Federation of Students’ Special Council Meeting

ONLINE, MICROSOFT TEAMS

Chair: President Simpson  Secretary: Mike Cimetta

ATTENDANCE

The following members were present*:

- Simpson, Abbie (President)
- Fatima, Aiman
- Guevara, Alana (VP, Operations & Finance)
- Helka, Amanda Nicole
- Souza, Angela
- Wang-Lin, Angela
- Easton, Benjamin (Chair of the Board)
- Dong, Catherine
- Yang, Edward
- Gondosiswanto, Evelyn (Assistant Secretary)
- Hallen, Frances
- Yanez Vasquez, Jairo Josue
- Dhillon, Jaskaran
- Chen, Jason
- Hunte, John (Deputy Speaker)
- Surdi, Julian (President, SciSoc)

* remote  † late

- Sharma, Kanan
- Zhu, Karl
- Jolicoeur-Becotte, Marie
- Schwarze, Matthew
- Town, Megan (VP, Education)
- Hymers, Meaghan (President, SJUSU)
- Abouelnaga, Nada (VP, Student Life)
- Dosen, Nick
- Dragusin, Rebecca
- Leo, Shanelle
- Ye-Mowe, Stephanie
- Macci, Sumayyah
- Rehmanji, Taher (President, SoPhS)
- Shi, Victoria (President, ESS)
- Ghuwalewala, Vidyut
- Wang, Yuqian (President, MathSoc)
The following members were absent:

- Narang, Aryan
- Lindstrom-Humphries, Delainey (President, EngSoc A)
- McGee, Ellen (President, EngSoc B)
- Singh, Jaineet
- Ukrani, Mahaveer Jai
- Suri, Manas
- Ahmed, Mehida
- Parmar, Mokhash
- Couzens-Brown, Nathanial (President, ASU)
- Roxas, Niks
- Ikeno, Vicky (President, RASC)

* regrets

The following members were present in the gallery and wished to be noted in the record:

- Cimetta, Michael (Recording Secretary)
- Eyre, Alexander
- FitzPatrick, Amanda
- Yaseen, Ameen
- Masud, Ayesha
- Isimbi, Celine
- Brodsky, Guy
- Small, Jason
- Mapp, Kyera
- Pazzano, Lauren Anne
- Gerrits, Matthew (AVP Education)
- ZuMot, Samer
- Velling, Seneca
- Rodney, Victoria (AVP Equity)
- Ashraf, Zainab

**PRELIMINARIES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A quorum being present, President Simpson called the meeting to order at 2:06PM.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Be it resolved that Council adopts the agenda as presented for the 09 August Special meeting.

The Speaker assumed a motion to approve the agenda as presented.
President Simpson assumed the motion to adopt the agenda as presented
TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Pursuant to Federation Policy 50, Indigenous Engagement and Inclusivity, the Federation’s Students’ Council acknowledges:

"The University of Waterloo is on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to the Six Nations, which includes six miles on each side of the Grand River."

GENERAL ORDERS

ONTARIO POLICE SERVICES FUNDING DISCUSSION

Vice President Town introduced the following motion:

Whereas Executive Committee adopted a resolution and put forward the following quote to a newspaper, WUSA supports the reallocation of police funding towards programs with proven efficacy. We believe a shift in funding would support increased provision of social services to improve issues like mental health, addiction, and homelessness. WUSA is concerned about systemic inequities and their interplay with traditional police services. Especially for this reason, we stand behind the restructuring of current policing systems to incorporate deescalation tactics, harm reduction programs and training to address inherent biases; and Whereas the provincial government recently announced $6 million dollars in funding for the Proceeds of Crime Front-Line Policing Grant; and Whereas there are significant concerns with the current institution of policing, as presented by the Executive.

Be it resolved that the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association holds the following principles, concerns and recommendations:

- Principle: Public safety and wellbeing of students should be a key priority for the provincial government.
- Principle: Investment in social services has been shown to decrease the prevalence of non-violent incidents currently handled by the police. Concern: Current strategies for the funding and operation of law enforcement have adverse, dangerous impacts on marginalized individuals and communities.
- Concern: Current strategies for the funding of law enforcement deprioritize funding available for proactive social services. Recommendation: The provincial government should allocate more funding to urgent response programs for non-criminal events.
- Recommendation: The provincial government should allocate more funding for community-driven, social services which act proactively to address concerns including crime, violence, homelessness, addiction, human trafficking, sexual violence and mental health.
• Recommendation: The provincial government should invest in efforts to investigate systemic issues with policing in Canada and work to address any and all identified issues within the institution of policing.

Vice President Town and Vice President Abouelnaga.

Vice President Town gave a presentation outlining how advocacy works, beginning with identifying an issue through to taking action. Today is the penultimate step of approving the planned action which will be undertaken. The position that the execs would like to take today is in line with their annual plan of developing a racial equity advocacy strategy including work related to the police. Premier Doug Ford announced that $6 million would be going to policing grant; a position letter will be written to announce displeasure and recommendations will be included outlining a desire for greater funding of community services. Execs are seeking approval from councilors on this position and recommendations.

Ayesha Masud, a coordinator for Racial Advocacy for Inclusion, Solidarity and Equity service (RAISE), then went through the attached presentation giving a deeper dive into the meaning of "Defunding the Police" and how it is a shift in funding toward social services and away from police getting involved in certain emergencies that social workers are a better fit for. The police system historically oppresses Black and Indigenous and other marginalized lives. A movement is needed because there is data to backup that more training and resources does not necessarily lead to less crime or less over policing in Black and Indigenous populations. "Tough on crime" mindsets do not work and "collective community care" should be the focus. This means standing up for marginalized communities. Assuming this position fits our principles as public safety and the well-being of students is something that should be a key priority for the provincial government. Recommendations include allocating more funding to urgent response programs for non-criminal events as well as focusing this funding on community-driven social services which act proactively to understand crime, violence, homelessness, and other mental health crises. This RAISE presentation provided references as this is a very large topic.

