12th Meeting of the 48th SRC

5:00 pm, Friday, January 30, 2022

Via Zoom (Online)

**Attendance Record**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Position | Name | Present | Regrets | Absent |
| President | Tyler MaGee | X |  |  |
| Vice President Administration | Alex Nguyen | X |  |  |
| Vice President Education | Sydona Chandon | X |  |  |
| Vice President Student Life | Victoria Young | X |  |  |
| Off-Campus Representative | Carol Alvarez | X |  |  |
| Off-Campus Representative | Gregory Robinson | X |  |  |
| Off-Campus Representative | Lindsey Graham | X |  |  |
| Harrington Hall Representative | Lauren Hayes | X |  |  |
| Social Inclusion Representative | Manvi Walter |  |  | X |
| Indigenous Representative | Stevie DeMerchant | X |  |  |
| International Student Representative | Sony Phung | X |  |  |
| Member at Large Representative | Julia Evans | X |  |  |
| Grad Class President | Tory Desroche | X |  |  |

**Staff Present:** Kryssonia Wedderburn (Chair), Minahil Fatima (Recording Secretary)

**AQ Representatives:** Jessie Saulnier

**Guests Present:** N/A

**Land Acknowledgement**

St. Thomas University Students’ Union recognizes and respectfully acknowledges that it carries out its work on the traditional unceded territories of the Wolastoqiyik, and Mi’kmaq peoples. This territory is covered by the “Treaties of Peace and Friendship” which these nations first signed with the British Crown in 1726. The treaties did not deal with the surrender of territories, but in fact recognized Mi’kmaq and Wolastoqiyik titles and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations. STUSU members and staff pay respect to the elders, past and present, and descendants of this land.

**Call to Order and Quorum Call**

Meeting was called to order by Kryssonia Wedderburn at 5:02 pm.

Quorum is met with 10 voting members present.

## **Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was presented to council.

It was moved by Victoria Y. to approve agenda.

Seconded by Tyler M.

The agenda was approved.

## **Approval of the Minutes from the 11th Meeting**

The minutes from last meeting were presented to council.

It was moved by Alex N. to approve minutes.

Seconded by Sydona C.

The minutes were approved.

## **Executive Reports**

**3.1 President’s Report – Tyler MaGee**

Hey, everyone, I hope you had a good week. I'll try to keep this as short as possible. I'll start on Monday. So, on Monday, the 24th. I use this as an email catch up day. Just to for everybody to know I was in the middle of moving. So, I took that weekend to move, which meant I had a very, very full inbox. And I needed to go through all my emails. So, I'm almost caught up now. So, if you have sent me an email, I should be caught up by I'm hoping end of day tomorrow. So that's why I was a little bit behind there. On Tuesday, Sydona and I had a meeting with the NBSA. And the senior administration of STU. We were going over advocacy asks from the NBSA. I'm sure Syd will expand on this. So, I'll leave it there for now. And then at 1:30, I was supposed to have an experiential learning committee meeting, I was unable to attend that meeting. Just because something had popped up at another organization I'd worked with, but I did receive a little update from one of the deans that heads that meeting afterwards. So, I'm still up to date with what was going on there. I just unfortunately was unable to attend. On Wednesday. I did some little check ins with the STU board communications department. Sorry, I haven't done this in a little while. So just getting back into a swing of the meetings. But with the communications department I had a couple of communications and email correspondence as well as a brief meeting with them. Just to get some feelers out on how this semester was looking and if there were any like, like event type stuff or what the university was planning as far as like open houses and those types of things. So that was the conversations that were happening on Wednesday. On Thursday, we had a NBSA board meeting. I will save part of that what was discussed in there for later discussion that we have, but it was a pretty good board meeting. I guess I'll make the announcement now that UNBSU Fredericton have decided to withdraw from membership status of the NBSA. It was passed by their student representative Council, so effective September next year, which is when the first membership fees will be taken out, they will no longer be a member of the NBSA. We are planning on having some follow up meetings in the future with just with the remaining members. So that is Mount Allison University, St. Thomas University and University of New Brunswick St. John campus. I would also like to note that we are in conversations with NBCC as well. And they have expressed the desire to potentially become a member of the NBSA as well. So that is something that we're really looking forward to and hopeful for the future. So, we'll keep you updated on that and how the NBSA is looking. But that is one of the big takeaways from that meeting. Additionally, on Thursday, Alex and I also had a meeting with the Professor Executive of Theatre STU and just discussed the future of that club and society and how we see it operating going forward. I think it was a pretty productive meeting. Then on Friday, we had our weekly executive meeting, that they always go really well I like, I really enjoy hearing what everyone has got going on. And we've got some pretty cool stuff coming up in the future, which I'm excited for. And then later that day, I also had a meeting with the Senate reconciliation committee. And this one was actually really exciting because it was, we ran it as a talking circle. So, it was the first time that I have ever participated in a Talking Circle format meeting. It was very different to the way that we run ours, as many of you know, Robert's Rules is a colonial setup. But the way that they ran the meeting, it felt very, it was relaxed. In such a way as like, I found like, I was able to share a lot more than I would in a formal setting. I left that meeting feeling better than I had any other meeting that have ever taken. So, it was very interesting way of running a meeting. And I'm very grateful to have been able to take part in that. And I look forward to taking part in similar things in the future. Yesterday, I was received a lot of emails from students regarding a discussion item later. So, I will take all those and put them into our discussion item that's later on regarding the return to campus. And that will be it for my report.

