



APSA General Council Meeting  
November 15, 2021 17:00

1. Call to order (17:00)
2. Roll call (2 min) Jonathan, Garrett, Marzena, Rachel, Amandeep, Rokhand, Jasmine, Carolina, Katie, Diane, Mostafa, Raymond, Carolina, Alyssa, Molly, Nathan, Daniel, Mahnoor, John, Naomi, Ivy, Jared, Talia, Saad
  - a. Regrets: Zoria
3. Additions to the agenda (1 min)  
**Motion:** To approve the agenda  
**First:** Molly. **Second:** Daniel.
4. Minutes of the last meeting (1 min)  
**Motion:** To approve the previous meeting minutes  
**First:** Rachel. **Second:** Amandeep.

New Business:

5. Social Media Director - Garrett (5 mins)
  - a. Garrett: I wanted to update everyone that we discussed this at our last executive council meeting. We decided that the best thing going forward would be for Marzena to be a moderator of the instagram account. Marzena won't be posting on there specifically and we will leave that up to individual councillors that want to do that. If you need to get the password and username you can reach out to Marzena and she will get that for you. She will look over the account in case we get any direct messages from other organizations and reply to those.  
**Motion:** BIRT APSA appoints Marzena Kula as the standing Social Media Director for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year.  
**First:** Ammy. **Second:** Talia. **All in favour. None opposed. Garrett and Marzena abstain.**
6. Office Hours Discussion - Garrett (5 mins)
  - a. Garrett: I wanted to bring this to general council and open the floor to anyone if they would like to say anything about office hours. I welcome a discussion about them and what to do going forward.
  - b. Molly: It is not a huge issue since it is only once every two weeks, but I have never had a single person come to my office hours, although I don't know about others. I don't know if there is a better option out there. I know as class representative, people come to me outside of office hours. I just log into google meet and study for an hour, so it doesn't affect me too much, but there may be better options.
  - c. Garrett: That's kind of the census I've been getting. When we had them in person, people would come to drop off and pick up stuff. I haven't been hearing the same right now. When students have a question they reach out to councillors via messages and don't go to office hours. Many people may not realize they are there.
  - d. Diane: I have similar feedback. No one comes to my office hours and generally most people reach out outside of office hours.
  - e. Garrett: I've gotten a few messages from councillors and students asking me questions and I think that is the trend rather than students attending office hours.
  - f. Katie: I haven't had anyone come to my office hours either. Sometimes I have one of the lunch hour ones and it conflicts with other lunch and learns that I would like to attend. In that respect, it is unfortunate if no one comes. I feel like with an online platform, people are less likely to come to online office hours. I can see that they would be busier if they were in person. I don't see a benefit in holding as many office hours as we do. Even if we don't get rid



APSA General Council Meeting  
November 15, 2021 17:00

- of them we could significantly reduce them.
- g. Garrett: I'm not suggesting we get rid of them and even after today we can't change anything right this minute. Marzena and I would have to go back to the Constitution and see how office hours are outlined as well as Student Union policy regarding office hours. I know that other faculties also host office hours but they have been hosting them in person. Our faculty is more of a community whereas other faculties may not be as approachable. APSA is approachable and people are comfortable reaching out on Facebook or sending us an email. However, we would have to look into the policies.
  - h. Katie: I didn't know there was an APSA requirement for office hours by student associations, good to know.
  - i. Garrett: I know it is in the constitution that we have to hold office hours but I don't know about the SU policies so I would have to look into it.
  - j. Diane: Perhaps what we could do is fill out a form and request an officer during an hour or have a regular day that office hours are held and request an office during that time. That way we will still be available and also remind people that we are here for office hours.
  - k. Garrett: I think making office hours available upon request is an easy solution, but I just don't know if we're allowed to do that.
  - l. Nathan: I agree with everything that has been said so far. I think we should consider in person office hours in the new year. Maybe we could have joined office hours so that they aren't happening so frequently. That way we can advertise a more universal time for office hours. I guess regarding the SU policy, I don't know if there is a bylaw for specific details for the operation of office hours. I can look further into it and get back to you.
  - m. Garrett: Yes, I'm not aware of anything either but I know that other faculty associations have them too. It was more of an assumption that if all associations have them, maybe it is a requirement, but maybe it isn't.
  - n. Amandeep: I would highly encourage you to read the Constitution. It does not specify how often office hours should be, it just states that the councillor should be responsible for ensuring their office hour requirement is met. Logistically, reducing them to half would be reasonable, however, that would also be more work on Marzena's plate since she organized office hours.
  - o. Garrett: I think the safe thing is to keep office hours the same for this semester and then we can revamp the system for next semester. Marzena has to organize new office hours for next semester anyways, so we can do that next semester and not add unnecessary work for this term.
  - p. Katie: I feel like that is a good idea to combine office hours because then it also alleviates the barrier of 1:1 video chatting and make it more of a social platform. If someone needs something from me they usually just message me. It doesn't have to be changed this semester but it is good to start talking about it so that we have a plan.
  - q. Garrett: I think so too, and currently I'm working on a survey that I want to send out to students and ask about advocacy. There will be questions for students regarding APSA and suggestions for what we can do for them. I might add something about office hours and ask if they would attend if they were done differently. I'd like to see if students value office hours or how they would better value them.
7. Professional Morale Discussion - Amandeep (10 mins)
- a. Amandeep: So what I mean by professional morale is in regards to how people are behaving, if they are acting professional, if they are building their professional identity and if you feel that you are building your professional identity. Reflect on yourself and reflect on your peers and if you could answer the poll to say how you think professional morale has been that would be great. So the poll shows kind of a mix of results, some people not really seeing a