The floor was then opened for questions:

Councillor Dosen asked why the stance in the presentation was abolish, and not just 'defund'. Ayesha responded affirmatively and said a community model of care without large weapons would help prioritize health where the police currently do not. Councillor Dosen followed up asking about what would be there if force was needed in the moment for defense. RAISE Coordinator Ayesha confirmed that the goal is not to get rid of everything as this would lead to a vacuum and that services would exist to still take crimes down. Expanding on that point, she said that de-escalation is an important piece and this should happen with a whole set of tools beyond weapons that are currently used; this work is already being done in crisis situations by people who are not police. Closing this line of questioning, Councillor
Dosen stated it seems like better police who are taught more.

Councillor Ye-Mowe directly responded saying that in the context of this council meeting, council is hoping to approve the motion, not debate the larger political issue; whether or not you agree with the politics. The focus should be finding agreement with the statement that Megan put forth.

Councillor Dong asked Ayesha why RAISE thinks WUSA is in a good position to advocate on this particular issue. Ayesha responded by saying it is something everyone should care about. Policing affects students. University student lives are affected by the police system and they should care about student safety.

Vice President Town inserted context by saying advocating on issues not directly related to post-secondary education is not new. Issues relating to mental health, LGBTQ+ students, and sexual violence and response lead to advocacy that goes beyond the policies of the university. It is an issue of access and safety as a larger topic that is seriously affecting our students even if it is not a clear cut as financial aid.

Deputy Speaker Hunte asked why the presentation sometimes used the analogy of the USA for this issue in Canada. Ayesha answered by saying it is more newsworthy in the States because there is more of a media focus there but there is a lot of research in the references to show that it is also a problem domestically. Deputy Speaker Hunte asked why RAISE cannot advocate on its own? Vice President Town recognized that RAISE is a part of WUSA. This is a WUSA stance that RAISE is taking as well in partnership. Most of the expertise of government relations lives in Megan’s role as VP Education. She then remarked that there is a desire to work with other student associations on this effort as well - which makes WUSA a more reasonable driver of the effort.

Deputy Speaker Hunte disagreed saying services do exist to have separate pull so to not affect org as a whole, so services can focus on advocacy for more controversial political issues. RAISE directly responded saying that yes, they can do separate advocacy but it would not be effective for systemic change for RAISE to do it alone. To go against Ontario government, it is too complex for the service alone.

AVP Equity Victoria Rodney directly responded with the line of comments stating that it is very unreasonable to think this is only a race-related issue and if that was the belief, then maybe Black students could waive paying union fees if the association do not consider this important student issue as something worth fighting for. This is about humanity, not just about racialized students. She then said she has been policed on campus for no reason and there are threats made against Black students that police will be called on them for no reason.

**Point of Privilege:** Deputy Speaker Hunte clarified that as a councilor he has a right to vote on council and a right to represent our constituents despite not actually fitting the same identity as constituents.
Councillor Ye-Mowe asked, if council approves the motion, what ways will VP Education portfolio be acting on the recommendations? Who will they be talking to? Will this involve research being done? What tangible actions could be expected? Vice President Town responded by saying the first step is writing a letter expressing our concerns in hopes to share that letter with associations in the community and get a meeting with local MPP Catherine Fife. The letter would express our discontent; it is relatively unlikely that this $6 million will get taken from this program but we hope to lay the groundwork for changing allocations in the future.

Alexander Eyre asked a question around the content of that $6 million grant. It seemed to focus on gun crime, sex assault survivors, and human trafficking. He asked what will happen to these initiatives? Vice President Town responded by saying that police are not the best people to be doing this work – social workers have more training to do a better job. The problem is not the initiatives, it is that the money is going to police. Alexander Eyre asked why WUSA is being chosen as the best organization to do this. The Charter recognizes promoting advocacy in the “common interest” of students which would imply that we would stay away from controversial positions. Procedure 9F specifically limits advocacy to issues pertaining to post-secondary education or university policies. Political debate in the past like Israel/Palestine and the divestment debate have taken time away from advocacy for students. Why don’t the people interested in this get involved in groups focused on these political views? He said he has worked in this type of groups focused around political opinions before. Vice President Town responded by saying it is a bit of a misnomer to call it a political opinion but at the heart of it, it is an issue of safety and access to education. We would be neglecting the larger idea of student experience if we do not advocate for safety and equity. We should be mindful of our privilege. As a white woman, she said she does not know what it is like to feel unsafe because of policing, but is doing her best to research to find out. Vice President Abouelnaga further responded to Alex saying: many people on this call have privilege of not being carded on campus. Our Black student clubs on campus had increased police presence at events for no reason. This is unfair treatment and we want students to be treated equitably.

