

Minutes of the 1320th meeting of the Hart House Board of Stewards held on Thursday, February 3rd, 2022, virtually on Zoom video conferencing.

Present:**Voting Members:**

Ms. Lauren Duan (Steward, RA&W Committee)
Mr. Robert Fisher (Steward, Community Members Committee)
Ms. Kimia Karachi (Steward, Student Theatre Committee)
Ms. Jaime Kearns (APUS Representative)
Mr. David Kim (Governing Council Appointee)
Mr. Matthew Lee (Steward, Student Literary and Library Committee)
Ms. Sherry Kulman (CAO, Acting Warden)
Mr. David Newman (President [*ex-officio*] Designate)
Ms. Chan-Min Roh (Steward, Student Debates and Dialogue Committee)
Ms. Nadia Rosemond (Presidential Appointee)
Ms. Rachel Shi (Steward, Finance Committee)

Non-Voting Members:

Ms. Ikeade Adekale (Recording Secretary)
Mr. Terry Gardiner (Chair)
Ms. Lena Yusim (Project Coordinator)

Guests:

Ms. Michelle Brownrigg (Senior Director, Chief Program Officer)
Ms. Davina Chan (Senior Director, Marketing, Communications, and Information Services)
Mr. Jimmy Cheung (Director, Facilities and Capital Projects)
Ms. Jenifer Newcombe (Director, Strategic Initiatives)
Ms. Amy Shuang Wang (AV Operator)
Ms. Calista Barber (Steward, Student Farm Committee)
Mr. Sako Khederlarian (Coordinator, Learning and Community)
Ms. Teya Nightingale Chair, Youth Advisory Council
Mr. Dylan Alfi (Chair, Social Justice Committee)
Ms. Danielle Dinunzio (Coordinator, Access and Community Engagement)
Mr. Alphonse Daniel (Youth Access Program Assistant)
Ms. Gillian Lewis (Education and Production Coordinator)
Mr. Doug Floyd (General Manager, Hart House Theatre)
Mr. Adam Eid (Communications Officer)

Regrets:

Mr. John Monahan (Warden)
Ms. Beth Ali (Presidential Appointee)
Ms. Charlotte Koch (Steward, Student Art Committee)
Ms. Calister Barber (Steward, Student Farm Committee)
Ms. Tara Behruz (Steward, Student Music Committee)
Ms. Varsha Pillai (Steward, Student Social Justice Committee)
Ms. An-Noûra Compaoré (GSU Representative)
Mr. Kashi Chandrasegar (SCSU Representative)
Mr. Ryan Tomlinson (UTMSU Representative)
Ms. Catherine Lai (UTSU Representative)

1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement (Terry Gardiner, Chair)

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the 1320th meeting of the Board of Stewards and led with the Land Acknowledgement.

2. Approval of the 1,320th Meeting Agenda (Terry Gardiner, Chair)

The following motion to approve the agenda was made by Robert Fisher, seconded by Mathew Lee:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Stewards approve the 1,320th Agenda

The motion was carried by voting members of the Board of Stewards.

3. Minutes of the 1,319th Meeting (Terry Gardiner, Chair)**a. Approval of the Minutes of the 1,319th Meeting**

The Chair asked if there were any amendments to be made to the Minutes from the January Board of Stewards meeting and none were presented. The following motion to approve the Minutes was made by Jamie Kearns, seconded by Nadia Rosemond:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Stewards approve the Minutes of the 1,319th Meeting.

The motion was carried by voting members of the Board of Stewards.

4. Elections Update (Michelle Brownrigg, Co-Curricular Education & Chief Program Officer)

Michelle presented the process for the Student Standing Committee election and reiterated a few important dates:

- Nominations opened on January 17, closing on February 4 – Michelle encouraged those who are interested to serve as Chairs or Co-Chairs for next year to submit their nominations.
- February 10-24 – Campaign period when candidates will have the opportunity to promote their candidacy
- Voting period – February 28-March 1 – students will be able to vote online via UElect
- Successful candidates will be notified in March

5. Committee Presentation**a. Hart House Student Theatre Committee** (Kimia Karachi, Steward)

Kimia started by providing a general overview of the Hart House Student Theatre Committee (“Committee”). The Committee acts as an advisory board for the management of the Hart House Theatre in order to help ensure that the programming and operations are in keeping with the overarching goals and mandate of the Hart House Theatre specifically and of Hart House more generally. Additionally, the Committee acts as a centre for experiential education that provides students with rich learning opportunities outside of the classroom. This is achieved by the presentation of student-focused programming such as workshops, festivals and competitions for students across all three of the University of Toronto campuses.