APSA General Council Meeting  
November 15, 2021 17:00

difference. Majority are voting that professional morale has not been great. I know the middle choice of not seeing a difference from previous years is kind of biased because I know not everyone has previous years to reflect off. I wanted to see if everyone else felt the way I do. I don't blame anyone and I am not trying to have this discussion to be punitive. I am trying to find ways to boost professional morale. In discussions with other classes, I know there have been unprofessional behaviours in class polls and I get it, students are burnout. It seems that students use it as an outlet, but there is a time and a place. As healthcare professionals, we need to hold ourselves to a higher standard I feel sometimes. I want to get a sense to see what you think would be a good way to boost professional morale. In no means am I trying to be punitive, I just want to foster that environment. It is open to discussion and if you feel more comfortable, you can answer in the Menti poll.

- b. Molly: I know we talked about this with Dr. Hall and one of the things we came up with was more connections with the faculty. It could be a disconnect with the online environment. We as councillors might have more interaction with faculty than our peers do. I don't know if Jared is here but maybe next semester for in person events we could invite faculty.
- c. Amandeep: They might try to give more insight about faculty advisors as students might not realize what they can and can't reach out to the advisors about.
- d. Mostafa: Basically, at least the 2024s, we have grievances about some classes and we don't have an outlet to express those grievances well. Some of us brought up our concerns to Ravina or Mark and some people would take them to the Menti. If there was a way for faculty to be there to hear our grievances, it would be a huge help for everyone.
- e. Amandeep: I do agree with you, and with that you can bring it up to your class representatives. We do have student advisory meetings and we can have them on an as needed basis. Although it is an outlet when things are anonymous, nothing gets done from those anonymous ways. Sometimes lectures are not valued but there is a time and place. Another place for this is focus groups. You can sign up to discuss courses and those who feel that they have an opinion about courses can go there. Dr. Cor runs them and in my experience, he is very non judgemental. In my personal feedback, he is willing to listen and not criticize you for having a certain opinion. I know most people have felt that they didn't like a course at some point in time.
- f. Diane: I wanted to echo that this has been a hard year. We have to remind people that there is a time and place to share grievances. We can comment on the course through surveys and maybe professors can share some class time to fill these out. I know it has been hard with the anonymous feedback and as a student council or professors could work on this to dedicate some class time to filling out the surveys.
- g. Amandeep: So I'm hearing that we need an outlet more than anything. It might not be a factor of professionalism. I appreciate this feedback a lot.
- h. Molly: I wanted to say the same, that I've been hearing the phrase "needing the right place". I wonder if it would be beneficial for us to have a focus group or town hall for students, since I don't know if students know they can join council meetings. They might be more comfortable coming and almost venting to us. I want it off of those anonymous polls in class time, we need to create an outlet. I wonder if we should set that up or if class representatives should set that up.
- i. Carolina: I am echoing what everyone else says. I know classmates feel very uncomfortable when classmates say some of the things they do in anonymous polls. I think a lot of people don't know about the town halls or focus groups, but I feel like the focus groups are not scheduled at the right time. I don't know if after finals is a better time. The USRIs are also at a bad time, right when classes finish and then people don't have a lot of time to reflect on the semester. I like the idea of having an outlet, but if there is a lot of emotional buildup it could



APSA General Council Meeting  
November 15, 2021 17:00

get very negative. I think people get very comfortable with the faculty and get comfortable venting the way they do. It should be noted that people should watch their tone even when they are sharing grievances and keep it respectful. I think it comes down to the timing of when focus groups come out and it should be when the stress has died down and people have had time to go through their emotions and compile their thoughts.