**3.2 Vice-President of Administration’s Report – Alex Nguyen**

Hi. So, throughout the week, I continue to receive applications for affirmative action bursaries, which is now almost 40 applications, which is good. We still have, I believe, two more weeks until the deadline so we anticipate 50 applications as the total. On Thursday, I worked on some website updates I put out recently passed constitutions and bylaws amendments, along with the minutes. So, if anyone missed the meetings, as always, you can find the minutes of the last meeting on our website. And on a same day, I was having a meeting with Ty and TSTU Director to talk about the club's future directions. On Friday, I received funding applications from clubs and societies, and I passed the applications to the finance committee to make decisions. I also received new clubs and societies ratifications applications, which I will bring forward to the Governance Committee next week. And we hope that new club can be put in motions and have more recommendations moving forward. And on Friday, I had the exec meeting along with my fellow executives, and that will be it. Thank you.

**3.3 Vice President of Education’s Report – Sydona Chandon**

Hi, everyone, I hope you're doing well, and the storm didn't get you too bad. So, I'll go right into my report. On Monday, I answered a few emails from students. On Tuesday, I had a meeting with NBSA and the STU leadership team. Here we discussed the advocacy document that included us on the colonization, anti racism, mental health, university funding and student loans. STU was very impressed that the policy acts as they were in support of most policies that were brought forward. On Tuesday. I also met with the EL Committee, which is the experiential learning committee, where we talked about the upcoming STU Leads conference, and many internships that students are currently involved in. We also discuss the experiential learning certificate, which we are looking for more students to complete this year. So, if you are graduating, you still have time, feel free to reach out to Clara. On Wednesday, I sent emails and arrange meetings. On Thursday I met with the NBSA again for our biweekly board meeting, where we discuss remote learning and return into campus. We are currently listening to student concerns and Tyler will touch on that later in discussion. On a Friday, we had an exec meeting where we discussed many things, including upcoming events and return on campus. Later that day, I attended a meeting with Victoria and Tyler for the sexual assault and prevention committee, which was very productive. And shortly after I had a follow up meeting with Julia on the remote learning roundtable, which will be coming soon. So that's what I've been up to this week. Thank you.

**3.4 Vice President of Student Life’s Report – Victoria Young**

Hello, everyone. So, I'm just trying to go through my report quickly. So, on Monday, I posted a giveaway on my VPSL Instagram account for Mental Health Week. I also made my clip for a video that the executives put together for Mental Health Week, which was I think, really impactful. I also sent a quote to Rinaldo, our communications director that just spoke on behalf of the students Union's commitment to mental health to be posted on Wednesday. Just in just in line with Bell Let's Talk Day, I guess. And then on Tuesday, I had the activities and events committee with our activity’s coordinator, Valeria as well as some of our lovely representatives who are on the call today and some other members of the STU community who are interested in activities and events planning. So, it was very productive. We talked about Wellness Week, and we talked about Valentine's Day and discussed how we would adjust to being either or online or in person and, having activities available for both cases. And then on Tuesday, I also discussed just some money, topics with Tina just about the funds from Shinerama, which has to be deposited very soon, as well as the ticket sale money that we collected in cash from the at the door sales, as well as the cash that goes to Global Brigades for their coat check that they did at the Winter formal. And then on Wednesday, I responded to an email from Kerry Montes, the international student coordinator about Welcome Week kits for some international students who just came to campus for second semester but weren't here for first semester to receive their welcome week kits. And then on Thursday, I met with an individual who had reached out about an opportunity for bringing more conversation about mental health to the STU campus. And it was sort of, he had an approach of like, mixing mental health with like, comedy, which I just came to the conclusion that maybe this wasn't a good fit for the STI community. And there's also a bit of a hefty price involved with it. So, I very respectfully and delicately declined his offer and thanked him for explaining his, his initiative to me. And then on Thursday, I went through a lot of emergency bursaries. We had a lot of emergency bursaries come in this week, which was great to see, we're always happy to help and respond to those as quickly as we can. And then on Friday, I of course, had my executive meeting, like the other three executives mentioned. And I also had the sexual assault, sexual violence prevention committee, which I thought was very productive. We have a lot of passionate people in that group. And we were just thinking of different initiatives that we could do this semester that were really action based. So that was very productive, and very exciting. Happy to see what comes in that group. And then, yesterday, and today, just over the weekend, I chose the winners from the Mental Health giveaway, and also just did a little bit of a check in through email with jack.org. But yeah, that's about it for this week. Thanks for listening.

