the ability to keep remote proctoring. I don't necessarily want to get student's hopes up thinking that we're going to move to an open book system without remote proctoring just to have the faculty come down with an email saying that we're keeping SEM because we need to for accreditation standards or whatever it may be. Those are my initial thoughts on this.
 - c. Brianna - From the 2024's we've never had a comment about the online proctoring, my class doesn't seem to have a major issue with it and my first reaction is that students will cheat if remote proctoring is taken away and my fear is something like what happened with UBC where the 100 math students all cheated and got caught will happen with the pharmacy students. Online proctoring is a way where you can prevent the mass Zoom call for everyone doing the exam together at the same time and so I agree that putting our names on this would not be the best solution.
 - d. Anthony - That is a great point and I appreciate you bringing in the 2024's perspective and it is good to know that there hasn't been a concern thus far.
 - e. Kevin - So i have got a couple things that I want to say. Wrapping back to the fact that the faculty has accreditation standards that they have and is there any way that they could be transparent with us to see exactly what the standards are and that way we can work around them and work with them to make sure we achieve that? Without knowing I'm not exactly sure that we can make a recommendation and it makes it impossible for us to make well intentioned arguments without being educated. On the topic of cheating I guess I know there is a risk of cheating but I also have to ask how much cheating occurred last year? How significant was it? Was the faculty able to catch it? If last semester in our exams they were able to catch people who cheated and ensure the results were fine then I don't see why they continue to ask students to have to turn their cameras on and sit through the exam. I think there's a lot of things that if students are going to cheat, there is a way to cheat with or



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without the online system, they will find a way to cheat. As professional students I would hope that we be treated with the intention that we are future pharmacists and that we do actually have an ethical standard to not cheat. I just think this is something to look into instead of just assuming that if we remove the block to cheating people will cheat, because it seems like the thinking for having the proctoring is that everyone will cheat if they have the ability to do that.

- f. Anthony - Those are valid points and I would agree if someone really wants to cheat, they'll find a way which is very unfortunate. You are right we are pre-professionals and we are going to be pharmacists one day and we are held to a higher standard and there is a code of ethics and you'd hope that we all kind of inherit that and try our best to maintain it. It's a tough perspective because you are right I'm not sure if they can prove that when exams are open book when there was no remote proctoring. We also have to really define cheating if that is the conversation.
- g. Navjot - I think for accreditation that information is available because we're accredited by the Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs. I can send you a link for this but it looks like they've got the information on their website. If you have specific questions we can look into those specifically. When it comes to professionalism, I think professionalism is something you learn, over the course of 4 years and I don't think we all come in being professionals. I think it is a standard, it's set, and it's an expectation, and then you work on it throughout your career indefinitely. Framing what that is and what that is going to look like for example, talking about cheating, I think you about the fact that we have organizations like ACP's disciplinary board. I also think it isn't an expectation that you can have off the bat, starting off in first year you know that things happen and it is something that you learn throughout the year. It's a steeper learning curve for some so I think it's something you have to probably account for the learning curve.
- h. Melody - I had a question and perspective. My question is does pharmacy use the same proctoring system as the rest of UofA or does each faculty have a different one? From my perspective when I was doing my midterms I was locked out once due to bad wifi and the process was so smooth, I gave Dr. Ken Cor a call and he eased my mind and just said to take your time, get your wifi connected, you're not going to lose any time at all. So speaking from that, I feel like our online proctoring system is fine because we do have Carol and Ken and they're just a phone call away.
- i. Navjot - I think it is SEM for everyone.
- j. Ayush - I also wanted to add that I think one thing that I found personally last year for example, when I was studying for ID I didn't actually learn anything because it was open book and I could just look it up and so I think that actually harmed me in the long run. I think that alot students might not see that in the moment because of the stress of the exam itself but thinking about the future it might benefit student's professional lives in the future. The other thing I was going to add was a lot of the problems they do highlight in terms of the flagging system in terms of things like it is true it does flag people of color at a higher rate but like Ken Cor said, they look at the flags, they investigate it, and I don't personally know of any students having issues with actually being contacted by the faculty, In terms of getting access to computers, the faculty has made Chromebooks available if needed so overall, I don't really see a point because the faculty has come up with solutions to each other problems this letter highlights. I don't really see a benefit in APSA signing this, but I do think that if issues do come up, I think students should let us know and then we can advocate for them individually with the faculty rather than doing a broad statement for everyone.
- k. John - Just to offer the perspective of the class of 2023, and I don't speak for all of them. In



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general, most students have no issues with the proctoring exam system. I think the problem stems from the consistency of proctored exams. I know I don't know if it is true for the 3rd years or 1st years but for this semester we've had a variety of combination of proctored and unproctored exams and that has caused a lot of confusion and stress for students. As well, the relevancy for one exam to be proctored over another. For example, the upcoming lab exam, most people are wondering why it is going to be proctored when we've barely had any hands on experience with the lab and they're choosing for it to be a proctored 5% lab final and then a 20% quiz for BASE is not proctored. Overall, it is the inconsistency that people are questioning.

