Society for Students with a Disability

Council Meeting Minutes

JULY 16th, 2026, 11:30am PST

Zoom: https://uvic.zoom.us/j/82592867194

In attendance: Bella, Kai, Robbie, Nicole, Lauren, Hannah, Arjun, Milo

1. Call to Order/Welcome 11:35am

2. Land Acknowledgement

Chair gives acknowledgment and offers time for others to add if they would like.

3. Check-In Question

a. A course you are most looking forward to in the fall?

Bella: Looking forward to not having any courses to take in the fall.

Milo: Looking forward to not having any courses to take in the fall.

Kai: Looking forward to not having any courses to take in the fall.

Robbie: Community Engagement, excited for part two!

Hannah: BIOL 365.

Arjun: Intro to Disability Studies.

Nicole: Ecology (not excited).

Lauren: Excited for Nicole's Ecology class.

Society for Students with a Disability

4. Access Needs Check-In

a. Break at 45 minutes

5. Adoption of Agenda/Minutes

a. Adoption of today's agenda

Amendment to add the following motion:

WHEREAS Education and Administration Coordinator Kai Punt, was approved during the 2026 budget process to increase their position to up to 30 hours per week for the Fall 2026; and

WHEREAS Office Coordinator, Bella Jacobs, has requested that an official start date be established for this increase; and

WHEREAS the Summer 2026 semester has experienced an unprecedented level of activity, creating an operational need for the additional hours; and,

WHEREAS this change has received preliminary approval from the Constituency Groups Director, Allie Mcfarland.

BIRT the SSD Council approve the increase of Kai Punt's position to up to 30 hours per week, effective August 17th, 2026.

Move: Hannah

Second: Arjun

Passed by consensus.

b. Ratification of 2026-06-15 - Minutes.docx

Move: Nicole

Second: Arjun

Passed by consensus.

6. Reports

a. Council

i. Operations Director

1. Hannah

Short report, they were at the Submarine racing competition and now they are visiting home, they will be back on August 3rd. They attended #A4A meetings and Thrive meetings they are excited to have an #A4A workplan. Kai and Hannah met about the Disability and Neurodiversity Awareness training to start re-vamping the training for upcoming presentations for 5 Days of Action, UVic HR, and UVic ECS. Hannah was elected as the GSS Internal and University Relations Representative on the GSS Board of Directors!

ii. Finance Director

1. Nicole

Nothing to report.

iii. Communications Director

1. Vacant

iv. UVSS SSD Representative

1. Acorn

Absent.

v. International Student Representative

1. Lauren

Nothing to report.

vi. Graduate Student Representative

1. Vacant

vii. Outreach Director

1. Julia

Absent.

viii. Directors of Council at Large:

1. Carolyn

Absent.

2. Eve

Absent.

3. Valentine

Absent.

4. Arjun

Nothing to report.

b. Staff

i. Office Coordinator

1. Bella Jacobs

Has been working on a bunch of stuff, as usual. She is excited to be done with the Disability Pride Week of Events and is happy all the events went well. They are working on the residence statement (this is your final call to add edits!), getting a free store idea together for the SSD space, started the annual report, created a workplan for #A4A, working on the Community Care Fair, creating the Office Coordinator job manual and SSD handbook, supporting several students in advocacy, and so much more!

ii. Education & Administration Coordinator

1. Kai Punt

Lifetime networks tour of the UVic campus. On July 24th, if anyone would like to be a tour guide let Kai know. Had a meeting with Karen Basi, about CAL services. We learnt about how to refer students on their behalf. They would like to make a CAL information webpage on the SSD website. Bella and Kai went to a Wayfinding meeting with LTI and gave them feedback about navigating campus. Kai is working on the Peer Support group Training. Has also had meetings with CCG about the accessible garden bed, finally moving forward with it. Is thinking about making the Art Hive an extension of the Disability Rage Campaign wants to talk to Valentine and Nicole first before moving forward with the idea.

iii. Communications Officer

1. Robbie Honnell

Robbie has been working on posting lots! Disability Pride Week Robbie made many reels. He is working on updating and digitizing our resources. He is updating our button designs and will be hosting button making on August 12th 2-4pm. Doing research for educational posts, to have a backlog of posts. Highlighting disability awareness. Starting on the Handbills and pamphlets for #A4A, SSD, & PSG.

7. Discussion

a. Campaigns

- #A4A Updates
  - We have a workplan YAY!
  - We invited the Campaigns Director from the UVSS to our last meeting. They are excited to get involved with us.
  - We are working on a tabling plan for the school year.
  - We have also been trying to post on our social media once a week.
- Residence Statement
  - Please add I will be putting the final draft together shortly.
- (Content Warning) MAID

Kai is on a mailing list for the Autism Alliance of Canada regarding MAID. They are asking that on June 16th and their was a recommendation (add email notes). They are asking organizations to send a letter to ask the minister of justice to not include this in MAID. This is important as many folks with disabilities are affected by MAID. There are mixed feelings with MAID as an option for those with Mental health conditions.

"Dear members,

We are writing to share an important update and ask for your support on a time-sensitive advocacy issue. On June 17, 2026, the Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying (AMAD) released its majority report. The committee made one recommendation:

That the Government of Canada amend the Criminal Code to indefinitely exclude people whose sole underlying medical condition is a mental illness from eligibility for medical assistance in dying.

This is an important step. It aligns with this open letter signed by more than 90 disability and mental health organizations, including Autism Alliance of Canada. That letter called on the federal government to stop the planned expansion of MAID for people whose only underlying condition is a mental illness.