## **4. Employee Updates**

No employee reports available.

## **5. Representative Reports**

**5.1 Off-Campus Representatives (Carol A./Gregory R./ Lindsey G.)**

Carol: Hi, everyone. On Wednesday, all the OC Reps met, and we decided we're gonna do a giveaway. Maybe these upcoming weeks. So, stay tuned. And that will be it for us.

Alex: Just want to quickly comment that I got your email and I think that you can submit the funding application so that we have something on record, and we know how much you intend to use. And if its above 500, then I can bring forward to SRC?

Greg: Yeah, so basically all the OC reps got together this week and we discussed what our plans for the semester were. And we talked about the giveaway that we are planning to do in the upcoming week. So other than that, basically what Carol said that's where I'll leave it today.

**5.2 International Student Representative (Sony P.)**

Hello, everyone. So, this week on Tuesday, I talked to Carla from international office about presenting the International Leadership Awards to the recipient. And we decided to do that in person as soon as we start in the next few weeks. And we had a plan B if there's some surprise later on. We also arranged that the students have their own picture. And then afterwards, we're going to promote the recipient and this award on social media and via email. On Friday, I talked to Carrie about organizing the multicultural fair, it was a very productive meeting. I had a lot of updates from the STUISA. So, the tentative date and time for that fair is on March 25 at Kinsella. This is going to be collaborative event from STUISA, UBNISA and other organizations for personnel and funding. So, this fair is going to have two parts, a ceremony, and a care package. So, the ceremony will have performances and videos and informative events, and the care packages will consist of food brochures and T shirts. And personally, I think that this plan is very neat and adaptable, it can be switched to online anytime because the ceremony can be filmed. And the full packages can be picked up throughout the whole week. And we are still working on it, and I will keep you updated. So that is the end of my report.

Alex: Good to hear about the award. And if you need any help on designing and preparing social media posts, you can always reach out to me, Ty and we'll have our director of communications help out with that.

**5.3 Harrington Hall Representative (Lauren H.)**

Hi, everyone. So just like last week, we aren't really allowed to do much in residence right now. But hopefully, when we come back into person, we'll be able to do some stuff. We're hopefully going to be able to give a Valentines to every resident that's here right now. But yeah, that's all for me.

**5.4 Grad Class President (Tory D.)**

I don't have much to report this week, I mostly just worked on getting the grad class clothing order finalized. And we're trying to think of events that we can do for whenever we go back in person. Thank you.

**5.5 At-Large Representative (Julia E.)**

Hi, everyone. Long time no see, as you probably know, last weekend was also the first meeting for the book club and the reconciliation committee, so I was there but I'm really happy now that those no longer conflict because obviously both are really important to me. So basically, I went to that, I also had a couple different meetings. So, I met I think that Victoria mentioned is briefly, we had an activities and events committee meeting, I also had met with Sydona to discuss the remote learning roundtable event, which I know that we're going to discuss a bit more later in the meeting today. And then I also am the student union representative on the presidential search committee, as the representative of this committee, it's a confidential committee, so I can't like report to you guys on like, what the discussions are, but that's something that I'm working on, in my capacity as the rep and as just a student representative on that team. And yeah, I think that's pretty much it. I know that the roundtable event is a really like pressing thing that I think is really important to the student body right now. So that's why we added it as a discussion point for later. And we can kind of talk about it as a group. But I just wanted to mention that Sydona and I had met to kind of start to work with preliminary details. But it's still a work in progress. And that's everything for me.