- j. Amandeep: I wonder if I should hold a session and see if anyone wants to come and share thoughts. The hard part about not making it anonymous is that people may not feel comfortable. But this is something that helps build your professional identity. We will inevitably have to address these things for the future. With online schooling, we lose that social interaction. I don't want to be punitive and parenting anyone. I saw a comment that people are fearful of repercussions and yes there will be repercussions if you do something really wrong, but not if it is constructive feedback. Our faculty appreciates feedback and there won't necessarily be repercussions for feedback. Maybe the 2025s haven't had that in person interaction with the faculty and don't see how the relationships are. Most faculty members are very open and it is just a matter of how you approach it.
- k. Diane: I think that everyone has discussed a lot of great points. I wanted to voice some concern in regards to opening it up for feedback. I hear things from peers and some things are negative and critical. I am concerned that if we open it up for an outlet, we might take up more than we can handle.
- l. Amandeep: That is a very fair concern. I also want to echo that our faculty members are also human and also burnt out and that is something to consider. I don't want to discount anyone's feelings. I can volunteer myself to read through the feedback and consider what is and isn't constructive. But we have to figure out if it is best to have a focus group with students.
- m. Diane: I do really appreciate the faculty and that they have done a lot for us. The focus group I attended before helped a lot in terms of direction. I want to know that all student council members will be supported, it isn't all on you Amandeep to take on all the negative feedback. It is just something I am concerned about.
- n. Amandeep: I think we should also bring up that we are here to support each other so feel free to reach out. I would like to reiterate that focus groups do so much. Doing course reviews and seeing how professors change things based on focus groups is amazing. When you voice your concerns things do get done but there is just a manner of doing it in a constructive way.
- o. John: I wanted to bring up the idea that Mostafa had in regards to grievances about courses. Maybe if we take a step back and think about why people are emotionally charged it is because they are not being heard. We can mitigate unprofessionalism but if there is a primary source as to why people are acting this way, that might be how we tie in what APSA does as an advocacy body. Maybe we can be that unified voice for the students, instead of students feeling lost and using the polls to be heard. People get angry when they are not being heard, more so than being unprofessional. I think there is a source there and as APSA, maybe we should address it and hold faculty accountable for things that students have grievances about. Maybe students feel that things won't change.
- p. Amandeep: I think from my personal reflection it comes from burnout. It may come from individuals lacking support. My previous thoughts were about how I can help people mentally but I do think this is beyond professionalism. I have talked to some professors here and there to do things themselves to make students feel better. Knowing that things get done from feedback is a huge point of lack because people don't see it. If it didn't work for you, it helps the class following. For curriculum committee students, they show us the exam schedule and ask us if we think it is manageable. There are a lot of things on the back end that are not



APSA General Council Meeting  
November 15, 2021 17:00

- visible to students. I'm not sure what the best means of communicating how feedback is used is.
- q. Jared: Thanks for bringing this up Amandeep. It is an important conversation and I think that a lot of frustration stems from the fact that things get done later which is hard because we want fixes to happen in the moment. I know that it is difficult on the faculty for us to ask for that. As students we want to see those changes right away if we think something is going poorly. It's great that they fix it for next year but it doesn't address the struggles that are current. When we give mid semester feedback, it would be nice to see adjustments mid semester. I don't know what the right answer is but I think that's where the frustration stems from, from what I have been gathering.
  - r. Amandeep: I appreciate you being honest and bringing that up. I do understand as individuals it is frustrating but we have to think about the system. Even if you might not think it will impact you right away, you can think that someone made a change because of you.
  - s. Talia: I think that the issue of professionalism hasn't been an issue with our class because of fear of repercussions. The sense of frustration is expressed as apathy and resigning yourself. I've asked for deadlines to be switched and sometimes the professor asks how things are going. When we separate the professionalism and professional identity piece, our professionalism is there but the professional identity is lacking because we aren't getting a lot of the exposure. There is a lot of questioning of why we do some things or why we are learning some things. I think that is the issue for first years, not so much that emotions are boiling over, it's exactly the opposite.
  - t. Amandeep: The purpose piece does come in the curriculum, I just don't know if everyone takes away from it as much as others.
  - u. Talia: We had our professionalism lecture but it doesn't start clicking until later and there isn't that reminder, and the faculty engagement is big. A lot of students don't have experience and are having a hard time visualizing that when you don't have examples and don't have people leading by showing why certain things are important. Our burnout is more about being tired and not caring rather than getting upset. If things continue like this, things will shift that way and the upset piece would come into play if our expectations aren't being met.
  - v. Amandeep: That is definitely something I could try to put a presentation on or talk to professors to see if they can relay that during class time to address that missing piece.
  - w. John: I really emphasize that this is a place where APSA can step in. At the end of the day students may feel their voices aren't heard and classes feel that disconnect. Then perhaps students will feel like they have support to fall on to. APSA will become that voice and be the liaison to faculty. APSA is the bridge between all the students and maybe that is the impact that we need. If the voice was coming from one organization maybe they will feel more inclined to make quicker changes or changes that help everyone.
  - x. Amandeep: I appreciate everyone's feedback. My challenge to you is to try to spark this conversation with other classmates and others. Try to have one conversation about how you are doing and how you could be better supported. Maybe then at the next meeting I can get a quick summary about it.
  - y. Garrett: I think that was a really great discussion and we got a lot of diverse discussion.
8. APSA Bear - John C (2 mins)
- a. John: I really wanted to give the APSA bear to Molly since the last month has been hectic. I know first hand how difficult it can be to navigate that. Congratulations Molly, I really think you deserve it.
  - b. Molly: Thank you John, that's really nice of you.
  - c. Garrett: Our class is very lucky to have you as our class representative.



APSA General Council Meeting  
November 15, 2021 17:00

9. Additions to the Agenda

10. Adjournment (17:47)

**Motion:** To adjourn

**First:** Amandeep. **Second:** Alyssa.