Point of Order: Councillor Yang asked for the Microsoft Teams meeting chat to no longer be used for side-discussion, just for debate organization. President Simpson affirmed this and cautioned all against further posting of messages in chat; furthermore, she shared rules for the debate with to all present in the meeting:

Each councilor or attendee entitled to 4 turns on each motion. 4 minutes to start but then following 3 turns to speak cannot exceed 2 minutes. President Simpson said she will give a warning in the chat for how much time is left in each person’s speaking time. The chat will only be used for organizing debate. Reminder we are here to represent best interest of students. If you are found to be speaking out of turn, your mic will be muted to afford everyone equal opportunity to speak.
Secretary’s Note: Discussion on the main motion was opened

Point of Privilege: RAISE Coordinator Ayesha Masud said it seemed the rules had changed and only members of council could be added to the speaking order and this is concerning for the students who took time out of their day to share their experiences and talk to this motion. Not letting people talk in the chat is inaccessible for many people. It was disrespectful that the only reason these rules were brought up was after Black women in the chat made a relevant point. We are debating if their existence is valid enough to justify abolishing the police that exist to oppress them. Vice President Town responded by mentioning that these rules were developed ahead of time. The chat is not entered into the record and we want to ensure everyone’s valuable comments are recorded in the minutes and thus must be said aloud. If there are technical or accessibility issues stopping this from happening, please email speaker@wusa.ca and we will try to resolve that. At Large members can be added to the speaking order once they are recognized by the Speaker. President Simpson added that during a normal council meeting she would also ask for a managed chat so this is not different and not an act of silencing the chat.

Councillor Sharma began by recognizing his privilege understanding that a lot of councillors have not faced the issues POC face but in this situation it’s unfair to call in privilege because councillors are not getting points from personal opinions but from the feedback from students.

Councillor Sharma said councillors and executives were not elected on their political beliefs and though he personally agrees that significant social changes are needed in policing and government generally. He said it is possible to spend more on social services, without affecting the ability of the police to prevent and respond to crime. As a person of colour himself, he understands the struggle and injustices people of color, especially Black students face at the hands of police.

He thinks that instead of cutting police funding we should spend more on social services then reallocate the police money to support specialist training for police officers to try and get rid of these internal biases. Councillor Sharma does not think it’s responsible for WUSA to be engaging such non-academic political advocacy. As said in our Charter, the objective of the Federation is “to promote the welfare and the interests of students of the University of Waterloo in all matters, respecting their common interest.” Based on all his consultations with a lot of math constituents, it seems to be a fairly consistent belief that this topic is not in common interest of the student body, nor is it something that the majority of his constituents believe this student government should be engaging in, even if many of them personally agree and have a desire to see such changes in their own personal capacity. Taking a stance on such a controversial issue not directly related to post-secondary education, or the University environment specifically, in my opinion, is in conflict with the objectives of the corporation, and with council procedure 9F. The procedure which clearly states, “Policy is a formal stance made by council that sets up the beliefs, governing principles or views of the corporation, including with regards to philosophical matters, or government relating to, our associated post-secondary education, or university policies.” If the executives propose advocacy stances directly related to examining and re-envisioning university campus police
as a security and central response/support system then I think it would be more relevant to the purpose the Student Government defined by law, and more importantly, to the interest of all our students. Unfortunately, the executives have not sought to solve a problem affecting UW students in their capacity as students of UW, but rather in their capacity as residents of Waterloo, Ontario and Canada, which is a civic duty for all of us, but not a corporate objective.

We should look at the relevance to a student body and how to address issues based on our campus and co-op. He clarified that his constituency doesn’t think the issue is not relevant, but would like to see more emphasis on things that affect your life such as campus and co-ops. He went further to suggest it is never good to rush into anything, especially on something of such large magnitude which could affect the organization’s reputation in relation to the government. This government has already gone after student groups that insert themselves into politics unrelated to education and student affairs. He expressed concern about being under more scrutiny while still reeling from the Student Choice Initiative. Rushing into this without data to support will paint us as hasty and student backlash in terms of opt-outs could be bad. Opt out rates have already been going up over time because our student population is more fiscally conservative than many other institutions.

Councillor Sharma expressed that he does not want to see a return to when Feds used to be a battleground between groups wishing to take stances on matters not related to post-secondary education like international relations and diplomacy issues. These were distractions from the normal operation of the organization and diverted resources from engaging and serving our students. This organization has done a lot of work over the past few years to ensure that the student government never returns to those tenuous times. Councillor Sharma said he would like to not take a stance on this issue but rather indirectly support our services by financial means and other resources to advocate for this instead of directly being one of the organizations doing this and be under more scrutiny by the government.

Councillor Schwarze began by saying redirecting funds from law enforcement to social programs can make sense. I think it certainly does in the US and it may here, although he does not have the evidence to assert that yet. He felt that we should not be involving ourselves in politics that are not inherently student oriented without an explicit mandate from our members. This kind of act will motivate members to defund us for pushing an ideology and not providing adequate time for them to provide input. There is a fear of a dangerous precedent that we could respond unilaterally non-student issues assuming student beliefs that were not reflected in the platforms that councillors and execs ran on. If members want action, we should allow them to approach external organizations that can do a better job advocating on these issues.

Councillor Schwarze transitioned into a description of the government announcement that prompted this position. In researching with Councillor Dong, it seems there seemed to be a disconnect with what the program aims to achieve and what the executives understand it to be. The proceeds of crime front-line policing grant is a $6 million fund of money seized from criminals by the courts and available by application. Police must partner with at least two community organizations to deliver programs combating gun and gang violence, human trafficking and sexual violence investigations units. He went on to describe many programs around the province that this fund aimed to support. Of the many that he listed, only one
was enforcement-owned in a smaller community where other services may not exist. He explained, in closing, that as a student organization, membership have expressed the importance of advocating for issues impacting Waterloo undergrads. It would be irresponsible to do anything outside this window without an explicit mandate. Students did not get to make a choice on representatives’ political stances. The stance in this motion is mischaracterizing the policy itself, and proceeding further in this uninformed trajectory could have negative effects on our reputation, further damaging our ability to be driven by students.