## **6. New Business**

**6.1 Remote Learning Roundtable Event**

Julia: Hello, everyone. Hope you’re all doing well. So, I know I mentioned this briefly when I was doing my report that Sydona and I had just mentioned the round table. And we kind of wanted to bring it to you guys, just to get it on your radar. And also, there's some preliminary stuff we need to work out that we thought we'd want to get like the council's opinion on. So basically, the intent of this roundtable is kind of like constantly evolving, because we didn't know that so much was going to change since we originally planned this event. Like we were in person, and then we've been online, and then we've been in a hybrid. And now we're going back in person. So, we're just trying to adjust to make it well suited to the learning atmosphere that we're going to be in. So that's why we're even struggling with the preliminary things of being like, oh, should we have this event, an in-person element online? Or should it be fully online, just these early questions that we need to start to sort out as much as we can. I'll just mention now that if everyone wants to write this in their calendar for a preliminary date that we have, we have right now March 2, which is a Wednesday as our date, we just wanted to solidify a date early because we know how busy second semester is for everyone. And so, Syd and I were talking about it. And if possible, we would really like to have it an in-person element. Because since it's a roundtable, we want it to be very like discussion based and like a safe atmosphere for everyone. So, if permitted by COVID restrictions, we thought it'd be good to have an in-person element. And then for those that aren't comfortable to show up in person, also have teams set up or zoom set up that people can tune in that way. So basically, I know that we've talked about this event a bit before, but the main intent of this event is to give students a platform to discuss their experiences with remote learning and their experiences with a hybrid model with us as executives. And we want to foster like a safe and like conversational environment. Like obviously, we don't want just to want to go to have them like feel attacked, or like have us feel attacked vice versa. But just talking to students, I don't know about your guys’ experience, something that I've noticed is a lot of students sometimes like there's like a bit of a disconnect when we're online. It's hard for students to feel really connected to the representatives. So I thought that this way, if we said, Okay, we have this, we're having this roundtable discussion about come share your concerns with us, we want to ease people's concerns, but then we also can serve as the link if there's any questions that they have or concerns they have that they don't feel comfortable reaching out to administration about, we can be there for them as that link, like make them feel like their concerns from first semester are heard and that we are doing something about it like advocating on their behalf. So, it's just a way I think for people to have a discussion. And the way we thought we would format it is like we would have discussion prompts that we could pose to the group. But then we also would have like a question period where people can pose questions to the representatives. So, one thing that I wanted to get your guys’ advice on is we were talking about whether or not we wanted to invite anyone from administration to be at the event. And I think there's pros and cons to it. I'll open the floor if anyone wants to give their two cents on it. But my opinion was information wise, it would be beneficial to have someone for administration, whereas with the environment I'm trying to promote, I would never want someone to be afraid to ask a question or discuss their experience with online learning. Sometimes, you know, people will filter what they say or be more nervous to speak up in front of a professor/administrator. So that's why we were kind of like, what we wanted to see what you guys thought about that. I know some students are really outspoken and they would say to anyone, they would post it on social media, whereas other students might have a concern that they don't really feel comfortable saying in front of administrator. But at the same time, I do understand that we don't have all the answers. So, there is benefits to having administrator. I don't know if anyone has any thoughts on that that they'd be willing to share. Because this is something we're still open to exploring. We just want to make the right decision because we want the most students to be involved as possible and to be as comfortable as possible. So, does anyone have any opinion or thoughts on that?

Alex: So, I actually have some comments, because the date that you're thinking of setting the roundtable on is actually during STU election week. So that might not be it as it's hard to promote two things at the same time. And I was just wondering about how like the roundtable would be like, is it gonna be like a panel model where you invite speaker on a stage and then you ask them questions afterwards, then you have a question period. In the same way that the international roundtable and the indigenous roundtables back in the first semester were or is it going to be like an open forum? So that like students can take turn talking? And how are you planning on, I guess, ensuring that every student has a voice. And I would say that we should have administrators as they can answer some questions directly.

Ty: I agree with a few of the questions that Alex raised just like how the formatting will go. But I also trust that it's far enough in the future that we'll have time to plan those things out and consider those things. I'm actually going to contradict having professors or administrators there, specifically for the concern that Julia had raised, which is a lot of students don't necessarily feel comfortable being 100% honest with faculty around, which is the main issue that we saw with the remote learning committee that ran, we've had like, on that committee, we had a number of professors that are renowned for how they are able to engage with students and everything, they are wonderful, wonderful professors. But students didn't take advantage of those meetings directly with these students who were designing how courses were being run. And based off of some feedback that we received, a lot of it is because they were afraid of the like directness or response that professors may give. So, because of that, even though, who knows better about what happens in a classroom than a professor, like, apart from the professor themselves, so I get that argument. But I think that the mediator of student union is like, that's why we are here, we're there so that students are relieved of that pressure of facing these people that they may not necessarily be 100% comfortable talking to. So, I would say for the purpose of this event and the kind of style is what I'm kind of getting out of this, and for the type of environment, but it sounds like you are looking have, I would say that maybe no faculty or administration might be best. And I'm thinking maybe three people, two people to kind of modulate the who is speaking and what is being said. And then one person as your note taker, one or two people as your note taker to keep up with what the concerns are, and then that can be formatted and given to like to administrators and stuff because Senate still runs like Senate still runs committees that look at how like pedagogy is the fancy word that they always use, which is basically just means the way that classes are run. So, they're always looking at these regardless of if there's a specific committee or not. So those types of responses are something that can be presented at Senate in a document format, and then you'll be able to get all of those answers and have them be truly considered on a much broader level than having an individual professors show up. And then the other thing that I would say to this is not a mark against professors, I think STU professors are amazing. But the professors that typically show up to events like this are the ones that care enough about student issues anyway to have an idea about what is going to be said or asked. Not all professors that should technically have this information or should arguably have this information are going to be the ones that show up to events like this. Whereas in a setting such as Senate, the deans are present, we have faculty representation from every department that's present, we have senior administration present. So, we'll give some food for thought, because I think Alex has raised some very good points on this one. And I think this is the other side of that argument. So just as devil's advocate, so you have both sides. I think that that will leave you with that information, but I'm confident that whatever choice you make, it will be good for students. So, I'm looking forward to seeing this happen.