Now Parliament needs to act. The current law still includes a "sunset clause." This means that, unless Parliament changes the law, the exclusion for mental illness could end on March 17, 2027. The committee has recommended that this not happen. The federal government is now reviewing how it will respond.

We are asking members to write to the Minister of Justice before July 21, 2026.

The message can be very short. The main ask is:

Please accept the AMAD Committee's recommendation, repeal the sunset clause, and advance legislation to make the mental illness exclusion permanent before March 17, 2027.

Why this matters

Autism Alliance of Canada believes that MAID should not be expanded to people whose sole underlying condition is a mental illness.

Many people with disabilities continue to face barriers to mental health care, housing, income support, disability services, and community inclusion. Canada should respond to unmet needs,

trauma, isolation, poverty, and lack of supports by improving care and inclusion. And research shows time and again that many Autistic people experience co-occurring mental-health conditions, often shaped by exclusion, bullying, poverty, isolation, trauma, and inadequate supports.

This is why broad MAID eligibility based on mental illness alone raises serious concerns.

What we are asking you to do

Please send a letter or email to the Minister of Justice by July 21, 2026."

Do we want the SSD to support this and if we don't want to support this that's fine.

Lauren: does not support. I personally believe that an individual's rights do include making the decision on whether to remain living and that mental health diagnoses should remain included in MAID services.

Nicole: does not support.

Arjun: I don't personally feel like I know enough about it, and this feels to me like a short timeline to make a decision.

Hannah: I am not as informed in the area of MAID as I would like to be, but I feel like people should have accessible access to dying. Excluding mental health conditions from this feels like making it inaccessible in a way as someone may only have access to a mental health diagnosis, and that this is enough for them to be eligible for an accessible death should they choose so.

Arjun: My take: I could research this more and have a more informed opinion, but... probably not by Tuesday so without doing that first, I don't think I'd feel good about voting for SSD to support/oppose it.

b. Committees

- AIR Updates

Going on another walk on July 24th around Swan Lake.

- Accessibility Committee Updates
    - New Rep Needed

With Hannah's new role at GSS they have taken the GSS spot in the Accessibility Committee. This means that the SSD spot on the Accessibility Committee is now open. I will be posting on teams about it and if you are interested please let me know by responding to the thread or messaging me privately and we can put it to a vote

c. Upcoming Programming

- Accessibility in Music Spaces

Milo they/them and they are deaf and the. A panel where those in the music industry or those who like being in community and also a proof of concept. Crip Brave service those to identify as disabled, they hosted a rave night in 2021, with accessibility first. Both founders are disabled. They would like to do this initiative in victoria. The Ministry of Causal Living would be interested in offering their space to us. VibraFusionLab, they are working to make sound accessible to those who cannot hear. CripRave based in Toronto, Criptoria based in Victoria.

Hannah: Has worked with Kimberlee Motture, who works with accessible instruments, maybe reach out to this person. CanAssist has also made accessible instruments for individuals.

Kai: Friends of Music Society. Music for mental health and they have lots of programs. They could be somebody to connect with, they would most likely be interested in it.

Milo: Center disabled DJ's, musicians, and creators.

- Community Care Fair

Have been reaching out to vendors and finalizing planning, things are going well so far.

- September SWAG
    - Buttons
    - Stickers
    - Keychains
    - Calm Strips

Everything has been ordered, we are currently waiting to hear back from the 4imprint Grant.

- Golf Cart Program
    - Next steps

Tabled to the next meeting.

- Campus Lifetime Tour
    - Is anyone interested in being a tour guide?
        - Nicole

8. Business

a. Motions

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WHEREAS the Summer 2026 semester has experienced an unprecedented level of activity, creating an operational need for the additional hours; and,

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Move: Hannah

Second: Nicole

PASSED

b. Email Motions

MOTION 2026/06/25: 1

WHEREAS for the last four years the SSD has supported a bursary for the Learning Assistance Program to help offset costs of tutoring and learning strategy for students, and;

WHEREAS the SSD would like to continue supporting these services;

BIRT the SSD approve spending $500 for the summer semester, $2250 for the Fall semester, and $2250 for the Spring semester. This has already been approved in our yearly budget, this approval is for spending this money.

PASSED

MOTION 2026/06/25: 2

WHEREAS the SSD has been asked to donate to the Mini-U Summer Camp, and;

WHEREAS the SSD would like to support Indigenous students in their transition to University;

BIRT the SSD approve sending a $300 donation to Mini-U Summer Camp.

PASSED

MOTION 2026/07/03: 3

WHEREAS: The Society for Students with a Disability (SSD) wants to endorse injectable estradiol and testosterone pills. Gels/patches for Hormone Replacement Therapy to better support gender affirming care for students.

BIRT: the SSD approved the lobbying of changes on hormone replacement therapy options to the UVSS Health Care Plan at the Alumo conference and in future advocacy outreach.

PASSED

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9. Future Meeting Times

a. Council Meetings

- Let's plan our August council meeting, please fill out the poll below.
  - https://crab.fit/ssd-august-council-meeting-298071
    - Reminder this council meeting will be held at the Campus Community Garden and we will be having a potluck! We will also be hosting it hybrid.

b. Bi-Weekly Staff/Admin (Thrive) Meetings

- Meetings throughout the summer are held bi-weekly on Mondays.
- Next Meeting: August 3rd at 12:00pm
- All are welcome, mandatory(ish) for Administrative Council.

c. #Access4All Meetings

- Meetings throughout the summer are held bi-weekly on Wednesdays.
- Next Meeting: July 29th at 1:00pm
- Email Bella if you would like to be involved.

10. In-Camera (If needed)

11. Adjournment 12:52pm

Thank you for coming!