Councillor Dong read the following statement:

If we rashly continue with this course of action, we will look uninformed and polarized to our membership, and it will have an effect on our reputation and opt out rates, damaging our ability to advocate on issues of the future, when students need WUSA specifically. There’s nothing about WUSA here that makes us uniquely able to affect change on this issue and making our stand here is choosing a particularly unstable hill to die on. Please vote not to make a statement on this issue and let our members, tell us what they want, and not the other way around. I’d like to reiterate a previous point, that I’m not getting you to support this program, I’m trying to demonstrate that this grant is simply not what it has implied to be through this proposed statement and WUSA’s posting on social media. This shows that this is not a time-sensitive issue that we need to comment on right now, and that we have time to get a proper and informed mandate from our members if they wish to call for one. Thank you.

Jason Small read the following statement:

Good afternoon councillors.

I convey this statement to you today as a WUSA veteran who has served as a councillor for three years and as deputy speaker of council for 18 months. While I considered myself to have fully retired from student politics prior to this past week, I decided that it was essential that I provide my expert opinion with regards to the matter at hand. It should be noted that I personally agree with the point of view expressed in the proposed stance, as I’m sure many UW students do. However, I must strongly advise against the adoption of this motion as it sets a dangerous precedent in terms of the scope of issues that should be advocated for by the organization.

It has been the longstanding largely-unwritten practice for WUSA to only take on political advocacy with regards to issues that specifically apply to either the UW student body or to post-secondary students as a whole. While the VP Education has listed examples of issues not solely about students that WUSA has taken stances on, all of those stances have been framed solely on the ways on which the general issues apply to students in particular.

This restraint from broader political advocacy exists in part out of recognition that the general views of UW students span across the political spectrum. As the official representative organization of UW undergraduate students, we should not aim to alienate students with differing views on a very controversial issue when it has no direct tie to
their role as students. Additionally, this approach is strategic in allowing the best chance to advance dialogue on the issues specifically applying to students.

As a counter-example, many other student associations which have adopted a wide range of stances on general left-wing issues, such as the Canadian Federation of Students, have effectively become partisan in all-but-name to the extent that it becomes impossible for them to advocate on any issues while a government of the opposing party is in power by any means other than mass protest. In contrast, while students may fare somewhat better under the governments of certain parties, WUSA has maintained fruitful relationships with cabinet ministers, MPs, and MPPs from all major parties.

As appropriate and timely as the currently proposed stance is, it represents a major divergence from the established advocacy practices of WUSA which risks hampering the organization’s credibility in its student-lobbying activities. If specific matters of concern can be identified either with regards to the activities or funding of the UW Police or with regards to policing activities that specifically target students, I would encourage that stances be made to directly and solely address those issues. Otherwise, I urge councillors to vote against WUSA adopting a stance on the issue, regardless of your and your constituents’ personal opinions on the matter.

Thank you.

Deputy Speaker Hunte read a statement of summarized feedback from constituents. This statement is attached in the Appendix

Guy Brodsky stated that it is important to recognize that it is an issue that people think does not affect the WHOLE student body, but it does affect students that WUSA is here to support. Just because it does not seem like an obvious academic policy issue from the Ministry of Education does not mean that it does not affect student’s education. Currently VP Education and Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance are working on policy papers around access to education and it is important to recognize that this issue of access is also present outside of UW policy. The school-to-prison pipeline is a very well researched issue. Big cuts to education from the Ontario government will affect students for many years and it is important to recognize those cuts when considering this funding into police programs. Police funding tends to go up every year on a municipal level anyway in the face of cuts elsewhere. This money being spent here is particularly inadvisable in a year with a pandemic and massive worries about healthcare. There are likely other ways to find funding in money already going to police to go towards this program and it does make sense for WUSA to advocate on this.

Councillor Jolicoeur-Becotte recognized that while most councillors are not directly affected about negative policing, it is something that affects constituents every day. Even though our mandate for advocacy is worded vaguely, it is our mandate to advocate for those students. Many have mentioned that WUSA should not advocate on this but it should be said that advocacy even on a small scale is worth something. While someone else brought up the point of campus police not carrying guns, it is important to point out that negative experiences with police of all levels does not need to be violent to be harmful, hurtful or degrading. Many people are choosing an extreme stance to say we should not do anything,
the best option may to give constituents more time and resources so we can bring their feedback to the council meeting towards the end of August.

Alexander Eyre noted that council had established that there are a lot of positions on this issue and that he respected many things in this motion like funding more social services. However, he had concerns that a simple defunding of the police will not stop systemic racism, brutality or misconduct.

He asked: is it right for WUSA to take stances in this situation? There was a time where Feds took stances on international relations. It turned council into a debate club for discussion not around topics for post-secondary education. WUSA should encourage students to get involved in external advocacy organizations to follow topics such as these. Policy 9F, and the charter were again referenced as reasons against this motion. This could cause a backlash and may cause opt-outs. This is going to be divisive and open the door for more controversial issues. WUSA is not the place for this.

AVP Education Matthew Gerrits said that the debate has a lot to do with evidence. He then spoke about getting involved with political issues. This is an organization that has, in the past, taken stances on political issues and that is not a bad thing. We take many stances on political issues but we don’t call them out. Things are only controversial because we disagree. Having our advocacy constrained about post-secondary education is a bit of a weird case. Housing, sexual violence prevention, and transit are things we advocate on. He said he personally didn’t think we should wait for a Black student to be physically harmed to make a stance. We advocate when it is just for a small number of students. We promote issues that make it better for cyclists and there are not that many. If the evidence shows that community programs are the better and that no one wants militarized police.