Julia: Thank you both so much for sharing with me. Thank you, Alex for mentioning the date, that's something that maybe we can look into revaluating. We were just trying to set some sort of preliminary date, but there's like, whatever week there's always something else going on. So, it's really hard to settle a day down. But that'll be like our next priority, because I know that how busy everyone on the council is, it'd be nice to know far in advance for a date. In terms I know, you were asking Alex about like a format. And basically, given the fact that we are trying to go for a comfortable environment. Yes, we probably will have it more like seminar style, like we're sitting all around table together, depending on how many people express interest. If 20 people express interest then it's not safe for us to all be in that type of environment, obviously, we'll have to go to a theater or something. I want as many people as I can but being realistic, if the numbers aren't too high, I would like it to have it that style. But having said that, it's not like I'm expecting it to just like have no format. And it's just always sitting around a circle telling stories, like I understand there needs to be, it needs to have a format to it. So basically, I'll create some sort of agenda, where I was planning on having it kind of formatted maybe like by theme, where maybe we could start with people can reflect like on experiences. But then we'll also we'll have a discussion, we'll have discussion prompts, will have prompts that will encourage people to speak. And then as much as you want to be casual, we still will have someone or someone that is moderating conversation, just so no one's talking over one another because we know passionate students, it's not people aren't trying to be rude, but it can get chaotic if I'm trying to say something. And then Sydona is trying to tell her story. And we're just both trying to talk, and it just can get a bit chaotic and overwhelming for people, especially people who are perhaps more hesitant to share. So, we'll have someone like whether it's like raising your hand, just some way to moderate the conversation as much as possible. And then after we have our discussion or discussion prompts gone through, like, whether it be like we can talk about people's experience with online course load experience, with how they're finding synchronous and asynchronous classes, how they found the transition, like we'll just have like different prompts that way so that it's never quiet. And then we'll also have a session for questions. And so that's going to be kind like the format if anyone has any, like good ideas from like roundtables a bit in the past, I'd love to hear because this is kind of like a new thing for me. And then in terms of like, I know, this is like a big question that we are going over with, like whether to have a faculty or not like, this is something that Syd and I are going back and forth over. And I think that either way, we need to, there's problems with both. But if we aren't to have a faculty present, which I do see a lot of the benefits from in terms of like comfort level, we need to have a follow up system in place where students don't feel like if they have a question that we don't know the answer to we're getting back to them with the answer. We're not going to just say, oh, we don't know, that's kind of like hands off. That's not our problem. We have to have, like myself and whoever's doing it, so we have to kind of take that responsibility as representatives to follow up because we don't want them to come and say like, okay, they didn't know and now I'm never going to know what was the point? I get your concern Alex because we want to provide them with knowledge and information. So, I think if we're not gonna have a faculty person. We need to have a follow up system, whoever's taking notes, whatever, we have contacts that we can follow up with everyone after just because I think that we can't avoid responsibility just because we don't know the answer. So, letting faculty know in advance about it, just that if we didn't need to reach out, it's not like too late or we don't get the information we need. So, I think, whatever when we go with, we have to kind of consider how to reconcile some of the corresponding issues.

Sydona: So, I just wanted to echo what Julia said. And I also want to thank Ty and Alex for adding, you know, substantial comments. So basically, the main aim for the remote learning round table, is really to give students the ability to voice their concerns, because there's been so many students, so many questions that we've been getting. And we want to provide, you know, that atmosphere. So that's why we came up with this event. So of course, we won't have all the answers, as Julia said to all the questions that will be provided. But we will make a note of it and as Ty suggests that this is something that we can bring to the Senate within a documented format and present it so there will be follow up on the questions that are asked. So yeah, I just wanted to, you know, echo that the main aim is really to give students the platform to share, to discuss comfortably, you know, within an informal kind of atmosphere, but of course, we will have some form of structure to it. Yeah, thank you.

Alex: It sounds like you to have everything under control. And it's definitely going to be a wholesome experience for students. Yeah, I was thinking about it, maybe you guys can work on having some sort of like a survey, for everyone to fill out, you can release that either before or during or after the roundtable. So, like, if students don't have a chance to talk, because of time the there is like a record of it, I guess.