The Committee meets multiple times a term to discuss the Theatre's operations, programming and student initiatives. Acting as an Advisory Board to Theatre staff, items discussed include but are not limited to audience development, programming, student involvement, theatre marketing, operating policies and procedures. The Committee is comprised of the various stakeholders of Hart House Theatre and includes a first-year representative, permanent UTM and UTSC student rep positions, and student leaders from theatre activities across all three campuses including those from the Hart House UofT Festival of Dance, the Drama Coalition, and the Spotlight stream of programming. It also includes theatre staff, alumni, and industry professionals. The Committee plays an important role in Hart House Theatre's contribution in meeting the theatre-related needs of the university and of the broader community.

The Committee also aims to build artistic partnerships that enhance inclusion, pluralism, and representation; and that encourage innovative development and training opportunities for youth; and that provide platforms from which emerging artists can showcase their work. The Hart House Theatre and the Committee also works to support opportunities for students to volunteer both on and off the stage. Before the pandemic begun, the Theatre offered an annual season of live theatre productions and is looking forward to the opportunity to provide in-person theatre experiences again soon, including student workshops, consultations, competitions, festivals, cabaret nights, panel discussion, roundtable talks, and more.

Kimia highlighted some of the activities the Committee offers and/or supports. Recent or current events and activities include:

- Musical Theatre Slam – hosted in partnership with Singular Sensation, this is a live virtual event featuring a panel of industry professionals as judges and ten live performers.
- 2022 UofT Dance Festival – the 27th edition of the festival currently underway
- 2022 UofT Drama Festival – gives students the opportunity to write, direct, produce, design, and act in student written work. The student work is adjudicated for awards.
- Crafting Land Acknowledgement for Theatre Workshops – coming soon
- Monthly information sessions – for student and community members to learn about the Hart House Theatre, the work of the Committee, and how to get involved
- Discussing Drag seminar with educational makeup tutorial
- Voice acting coaching
- Acting for camera
- Spoken Word performances
- and more!

In summary, the Hart House Student Theatre Committee works to strengthen and position the Hart House Theatre as a cultural destination for the university and the City of Toronto. It is committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive experience for Hart House audiences, and to encouraging the growth and development of a thriving community of current and would-be creators of live theatre.

b. Hart House Student Social Justice Committee (Dylan Alfi, Chair)

Dylan acknowledged that the Hart House Student Social Justice Committee (“HHSSJC”) has not been as active this year as it has in the past. He took the opportunity to share some of the challenges that the group has been facing and asked for suggestions and recommendations on how to address the challenges.

Dylan highlighted some of the challenges that the committee is has faced this academic year:

- Staff and membership turnover – the committee has moved through three different staff advisors over the past seven months, and there have also been five resignations from the committee.
- Overall decrease in student engagement with the committee – low student participation in committee events, meetings, activities and engagement.
- Committee morale – some members of the committee are feeling burnt out, exhausted, overwhelmed, disconnected, or are facing mental health-related challenges.

Dylan also expressed that many of these challenges are not unique to the HHSSJC. He indicated that he decided to present these issues to the Board in the hope of engaging the rest of the Board in a discussion about how to address these challenges.

Board members were sympathetic towards Dylan and his colleagues from the HHSSJC, and some offered suggestions on how to begin addressing the challenges they are facing. The Chair noted that the experience Dylan shared is not specific to just the HHSSJC but one that is true for many people during the pandemic. He further noted that it is important that we recognize that the last two years have been systemically challenging for students, staff, faculty not just at the University of Toronto but across many institutions and organizations.

Nadia suggested that the HHSSJC take things slow and focus for the time being on healing and restorative activities for the group. She also encouraged the committee to seek out and participate in events and activities organized by other groups rather than, worrying about producing its own in order to avoid adding more pressure and strain to the group. Michelle echoed Nadia's suggestion and further encouraged the HHSSJC to reach out to its Staff Advisor, Sako Khederlarian, to seek further support or advice.

6. Hart House Youth Advisory Council (Teya Knightingale, Chair; Adam Eid, Communications Officer; Alphonse Daniel, Youth Access Program Assistant [Staff])

Alphonse, a member of the Hart House staff team, started by introducing the Hart House Youth Advisory Council (HHYAC). The HHYAC aims to provide leadership learning opportunities and the resources that will allow youth to share and execute their ideas; develop skills in good governance; support the evolution of youth-focused programming; and create more space for youth to flourish at Hart House. The HHYAC is part of Hart House's broader Youth Access portfolio, the overarching goal of which is to encourage high school-aged young people to consider and explore potential avenues for the eventual pursuit of post-secondary education at UofT or elsewhere.