We can advocate for things that are received on partisan lines. You are advocating for it based on evidence and values. There is value in advocating to people you disagree with and this advocacy can still motivate change in the future. Even the CFS get meetings with conservative members every year even though they disagree on many fronts.

AVP Equity Victoria Rodney started by saying that, as a Black person, this conversation was largely intellectually violent. To ask the executive to not take a stance is very concerning. It seems many councillors have not interacted with marginalized students that have been affected. The language employed is racist and anti-black. There are Black students on this campus who are over-policed and their access is hindered by this. Calling the police on a student is seen as a threat. Feel free to email me at equity@wusa.ca for more examples of how student experiences are impacted. Avoiding this issue because it is controversial without realizing it is impacting the lives of students and fellow Canadians is deeply concerning.

The effectiveness of investing in community-led public safety has been researched and is not new. Using funds to invest in police rather than community services is not radical. Policing is not working; making police do work for non-criminal events does not make sense. These community-based solutions require upstream thinking. Doug Ford has said there is systemic racism in policing. Much of the funding going to policing goes to police salaries with $90K average salaries. Victoria strongly urged that councillors read up on this research before deciding that it is not in WUSA’s purview.
Amanda Fitzpatrick, past VP Student Life, talked about what the money is going to directly. We hear, 'how dare you take away money from sexual violence survivors.' Though
experiences of sexual violence survivors with police are extremely negative. They make the experience for survivors worse. Bringing up trafficking when discussing the importance of police is not a reasonable argument. Amanda Cook, who is UW’s Director of Sexual Violence Prevention and Response, will tell you that policing is not helpful for victims and it is actively dangerous. Incident reports almost always deal with police. There were multiple cases of Police laughing at sexual violence victims on campus at their residences. Police telling students something did not happen or that something is not a big deal. This is not something that we need. If you want to be properly supporting survivors, funding the police isn’t the right way to do it. We need to invest in community programs that are trauma informed.

Vice President Town addressed the misconception that this advocacy will take away from other work. We are in this job because we care about students and what they care about. She stated that she wants to take on as much as she can. There is so much going on in the world and it is not her my place to tell a constituent their problem is not important to me just because they are the only one. She expressed disagreement that this is a partisan issue; this is about safety and access to education. Why there is not a proportional number of Black students on our campus is this issue of access. This is a systemic issue that can only be addressed through lots of change over a longer period of time. Councillors may not have collected feedback from a broad, diverse group of constituents if they are finding that this access to education is not an issue. It would be irresponsible to not take advantage about the current moment to not promote campus safety. She talked to her roommate who did not get involved in the Black student groups on campus but in that conversation, he still expressed concerns about policing and was excited about this advocacy. Government is talking about this issue right now. I do not think I can change where this $6 million is going but I want to change where the next $6 million and $10 million goes. This is why we called this meeting.

Vice President Abouelnaga addressed a lot of things that have been said. She wanted to ask about how councillors think of this not being an academic issue. What part of this is not related to Black and Indigenous students? 'Students' being the main word. This is a human rights issue. "We can provide more training" is a point that has come up but there is research that police reform does not work. Please check the references that are included with the motion. She did not agree with this not being an informed approach. Black and Indigenous students make up a large part of our student body. OUSA has put out policy papers about Indigenous students. One from Nov 8 2017 recognized that:

"Reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations is not easily achieved. Nevertheless, it is essential. Within the scope of Ontario's university sector, this means ensuring that Indigenous peoples are encouraged and enabled to equitably access, engage, and succeed throughout their post-secondary careers and beyond. The best way to ensure that universities can provide engaging and meaningful experiences for Indigenous
students is to pursue a path towards reconciliation via ‘decolonization’ and ‘Indigenization’.”

MathSoc President Wang noted that half of math students are international. This constituency faced xenophobia because they are different. Students from Asia were mocked through the beginning of the pandemic. WUSA seems to be picking BIPOC students specifically to support and Asian students did not receive any support. WUSA might be setting a precedent to engage in issues for each demographic subset.

Councillor Ye-Mowe mentioned that council should refocus the discussion and shared her thought process whether to vote in favour or against. The motion at hand consists of 2 components. It needs to first be logical and backed up by research and it would need to be agreeable and in the best interest of all. It seems to be that many in the meeting support this piece. The second part was a consideration of the impact on the organization in adopting this stance. Would there be consequences? Is this setting a precedent? Is there a belief that WUSA is going on a tangent and not focusing on specific issues? Answering this, there is support for the motion and there is belief in VP Town can advocate for it in a way that made Councillor Ye-Mowe comfortable. As for how discussion has progressed, there are a lot of questions around if it will be implemented correctly as to not have a negative affect on other projects. We should debate about how it is implemented and not on the politics on the face of it. There are considerations that there are issues which have a much narrower focus that WUSA can spend time on n the ground and there are other community organizations very much focused on this issue at hand. I am still trying to decide which way to vote but I would like these considerations to be the basis for adoption.

Seneca Velling, former VP Operations and Finance, noted that there are many Black and Indigenous People of Colour sharing their experiences with different levels of police. It is important to listen about their views on the success or failures of the current system. It is not fair that mixed opinion is coming from white students but it is easy for me to say as part of the majority privileged group. If you do not like what you see, offer an amendment to make it a more local, academic focus. Last year, we dealt with incidents that led to a change in how we operate the SLC which had not been done for many years. If you are concerned there is no local or academic scope what can WUSA do? At the end of the day, what options exist. Consult and listen to those who are affected.