Julia: Yeah, just when Syd was talking, it just reminded me is something else that we were discussing along the lines of structure. And obviously, we understand that not everyone on council perhaps will be able to make it to this event, especially when it's such a busy time of year. We all represent like different constituencies and have different mandates and our roles. And not every single person that represents every group at STU is going to be at the round table, like we're not going to think that idealistic, like that's going to happen. So, like if you guys have any questions or discussion prompts that you think that should be discussed on behalf of whatever constituents that you represent, or something really important to you and your mandate, please bring those to me in advance because I'll make sure to include that because I don't want anyone's voice to be missed, just because they didn't get to go to the roundtable. Like we want pressing issues for people, maybe international students that had issues with like the traveling back and forth. And like the uncertainty around the around the pandemic, maybe it just like there's so many different issues, students and residents might have different issues with online learning, students in the Fredericton community versus mature learners. Like there's just so many different experiences for different people. Not all of our experiences are the same with online learning. As you guys know, some people love it, some people hate it. So, we just want to make sure that everyone's voices heard. So, if you guys’ kind of can think and advocate on behalf like let's say like your grad class, like you're thinking about how graduating students are coping with this, questions and prompts you want on their behalf. So, I just really want I don't want to miss anyone's opinion and voice. That's why we really want it to be as inclusive event as possible. And even if you yourself can't go to the event, I still don't want the people that you represent to be overlooked. So that's why I thought that was a good idea. Obviously, you guys have lots of time, maybe just put that on your radar and then in more than subsequent meetings, I'll ask you guys email me those. And that's a really good idea as well Alex with a survey. That's awesome, like we were thinking of like having like some sort of signups that we have an idea of numbers, like sign up by this date so that way, we'll have email correspondence for everyone. And then we can do like a survey so that maybe there's stuff that people want, we're still not even comfortable asking in the group setting that they don't want to get overlooked. But I'm pretty sure that's everything for now, if you guys have any questions at all, because I know it's like in the early stage, please, please reach out.

**6.2 Discussion on Return to Campus**

Ty: So, I wanted to give this opportunity to check in with each of you and your constituencies because I don't know what everybody here has been hearing. But in recent days, the executives have been inundated with emails from students expressing concerns returning to in person learning. They've cited safety concerns they've cited, like masking requirements, all of these different concerns regarding the return to campus. And there's also a petition that's going around right now, I'm sure many of you are aware of that. It's a cohort of students from the tri-campus area that are all signing this document to be presented to administration. This is independent of all of the student unions, between those three campuses. But these are students themselves that are coming forward with these concerns. And the number is now high enough that I think that it's something that we can't ignore. Like it deserves to have the platform to speak to it. So, I wanted to check in with everybody here to see if you have received similar concerns from your students. From those that you represent, just kind of get a feel for I guess the broader student population, if you have heard anything. If you haven't, from your constituents, no pressure, don't worry, you don't have to say anything. But I just wanted to give the opportunity to hear directly from you and your students about what everybody's feelings are for the in-person return.

Julia: So as at large rep, I'm representing the community at large. So, as you can probably guess, there's been a lot of division on this issue. And I think that's one of the reasons it's a really important issue to discuss. I have, it's like, people are very passionate one way or the other. You know what I mean? Like I've heard people like, on social media and in group message chats and stuff, saying they don't feel safe. They want any opportunity they can to continue learning online. So, like I've heard a lot of safety concerns. And then I've also heard a lot of concerns kind of just about how people are really disappointed in like the uncertainty of it, like you kind of like are just kind of waking up to see what the outcome is going to be. It's constantly changing. So, I think that that's putting a lot of stress on people, perhaps who aren't currently located in Fredericton. So, I think that's another concern on top of safety. It's just like the logistics of the return and the uncertainty of it. And then on the other hand, I've heard people like, I absolutely want to get back in person. I learned way better in person, it's really hard for me to focus on an online format. I'll feel safe if I have my masks and the social distancing measures in place. So yeah, so from my perspective, it's very split. And I think that that's a reason why it's like a kind of pressing concern for us as a student council because it's a very divisive issue as you guys have probably also gathered.

Ty: I was just about to read off on Lindsay's message in the group chat too. So, they're just saying that in their first-year group chats, they've been hearing that a lot of students rather stay online, and that many of them have signed to the petition. So that's for OC. I would like to point out as well because I didn't really touch on into my report because I was going to touch on it here, the New Brunswick Student Alliance, the membership organizations had a similar discussion at our last board meeting, and it was, again, very divisive and split along their campuses as well. But based off of the number of students that that we've heard, and it is pretty much 5050 split rights down the center, we're starting to explore drafting a letter to the university accessibility offices, as well as senior administration, that is advocating for the use of virtual classrooms. So that the choice be given to students, whether or not they would like to learn virtually or in person. And from our perspective, this would not be challenging or demanding on the profs, because they are still able to run an in person synchronous class, it would just be a zoom link tied to that class, we can provide it to students that would like to learn remotely and not be in person. So, it will work the same way that all of our synchronous classes would. So, you'd be following the same syllabus in person classes, you would be subjected to the same scheduled times as in person classes, but it would just be a zoom link that was ended up in your inbox, and you will be looking at the stage in each of the lecture halls with professor teaching that way. So that's kind of how, what the NBSA is looking at doing. So, I'll add that food for thought as well. And then Tory has also noted in the chat as well, that they're worried that if we go in person too early, they're worried about not being able to have an in-person graduation. As a grad myself, that's also a concern. And I will also note that I will be putting together a document, anonymous doc regarding what different position reps are saying and that will be sent to Dr. Kim Fenwick, as she is the one that's overseeing the conversations with public health.