The council is comprised of nine young people in grades 9–12 from Toronto, Etobicoke, Scarborough, Kitchener, and Waterloo. The HHYAC acts as a conduit for input from youth that helps to inform current and future programs, engagements, and other activities at Hart House. It also collaborates with other areas of Hart House, local organizations, and youth groups.

The HHYAC meets on a bi-weekly basis and utilizes Discord, an online platform, to host their meetings, communicate with each other, coordinate its activities and build a sense of community. In December 2021, HHYAC coordinated a letter writing campaign to reach out to both the seniors and staff at O'Neil Long Term Care Centre. For the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year, the council will be coordinating a project to gather youth voices and perspective on climate change.

Alphonse then introduced and moderated a discussion featuring two key representatives from the HHYAC: Teya Knightingale the Chair, and Adam Eid the Communications Officer.

Teya highlighted the positive impact her participation in the council has had on her, especially during the pandemic when many high school students have felt an overwhelming sense of loneliness and disconnection. The HHYAC has provided Teya and others with an opportunity to meet new people, share thoughts, and feel motivated to work together on meaningful projects. She also noted that the experience has helped her to build or strengthen her courage, confidence, and leadership skills. She also talked about the sheer joy that she has derived from her time on the council, even from such simple undertakings as planning games with other members. She has benefited from the opportunity to build deep connections with other students experiencing similar challenges to her, which has been particularly valuable during the pandemic.

Adam commented that he has learned a lot from this program as a result of some of the activities in which he has been involved. His communication skills have improved thanks to his involvement in project discussions and brainstorming sessions. Through this program he has also been able to socialize with more people outside of his regular social circle and has appreciated being able to participate in more programs and group activities. He has also gained valuable insights into project planning and management, and how to collaborate better in a team environment.

The council is currently working on Climate Impact on Toronto Youth (CITY) that involves gathering user perspectives about the global climate crisis from Toronto-based youth. The goal is to get youth involved in becoming change agents, to hear about their hopes for the future of the city, and to find out what they are doing to help preserve our environment. Submissions will be collected in different formats - video, photography, and paintings or illustrations. A video compilation will be produced, and a winner will be selected to receive a prize in each media category. A summary of the CITY project will soon be made available on the HHYAC's page on the Hart House website.

Both Teya and Adam shared positive feedback about the events and guest speakers that had had the most impact on them. They were both appreciative of the opportunity to listen and learn from current U of T students as it has helped them to understand what it's like to be an undergraduate student.

7. Warden's Report – Sherry Kulman (CAO & Acting Warden)

Sherry presented the Warden's report in John Monahan's (Warden) absence.

- **Re-Opening Update**
 - Fitness Centre – January 31st
 - Art Museum – February 8th
 - Arbor Room – February 14th
 - Gallery Grill – Mid March

- **Student Engagement – May 2020 – December 2021**
 - 111,611 asynchronous engagements
 - 24,133 synchronous participants
 - Virtual Fitness Studio – 5,192 memberships
 - In-Person Activities – 15,651 used our fitness centre for workouts and 439 registrations for Piano playing between November 1-December 31
 - 5,784 registrations for the Academic study spaces

- **Meeting and Events Services**

- For the period of Sept 2021 to April 2022, we have 481 in-person and 59 virtual/hybrid bookings
- **Weddings**
 - First wedding of 2021 held in September
 - 22 bookings for weddings and social events
- **Facilities**
 - Between the periods of 2019-2020 to 2020-2021 we achieved 34.7% carbon footprint reduction
 - Utility costs reduced by \$300,900
- **Renovations and Renewals**
 - South Dining Room – Donald Burwash Room
 - Arbor Room soft opening
 - Universal washroom under construction
 - Ablution stations installed in upstairs washrooms
- **Participants reached through programming**
 - 2018-2019 - 17,000+
 - 2019-2020 – 19,994
 - 2020-2021 – 16,455
 - International students
 - 2018-2019 – 12% of all participants
 - 2019-2020 – 15% of all participants
 - 2020-2021 – 24% of all participants
 - Graduate students
 - 2018-2019 – 28% of all participants
 - 2019-2020 – 33% of all participants
 - 2020-2021 – 40% of all participants
- **Upcoming Events**
 - Black Futures – series of events happening in the month of February
 - Classical Theatre Slam – February 18
 - Changemakers Series – March 9
 - Global Commons March 5-26

8. Other Business & Announcements (Terry Gardiner, Chair)

The Chair asked if there were additional items to address. No other business or announcements were forthcoming.

9. Next Meeting

The next Board of Stewards meeting will be held on **Wednesday, March 2nd, 2022**

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Jaime Kearns (APUS), seconded by Robert Fisher (Community Members Committee).

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.