Point of Order: Deputy Speaker Hunte asked if there would be a motion to extend the meeting as we were getting very close to 4pm.

Motion to extend adjournment:

**Be it resolved that** adjournment is moved to 6pm.

*Councillor Sharma and President Simpson.*

Motion to amend:
Be it resolved that adjournment is moved to 5pm.
*Councillor Dong and Councillor Schwarze.*

Motion carries

*Secretary’s Note: With the speaker’s list exhausted, debate moved to direct responses*

Councillor Shi spoke in response to Councillor Sharma. She first wanted to say that she did agree with Vice President Town about being reminded about our privilege and even though she is a POC, it is not reasonable to say we have experienced the same racism. Secondly, this is a human rights issue and it still matters and deserves to be discussed. disagreed that RAISE is the only organization that should shoulder this effort. The amount of work from paid organizations being shifted is embarrassing. If we do not make a statement there will also be opt-outs. I do not think saving our image is a reasonable argument.

Councillor Sharma wanted to finish his statement. He would like Council not take a stance as external organizations have a more focused mandate to support this initiative. We should redefine the question to be closer to home. What is the role of student union when RAISE was created to do this; we can allocate funding behind RAISE. We could do a letter writing campaign instead of one from WUSA. It is not worth ruining our relationship and being compared to CFS. He hopes council keeps an open mind and can come to a decision together.

Councillor Dhillon spoke in response to John Hunte about how the Waterloo Subreddit is not representative of campus and most of the comments have separated the response from BIPOC students. These students’ academics are the ones being impacted. We can talk about campus police, but it needs to be larger. In regards to “now is not the time” arguments, all the movements in the last 10 years, have not seen real change. Not doing anything here sets a dangerous precedent.

Councillor Dong expanded on her earlier statement exploring the ramifications of this decision. Focusing our platform on defunding the police would discredit our organization and the movement as a whole. The execs published a statement without much input from councillors but after calls for involvement, executive team moved the discussion to COPS which was not meant to be political either. If we move forward through this method, we let others in the future to sway the organization towards other political stances in a rushed nature as well.

Point of Order: Councillor Yang asked the Speaker to to restate rules about not putting comments in the chat.

President Simpson affirmed, asking for guests and councillors to please refrain from conversations in the chat and implored to those posting to ask to be added to the speaking order.
SJUSU President Hymers responded to Alexander Eyre about the idea that WUSA cannot or should not make a stance on partisan issue just because something is not at first assumed to be student-focused. Calling the safety of racialized students “controversial” is violent. This is irresponsible and us making racialized students fight for their own safety policies is irresponsible. She asked those debating this to reconsider where they are coming from. Listen to what students are telling us.

Guy Brodsky expanded on points by Matthew Gerrits by saying that this is not related to whether or not it has an impact our students. People have taken time out of their day to tell is that it is important. Saying that there are other issues are not serious. This is not what WUSA should be doing. There are definitely other ways, but we have heard, within this meeting that this does not seem to be a good expenditure considering healthcare and education are getting cuts. They are DEFINITELY more important to students. This is a sucky issue that needs to be dealt with.

Deputy Speaker Hunte responded to Victoria by saying that incidents around police on campus being brought up means We should advocate for better Police on campus. This meeting was called about the motion being outside the current scope around the current advocacy. Council is well-placed to bring this within the scope of advocacy if it so chooses. Deputy Speaker Huntesaid he took issue students engaging in debate being called racist.

Point of Order: Councillor Sharma remarked that chat is continuing to be used for conversation by the other side and it is unproductive.
President Simpson said she would like to encourage anyone who would like to speak to be added to the speaking order.

Councillor Shi responded to MathSoc President Wang mentioning WUSA not advocating for mocked International students from East Asia. This issue is as valid as the motion; though the pandemic is extremely situational and centuries of racism have led to the disenfranchisement of BIPOC students.

Councillor Leo also responded to MathSoc President Wang that it is problematic to put forth one issue over the other to choose to not advocate for one. The concern that has been brought up is around the argument if stances on police funding should be the decision of the execs and council. Councillor Leo supports the perspective that this issue concerns campus safety and thus is a focus of WUSA.

Councillor Sharma reacted to Victoria Rodney’s comments by saying that councillors are here to have a civilized conversation about the policy. He stated the importance of campus safety being a focus of WUSA. Around the larger issue of this stance against the provincial government, we could have a plebeicite which would be a non-binding way to hear the wishes of students.
Matthew Gerrits expanded upon his earlier remarks by saying there are no specific lines defining what is or isn’t the scope of WUSA’s advocacy. He wanted to address the assumed differences in RAISE and WUSA and what their scopes seem to be. WUSA should be collaborating on things with services. It is not solely on those who are oppressed to advocate for themselves. A recent example was the Student Choice Initiative: students put their name in the line who were alumni who had no skin in the game. Many more results come when an advocacy effort is large enough to include people who are not directly affected.

Celine Isimbi then addressed all councillors by saying that what she has heard from this discussion is racist and intellectually violent. This is the lived reality of Black students. "My humanity is not political nor is it controversial."
Furthermore, she said that the debate rules have been harmful as Black and Indigenous students discussing their experience on campus, in the region and on this call, have been erased. Councillors have the privilege of learning and discussing this while it is the lived reality of racialized students.