Carol: Well, I'm also part of a group chat and a lot of off-campus people are concerned about going to campus considering that there are positive cases on campus. So that's like the major concern that I have heard.

Greg: So, in some discussions that I've had with students, I'm finding it quite interesting where a lot of upper year students, and obviously this isn't all this is just the people that I've spoken with, obviously, but a lot of upper year students have expressed the interest of going back in person. And a lot of first year students and even some second-year students, they tend to be the ones who are leaning more towards wanting to stay online. And I just thought that's an interesting thing to bring up. Because I don't know if it's more about learning online, or if it's having that experience of like that, that crowd your experience in person. So yeah, I've just I've talked to a couple students and that's what I've heard.

Alex: I've talked to mainly students, international students who live in residence, so it's actually kind of split somewhat unwillingly to go study online, just because we live in resident and our fees already been paid for the entire semester. So, it doesn't really matter whether or not we're going back in person. However, like for international student who live not in residence, some of them cannot go back to their country if we move online and some of them can move back country and save some money. So, it's rather split.

Victoria: Just kind of like seconding what Alex had said, I think it's important as a student’s union, like how Tyler and some of the other executives have received a lot of emails about this concern that we respond to it, and that we bring those concerns to the people who are making those decisions. However, from a personal perspective, I think the only arguments that should be made regarding this issue should be arguments due to COVID-19. So, arguments having to do with like, the new variant, or the spread of COVID-19, or, like Tory said, going in person sooner might cause down the road, more cancellations of different things. So, I think that's more what the issue is. And I don't think that on a personal level, I don't think issues regarding like, uncertainty of like moving or where you're going to live, should be taken into account just because the university did announce that we would be going in person. And that has been expected for like, well, since before Christmas break that we would be going back in person at the end of January, and then that we would be going back in person on the seventh. So, I think that student’s kind of prepared around that. And I know a few international students, or even domestic students who have moved back to Fredericton, this weekend, expecting that they'll be going back in person. So, in my opinion, I don't think it's fair to make that change really suddenly and reverse that decision that the university has already put out publicly, unless there's a serious health concern. Also from a student’s union perspective, as vice president student life, it's extremely difficult to prioritize student engagement, and student experience online. So, I think as long as public health allows for it, and this, restricting the spread of COVID-19 allows for it, I think we should be pushing towards being looking at the hybrid model again, or at least allowing for what Tyler said, having that option of allowing students to do like virtual classroom. So at least having that option, because like I said, it's really difficult from a student’s union perspective to have Initiatives and engagement that is completely online. And I think that's a major priority for the Students Union. So just to I guess, summarize everything that I said, I think that the main and only priority or argument that should be made regarding this issue should be the spread of COVID-19.

Tori: I just want him to kind of go off of sort of what Victoria said and what Greg said about how, like when Greg mentioned about how he feels that it's mostly first year and second year students who are against going back in person, like so much for, but I just think that something that I think a lot of people are considering that I've talked to at least are is the fact that there's COVID in the residences. And people are worried about that like, if we go back in person too soon, are there going to be people who are asymptomatic with COVID, who are walking around campus, and potentially giving it to people. I think that we really need to make sure that like, if we are going to say that we think that it's important to go back in person, we need to make sure that there's nobody actually living on campus who has COVID so that people will feel safer.

Lauren: So, I just want to give my two cents, I guess, because there has been a lot of conversation about residences, which is totally valid. I just wanted to say that of the cases that have come up in residents, I think it's been handled pretty well. And obviously, we're not in person. So, like, there's that whole other part that like going to class if you're asymptomatic, that hasn't been experienced really yet. But the spread has been very minimal. There's a specific person that I know that had to quarantine, because they're in contact with someone that tested positive. And of all the people that had to quarantine, only one other person did test positive, and then it never spread beyond that. What I know of, and we do have pretty strict rules, like one person a lot in the bathroom at a time, and stuff like that. But although there are like other risks with going back into person.

