



University  
of Manitoba  
**STUDENTS'  
UNION**

**TO:** UMSU Council  
**FROM:** Jakob Sanderson, UMSU President  
**DATE:** May 16, 2018  
**RE:** **UMSU Council 2018-19 initial meeting**

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## New Updates

### 1. Welcome

Hello everyone and welcome to the 2018-19 council year. It is my utmost pleasure as UMSU President to congratulate you all on being elected to your position as a director for your faculty/college/residence/community this year. Your role is extremely important; this is a great honour and also a great responsibility. On that note, we understand that you are also a student with limited free time, so if there is ever something you want to introduce to council, or something coming from us you want clarification on prior to the upcoming meeting, please do not hesitate to reach out to myself or any of the other executives and we would be happy to be a resource for you.

#### Key points of UMSU governance and Council participation:

- UMSU Council, recently renamed the UMSU Board of Directors (BOD), is the highest decision making body in the union.
- UMSU Executive has authority to approve funding of amounts less than \$5,000 and can fulfill the day-to-day operations of the union without having to consult the BOD; however any measures affecting the governing documents of UMSU, approval of all multi-year contracts and major position statements must be brought to the BOD.
- BOD has the power to challenge decisions made by the Executive and all students have the ability to introduce motions to the BOD that, if passed, must be carried out in good faith by the Executive.
- As members of the BOD of a multi-million dollar corporation and governing body representing 23,000+ members, it is integral that participants take their role seriously – not only in attending meetings, but in participating in discussions on motions, being an active member of any committee they are placed on, and in being prepared prior to the meeting on the business having to be discussed.

### 2. Priorities for the year

Regular updates on specific initiatives will be made available as the year goes on, but from the outset these will be the three defining themes of our year:

- Making education more affordable and accessible



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- Increased democratic engagement between UMSU and its members
- Building a stronger community on campus

UMSU is a union, and as such, advocacy should be at its core an advocacy organization. While we are proud to host events and run successful businesses, the goal should always be to represent students as effectively as possible. And that cannot be done without listening to them and engaging them. I encourage all of you that, if you believe in these three pillars, make sure to think of ways UMSU can be successful in meeting them, and challenging us if you ever feel we are doing something that goes against them.

### 3. Board of Governors (BOG) Update

The University has a bicameral governance model meaning that there are two decision making bodies: the Senate and BOG – the Senate deals mostly with academic matters and BOG deals with financial matters. While VP Advocacy, Sarah Bonner-Proulx, and I are a part of both, she will be the one primarily reporting on Senate and myself on BOG to council throughout the year.

#### BOG Key points:

- Comprised of 26 seats, 6 of which are students (3 appointed by the government, 2 UMSU executives and the GSA President). First portion of BOG meetings are open to the public and Council members are welcome to attend.
- Will hold its first meeting of the term on May 22, including a vote on the budget. The budget for 2018-2019 will include a 6.6% tuition increase which is the maximum increase allowed under the government's Bill 31, which raised the tuition cap in October 2017.
- Justification proposed for the tuition raise is that it is needed to cover a revenue shortfall after the MB government's decision to cut the University's operating grant.
- Both UMSU reps attending – President and VP Advocacy – plan on voting against the budget and presenting a statement asking administration to consider a more gradual increase.



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#### 4. Working Groups

An official motion to strike the following two working groups, both chaired by myself, will occur at the June 21 Council meeting:

- i) **Accessible Education Working Group:** Will work on taking much more active role in protecting the affordability of post-secondary education in Manitoba given the increases to tuition, the elimination of international student health care, and changes to the post-secondary tax rebate and the reduction to the post-secondary operating grant. This group can be composed of anyone wanting to make education more affordable and accessible, including UMSU councillors and students-at-large. Objectives will include, but are not limited to:
  - Promoting the use of Open Educational Resources in classrooms – <https://www.openedmb.ca/>
  - Increased promotion and accessibility of financial aid
  - Exploring alternative budgetary proposals in preparation for the 2019/20 university budget in hopes of combatting further major tuition increases
- ii) **Sustainability Working Group:** Sustainability is one of the four major campaigns UMSU has pledged to in recent years. This working group will focus on making our campus more environmentally friendly, including the creation of a campus-wide composting strategy, as well as any other initiatives that members of the working group wish to explore.

Ultimately these working groups' goals and levels of success will be up to the participants. Please spread the word about this to your councils, friends and to sign yourself up – to apply email your resume and cover letter to [pres@umsu.ca](mailto:pres@umsu.ca). A call for participants will be sent to all students throughout the summer and early fall.

#### **Events & Meetings Attended, May 2018**

May 1 – Board of Governors Training  
May 2 – Senate Executive Committee  
May 7 – Events planning meeting w/ UMSU Marketing team  
May 7 – Bylaw review session  
May 8 – Meeting with Spiritual Care Director  
May 8 – Jack.org Mental Health Conference  
May 9 – Meeting with peer tutoring database developers



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May 9 – Student Senate Caucus meeting  
May 10 – Distinguished Alumni Awards  
May 14 – Champions for Mental Health group meeting  
May 14 – Student Teacher Recognition Reception  
May 15 – StudentCare Executive Orientation  
May 15 – StudentCare/ASEQ Dinner  
May 16 – Senate meeting