Vice President Town read an anonymous email from a student:
WUSA’s power lies not in its name, but in the reputation it has with its members and the organizations that it advocates to. Thus, we have a plethora of options on the table, all of which can have the desired positive impact while mitigating the ramifications people are concerned about:
WUSA can offer more support to RAISE, UWASA, and other affiliated student advocacy groups that improve students’ lives however they think would be most helpful;
WUSA can support RAISE in championing a letter-writing campaign from students to the Premier’s office, which will demonstrate the genuine support for this movement from members;
WUSA can back an investigation into Campus Police’s activities, training, and impact on BIPOC students on campus;
WUSA can launch a survey to students requesting widespread member input on student’s priorities for WUSA’s advocacy efforts to get a true mandate from students for the actions we take.
I’m sure that if WUSA and its team refocus its efforts to better ways we can use our resources, we can absolutely benefit our BIPOC students on this particular issue. But, as a fee-paying minority student, I hope that we can evaluate our options on the table and select the best ways to represent and benefit our student body.

Alexander Eyre then spoke about the personal accusations that had been floated against councillors and how they were not a reasonable addition to the debate. Alexander yielded the remainder of his time to Councillor Sharma.

Councillor Sharma proposed the following amendment:
**Be it resolved that** the Executive, in consultation with RAISE and [COPS or EAC], shall revise the stated advocacy stance with greater focus on campus and regional police and their impact on students, ensuring that going forward that RAISE’s appointed
coordinators be the spokespersons on this matter, that the Internal Funding Committee allocate funds for PTS support for RAISE and the VP Education in the pursuit of advocacy on this topic; and

**Be it further resolved that** prior to any further public statements on this matter from WUSA Executive, further holistic research shall be conducted and consultation from students

_Councillor Sharma and Councillor Schwarze._

Debate was opened on this amendment.

Vice President Town responded to Sharma and his intentions. She noted that she was against this. RAISE has already started work regarding campus police. While she respected the points in this amendment, RAISE and AVP Equity have been involved in this smaller scope item already.

RAISE Coordinator Ayesha Masud challenged Alexander Eyre’s assumption that all councilors want to address systemic racism on campus which was not true because it has taken 3 hours to agree on something as simple as a letter, no resources. All councilors on this call have a right to speak about constituents but some have not proved they have done the step of educating said constituents. The procedure is unfair that people in the chat are being dismissed. Finally, she expressed disagreement towards this amendment as setting up an initiative for RAISE without consultation shows that councillors believe they have control over the service. A service that is unpaid and under-funded for what they are expected to do. There should be an office of people to handle growth of a mandate such as this.

Deputy Speaker Hunte expressed much disappointment with his character being called into question during this meeting.

_Secretary's Note: Someone [Former Vice President, Student Life, Amanda FitzPatrick] in the chat immediately said something in response to this which led to Deputy Speaker Hunte getting mad and he left. Time: 4:53. Time: 4:53_

Councillor Sharma responded to RAISE in the assumptions of his experiences was found to be disrespectful and flies in the face of a service that should be inclusive. He then addressed that RAISE will soon have paid PT staff at rates above commercial services staff.

Point of Information: Councillor Shi wanted to clarify as this might be something which was missed: When was anyone’s character being questioned? We can all say racist things or ignorant things without understanding the effects but she did not recall if anyone was called racist. Did it happen in the chat?

_Secretary's Note: While nobody was explicitly called racist in the chat, though some councilors felt it was implied, while some at-large members present felt they had been targeted._
Councillor Sharma then directly responded to Councillor Shi by saying people who were speaking were called 'centrist' and when their comments were not in line with those in the gallery, things like 'so the lives of Black people don't matter?' have been posted in the chat. It implies racism and it is a sad day when this is happening in a council meeting.

Guy Brodsky mentioned that it is a sad day that this has to be such a debate and the question if it effects students. Them providing criticism of 'centrist' is not an appalling statement. People should vote on the motion and not around what was said in the chat. Good luck voting and know that this affects many students on campus.

Secretary's Note: Deputy Speaker Hunte returned to the meeting to 'execute my duty and vote on behalf of my constituents as required by law'. Time: 5:07

**Be it resolved that** the Students' Council will conduct a vote on the amendment to the main motion by secret ballot.
*Councillor Sharma.*

**Motion fails** with Vice President Abouelnaga, Councillor Shi, SJUSU President Hymers, Vice President Guevara, and Councillor Jolicoeur-Becotte noted against; Councillor Ye-Mowe, and Councillor Schwarze noted in favour.

Point of Order: Vice President Town addressed that Guy Brodsky was attempting to sway votes to one side of the vote in the chat and expressed how this is extremely inappropriate. Further comments in the chat outside of the organizing of debate must cease. Those who cannot follow the rules should be dismissed.

Vote was taken on Councillor Sharma’s amendment to the main motion:

**Motion fails** with tie broken by the Speaker and with Vice President Abouelnaga, Councillor Shi, SJUSU President Hymers, Vice President Guevara, and Councillor Jolicoeur-Becotte noted against; Councillor Sharma, Councillor Dosen, and Councillor Schwarze noted in favour.

Motion to extend adjournment:

**Be it resolved that** adjournment time of this meeting is extended to 5:30pm.
*President Simpson and SJUSU President Hymers.*

**Motion carries**

Discussion shifted back to the main motion and back to the main speaking order.

Samer ZuMot, senator at-large thanked the execs for bringing this discussion to council. It seems that both sides have a lot of common ground. In his opinion we did not elect
student reps to make a call such as this. Let us take the time to do the proper research. Let us ask students for their input. Let us not offend each other and not question character. He acknowledged this is an emotional issue but having respectful debate will get us across the finish line.