- l. Anthony - That is all good to know and thanks for sharing that. I think we should part the discussion here because we are way over time and I think we have had the discussion we needed.

Motion: BIRT APSA General Council does not approve the signing of the COFA Advocacy Board Ban on Remote Proctoring letter.

First: Navjot. Second: Leah

Megan, Ayush, Garrett, Melody, Angel, Rachel, Navjot, Makboolee, John, Jared, Cody, Marzena, Eliana, Akshita, Jackie, Mandy, Leah, Matthew, Monica, Nicole, Brianna, Nathan in favour. Kevin opposed. Anthony abstains. **Motion carries.**

8. APSA Bear - Angel (2 min)
 - a. Angel - After the show we had on Friday, I think it is really obvious that the APSA bear today is going to our VP External Garrett. I think when he first signed up he didn't expect our show to be online but he handled it really well by transferring us to an online process and coordinating with the faculty, with Movember, with all the others involved and the contestants.
 - b. Anthony - Well said, I completely agree, I really enjoyed the show. To put a product like that in the online environment was pretty spectacular!
9. Additions to the Agenda
 - a. Grad Committee Update - Melody (5 min)
 1. Mel - Last week I spoke with Dr. Sanghera just about general grad committee things. This idea actually comes from her and Dallyce, which I thought was great. So they've noticed in the MOU's that APSA members were using lots of gift cards as prizes for participation and APSA events and such. Another thing that you can do is offer grad swag. That way the MOU's look better and you're supporting the 2022 grad committee. So if you are looking into offering prizes, if you're doing a raffle of any sorts or a challenge, reach out to me and Jes we can work together and get something together that will be a nice little keepsake for people. It's a lot more fun than a gift card and will be supporting the class of 2022.
 2. Anthony - I agree it is a great solution in regard to the MOU with us trying to navigate how we can bring people out to events and reward people for participation without focusing on gift cards as much.
 - b. GFC Academic Restructuring Update - Makboolee (2 min)
 1. Makboolee- At the last GFC meeting we actually voted for what to recommend to the Board of Governors. There was overwhelming support for the college model, which is good for us because in that one we get to retain our faculty statu and still have a degree of self-governance which the Dean pointed out is really important. I also voted for the college model and we will wait to see what is approved by the Board of Governors on December 11th. Maybe Nathan could speak to this more but



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a student in our class created a proposal in support of student services. They didn't want any of our student services to be cut so they wanted to show how important they are. They're adding personal statements from students, which I think is great because I know Anthony sent a letter to the faculty, and myself and Nathan do our work on our committee but it is always nice to see student advocacy within the student body.

2. Anthony - I think it was a great initiative started by your classmate and I think it will go a long way, like you said, with the personal stories and hearing from students that maybe aren't as vocal as others.
- c. Team-Up Science Call for Volunteers - Kevin (5 min)
1. Kevin - I've been working on getting an event called Team-Up Science and they're doing a competition for high school students to explore different fields in science. I got asked to help with pharmacy for that field and was looking for two people who'd be willing to help. The point would be to have an event where they do a mock interaction and break down some of the communication skills that you see in a pharmacy interaction and how to decode a prescription. I am looking for two volunteers that would be willing to help out with planning and organizing. I'm not sure if it has to be through APSA or if I can just post on Members' Corner looking for volunteers?
 2. Anthony - I think either is sufficient but if nobody here is jumping at the opportunity then definitely post it on Members Corner. When is this event taking place?
 3. Kevin - The event is scheduled for February but I don't have the exact date offhand. I believe it might be during reading week but we haven't figured out when exactly our time slot is during the week.
 4. Anthony - If anyone here is interested in that they can reach out to Kevin for more information and Kevin if you don't hear anything within the next couple days I think it's a great opportunity to post on Members' Corner and try to get others involved.
- d. Holiday Update - Anthony (2 min)
1. Anthony - I just wanted to give a quick reminder that Semesterly Council Reports need to be uploaded to the Google Drive by 5pm in one week on December 7th. I know Megan sent an email out for that not too long again but I just wanted to give everyone a reminder. In regards to the work everyone has done this first semester, I really appreciate it. I think our students appreciate it and the faculty appreciates it. I can honestly say that I think our relationship with the faculty is probably the best it has ever been or at least the best it's been in a long time and that is really due to the great work that all you do and how inclusive you are. We talked about this at the Summer Retreat, that it was going to be a difficult year to navigate, especially online and I'm just so pleased with the results. I think the turnouts have been phenomenal and everyone is working really hard, staying committed to the process and I just can't thank you enough. I hope you are able to take the holidays to decompress, because we all need it. We know we're going to be online heading into the second semester as well, so just refresh, recharge, and good luck with finals!

10. Adjournment (16:51)

First: Ayush Second: Navjot