



**OASFAA Executive Meeting  
September 12, 2024  
MINUTES**

**Present:** Celeste Coles, Shaun Anderson, Mark Robinson, Anik Powell, Jeremy Potter, Krisha Marshall, Melanie Oakes, Tina Obediah, Juli Vlaminck, Marian Doll, Leslie Aitchison, Brenda Cromb, Lana Hardwick, Jessica Husted

**Regrets:** Mary Santoli

**1. Business Arising**

- Committee Sign-up – Update
  - Deadline has passed but we need new participants

**2. Chair's Report**

- Letter to Director sent on August 23. Celeste & Shaun will meet with Saba Ferdinands on September 25 to discuss.
  - Will share results after meeting
  - Letter will be shared with membership via regional reps
- OLSG Working Group Callout
  - Call-out will be sent by end of week

**3. Past-Chair's Report**

- **Service request out to vendor to discuss options; registering as non-profit. Any response/update?**
  - Hard to establish as non-profit; therefore, may need to terminate credit card payments or drop box at bank (re: cheques)
  - Suggestion is for payments to be cheques or EFT payments only
  - Need accounting software for

**4. Treasurer's Report**

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**5. Committee Reports**

- **Policy Report**
  - Have committee members now; will meet in October
  - OLSG re: Manual – student's lack of participation (ie: WD or drop to PT) is problematic
  - If returning, need to confirm a 'new cohort'.



- **Professional Development**
  - Getting Fall virtual meeting underway
  - Requesting MCU participation
  - We need more participation on PD committee!!
  
- **Procedures**
  - Will meet with new committee members in October
  - Need Ministry to update their Microcredentials website
  
- **Communications**
  - No new participants since August 23<sup>rd</sup>
  - Sign-up page will be removed now from website
  - Add instruction/form on how to make suggestions to OASFAA on our website
  - Discount for membership if sitting on committee?
  
- **Systems**
  - Met with MCU on Aug 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - Reinstatements – extension of study period – student could complete – MCU will explore
  - If student WD & wanted to return, can that be processed as a reinstatement?
  - Allowing new apps online would save majority of reinstatements
  - Comprehensive review of academic progress – Chairs will be discussing with Saba in their meeting at end of September
  - Distance calculation doesn't work if students can't find their program/cost code on the app – this defaults to home/main campus. When cost code is corrected, it does not calculate the actual distance

## 6. External Liaison Report (CASFAA)

- CASFAA yesterday
- Conference June 8-11<sup>th</sup>
- Meeting in October re: sustainability of organization, financial literacy, scholarship support, governance of board

## New Business

- **BSWD Transfer Payment Agreement** – Lots of discussion over email about this new requirement. Is there any feedback that should be forwarded to MCU?
  - Will this be implemented for other scholarship programs?
  - Why report? Info is already included in BRS?



- Report states from April 1, 2024 (but TPA email was received in August)
- Budget is perplexing – why budget? We are obligated to pay out for students anyways?
- Why can't BSWD/CSG-DSE come via EFT directly to students?
  
- Scholarship info (ie: Ukraine, Remembrance, First Gen, Indigenous, etc) – we should have this information by May 1<sup>st</sup> so we can budget, advertise, etc --- **Refer to MCU**
  
- **Automatic communication when downgrading probation/restriction** – Recommending that students be notified they have returned to good standing, plus a reminder of the academic progress requirements
  - when placing an instance, it asks if we want to inform the student.
  - But, when we downgrade & bring to good standing – we should be asked to automatically notify the student – can this be added: 'would you like to notify student'? – **Add to Systems**
  
- **Signature Pages** – In addition to pop-up warning about electronic signatures, we had requested a warning right above the signature panel on the actual forms
  - Pop-up stating ACTUAL signatures is good but we had requested the same wording on the actual forms – **Refer to MCU**
  
- **Extenuating Parental Circumstances form** – For 2025-26, can form be updated to list what the Ministry considers arbitrary reasons to refuse support?
  - Sometimes cultural reasons or program choice is being selected for extenuating parental circumstances
  - Can MCU have a listing of arbitrary reasons upfront on the form -- No, the arbitrary reasons can be found in the manual & students would just list one of the acceptable reasons
  - It is up to Fin Aid officer to relay the reasons & to discuss that 'extenuating' means a serious rift
  - Let's ask MCU to ask for a query of the number of Family Breakdown appeals – this review has been discussed for many years – **Refer to MCU**
  - **Great roundtable at conference – how does MCU deal with these out-of-province reviews?**
  
- **Bankruptcy Reviews** – Confusion over messaging “if you had previous student loans **that were paid in full**. Recommendation to remove “that were paid in full” and just state “if you had prior student loans . . . you must provide proof of no balance owing”
  - Very unclear; request to remove that phrase – **Refer to MCU**
  
- **OLSG Complaints**
  - MCU promotes that the program covers the cost of tuition, fees, and books. However, due to maximums in the cost code guide, students are left underfunded and frustrated with program



- OLSG Website for program eligibility is too vague. Needs to specifically state that only the Nipissing on campus program is eligible, not the distance program.
- MCU communication to EI's regarding issues with program eligibility is inadequate and unacceptable. There is no accountability or transparency from the ministry regarding OLSG administration.
  - Holds were placed on all OLSG applications following COE and FAA was not advised
- **Refer to MCU**
- Level of transparency & communication needs to improve
- Students are not getting enough total funds to cover the educational fees
- Textbook costs – if over 3 characters, you need override (ie: \$1100 needs override). If overriding for OLSG, you also need to override those that also get OSAP
- Needs better communication on their website (re: compulsory fees not covered, 'allowable' compulsory fees, maximum textbook costs?, etc)

#### 7. **Regional Reports** -- Defer to next meeting

- **Eastern Region:**
- **Central Region:**
- **Western Region:**
- **Northern Region:**