Ty: I don't want to like cut anybody off. So, there's more, please throw it at me, because this is a lot of really good stuff. And, you know, what we hear is executives usually isn't like the full picture. So, thank you everybody, for sharing. I think that is it's it speaks a lot that, that you're all, like having this relationship with your constituents that you're able to speak to this. The number one thing that has remained true throughout this entire time, and I actually have sat on a lot of the committee's and work with the communications department everything when they are coming up with the, like the restrictions that are going to be on campus. The four executives, we were all in pretty much direct conversation with how these restrictions were going to be conveyed to students, what we saw as being the benefits and, and the kind of shortcomings of each of these things when they were first introduced. And this was back when we were having the debate about vaccinations should be mandated on campus or not, I think all four of us will remember that that time. And the one thing that has been true, and it's been true from the very beginning, and public health has said this themselves, restrictions are all just precautions, and you have absolutely no idea how it's going to go until those things are tested. Which means that until we had a COVID case on the university campus, there was no way of knowing if these restrictions were going to actually work or not. As everyone on this call has pointed out, we all know somebody at this point who has had COVID, and some of them are on campus, this spread has been very minimal, which shows that as far as our restrictions have gone. So far, they have worked very well. The key component that is coming through from everything that you have all said and the things that the that students who have contacted me directly have said is the asymptomatic component. That is the number one concern that keeps popping up between each one of what you're all saying. And the solution that keeps being thrown around here is that hybrid model. So, what I'm thinking is, I'll take what these concerns are, and I will structure them around those two key points. And I know that the university typically has conversations with public health, like about the week before we go back in person is when they typically have those conversations and I believe that they were meeting weekly, they probably still are. But at one point, there are a meeting weekly, and I think it shifted to biweekly. So that asymptomatic question, I can have that framed and sent to the communications department and administrators so we can get that answer directly from public health, from their concerns. And then we can go forward with the with the hybrid option for students to choose whether or not they want to be in person or online, based off of as Victoria has pointed out, and everybody else has to but Victoria is the one who like just outright said so that's why it's in my head and based off of the responses that it has to be COVID centered reasons that we give the university in order for them to base these decisions off of. So, I think that was a pretty good summary of everything that we've just said, people can give like a little thumbs up or something in the chat just fine. If I've summed that up, right. And again, if there's any other concerns that pop up or any further things that pop up from any one of you either, like, personal concerns that you might have or things that you hear from your constituents, please forward them to one of the executives and we will be able to compile it and so that they are being heard by the administration and the correct people.

Julia: Yeah, this is really quick. I just wanted to clarify quickly, just so everyone knows, when I was like stating concerns that like weren't necessarily COVID related, I was just on voicing these, like on behalf of my constituents. So, it doesn't mean that I think there's merit in these arguments, I just feel like it's my responsibility as representative regardless of whether I agree or think it's valid to state it, just because I think it's important for us as representatives to know the concerns, regardless of whether we think they're pertinent to the issue. So, again, I just want to make sure that I'm on board with you guys about like, what the concerns whether they're COVID related and how this decision is made. I just thought it was my responsibility as an at large representative to state all the reasons that I've heard thus far. So, I just want to clarify that, so everyone knows that I'm on the same page.

Ty: Yeah, I didn't see the message. I wasn't actually this was a direct bag to a Julia just said, I think what you just said perfectly encapsulates what it means to be a representative and an executive. We're always faced with that dilemma. And this goes for everybody. I think we've all faced that, is balancing, you know, what we personally and individually think versus what the broader cohort is. And I think that sentence just perfectly sums up what it takes to be an effective representative. And based off of what has been shared here today, we have a full council of effective representatives that are embodying that phrase. So, thank you very much for sharing that. I think that means a lot. I think it's good for everyone on the call to hear so.

Sydona: One of the concerns that I've been receiving is that if we do return, in person, that there might be another wide spread of COVID 19 here on campus, just because, like there's many students, there's talks of many students that have gotten COVID and are currently in quarantine as well. So that's one of the major concerns that I received from students.

**7. Questions, Announcements & Notices**

Ty: Based on the attendance this time slot works well for everybody. We can keep it for the rest of the semester. That good for everyone? Great!

Sydona: It's kind of an announcement. STU Leads is this Friday, so I just wanted to share that, and it would be lovely if all our students attend. And if you share it with other students. The team this year is equity, diversity, and inclusion. And I know there'll be a lot of great information shared with so many good speakers that are from you as well. I'll also be a speaker on that. But yeah, it would be great to see you guys. Also, Black History Month is coming up on Tuesday. I'm sure the black student association has great things planned. So, make sure you attend all those events and share around within your community.

Victoria: So, as a sexual assault prevention initiative, STUSU is going to do sort of a redo of last year's, we believe you campaign. So, we're thinking of kind of changing up the wording and doing like we stand with you. But I just wanted to announce that we're open to any suggestions of how to sort of make this different from last year. If you're not aware of what this is, basically, it was a video that was made for sexual assault prevention. And it had basically the Students Union saying, we believe you, and then different representatives of different groups on campus saying we believe you and saying a little bit about why we believe you and as well as some faculty members and stuff on campus included in that video, so if anyone has any suggestions about the wording, who's included in the video or anything, we should just change about the video as a whole. Please shoot me an email and I'd be more than happy to talk about it and take all your suggestions into consideration.

Alex: I don't remember who said this, but I like the idea of putting facts and figures along with we stand with you. Like have other facts before the video or after during whichever works. Thank you.

## **8. Adjournment**

Motion for adjournment was moved by Alex N.

Seconded by ­­Tyler M.

Motion for adjournment was carried.

Adjournment at 6:15 pm.

**Submission:**

The minutes were respectfully submitted to the Vice-President of Administration on February 5th, 2022.

Minahil Fatima

su\_secretary@stu.ca

Recording Secretary

STUSU Student Representative Council