Councillor Sharma yielded his time to Councillor Dong. Councillor Dong submitted a motion to amend for plebiscite:

Whereas student input has not been fully taken into account; and
Whereas this is a controversial initiative from WUSA within the student body based on perceptions of the best way to benefit students;

Be it resolved that WUSA conducts a plebiscite on what actions students would like WUSA to take in this circumstance.
Councillor Dong and Councillor Ye-Mowe.

Debate opened on this motion:

Councillor Ye-Mowe brought up the understanding that referenda take a lot of time to coordinate. This meeting has been a rough situation in how Roberts Rules of Order have not necessarily been abided by and non-councillors have voiced that this meeting feels inaccessible. A plebiscite would allow for more structure. I do not necessarily like it per sé but acknowledging all these things, it might be the best course of action.

Vice President Abouelnaga then spoke noting opposition to the councillors who are saying that this is a controversial initiative, there has been an ample amount of research one to reveal that this is a human rights issue.

Councillor Sharma responded by defining 'controversial’– giving rise to public disagreement. That has happened. We want to make sure we make a democratic call here and plebiscite will help us do that.

Councillor Shi expressed opposition to this plan as it would take a disproportionate amount of time considering what the details of the motion is – a letter.

RAISE Coordinator Ayesha Masud argued that the idea of this referendum would be to get back-up for this position but we already have overwhelming backup from Black and Indigenous students who strongly support this. Go back to your constituents and educate them on this reality. Four paragraphs is not going to hurt anyone.

Councillor Sharma argued that if this is just sending a letter, then we are matching the criticism of online comments and we ARE just doing this for show or for PR. He wants to do more and he wants more support to do this. He also said that referendums can be done quickly.
Guy Brodsky said that since this issue has been brought to mainstream media attention we have all been in quarantine and people have had every chance to get informed and if they are not yet, they won’t go any further. The people who are informed think it is a very important issue and thus it is above being sent to referendum. It delays important work that needs to be done now.

Councillor Ye-Mowe said that we are conflating the motion proposed by Megan into a larger course of action. The debate is “What is the best way to proceed as an organization?” We are constantly speaking over each other and if it going to be like this it is better off being left to a larger judgement.

Debate ended and the vote was taken on the amended motion for plebiscite:

**Motion fails** with Vice President Abouelnaga, Councillor Shi, Vice President Town, and Vice President Guevara noted against; Councillor Sharma, Councillor Dong, Deputy Speaker Hunte, Councillor Dosen, and Councillor Schwarzé noted in favour.

Comments:
Vice President Town: "The Executive have conducted significant research and consultation with Black students on this topic."
Councillor Schwarzé: "I’m voting in favour getting feedback and data from students on this specific issue that existing research by the executive and WUSA does not address."
Councillor Dong: "Student input allows us to place focus on benefiting our students in the best possible way, with a mandate and dedicated resources for real change rather than surface-level statements."
Councillor Sharma: "I would like to have at-large members be able to have there say as it should be in a democratic institution and that the current stance and plan to just send a letter makes it even worse and makes it seem like just for show."
Councillor Dosen: "WUSA is meant to support the views of the entire student body."
Deputy Speaker Hunte: "It is not immediately harmful to conduct student consultations, and that when we stop consulting students, we stop representing them."

Debate resumed on the main motion:

MathSoc President Wang responded to Councillor Leo expressing understanding that just because something did not happen for one group does not mean it should not happen for another group. She commented about her future vote: "I, as president of MathSoc, shall be abstaining from the main motion at hand, as I believe it is the best reflection of what my society members want."

Vice President Town spoke against the assumption that this action is for show. The research is relevant to Canada and I would like to note that the executive have been doing consultations with Black students. This letter is ONE step of a larger path contained in the exec action plan. We will continue to work on addressing anti-Black racism on our campus and beyond.

Vice President Abouelnaga also spoke to the ample amount of research. RAISE coords and
AVP equity have done so much to get the information as accurate as possible to come today to present this to council.

SJUSU President Hymers said that the discussion the occurred today has been damaging to WUSA’s reputation. This has already been damaging on the assumptions that this has not been researched. She encouraged councilors to vote in favour.

President Simpson re-read the main motion and then opened voting: **Whereas** Executive Committee adopted a resolution and put forward the following quote to a newspaper, WUSA supports the reallocation of police funding towards programs with proven efficacy. We believe a shift in funding would support increased provision of social services to improve issues like mental health, addiction, and homelessness. WUSA is concerned about systemic inequities and their interplay with traditional police services. Especially for this reason, we stand behind the restructuring of current policing systems to incorporate deescalation tactics, harm reduction programs and training to address inherent biases; and **Whereas** the provincial government recently announced $6 million dollars in funding for the Proceeds of Crime Front-Line Policing Grant; and **Whereas** there are significant concerns with the current institution of policing, as presented by the Executive.

**Be it resolved that** the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association holds the following principles, concerns and recommendations:

- **Principle:** Public safety and wellbeing of students should be a key priority for the provincial government.
- **Principle:** Investment in social services has been shown to decrease the prevalence of non-violent incidents currently handled by the police. **Concern:** Current strategies for the funding and operation of law enforcement have adverse, dangerous impacts on marginalized individuals and communities.
- **Concern:** Current strategies for the funding of law enforcement deprioritize funding available for proactive social services. **Recommendation:** The provincial government should allocate more funding to urgent response programs for non-criminal events.
- **Recommendation:** The provincial government should allocate more funding for community-driven, social services which act proactively to address concerns including crime, violence, homelessness, addiction, human trafficking, sexual violence and mental health.
- **Recommendation:** The provincial government should invest in efforts to investigate systemic issues with policing in Canada and work to address any and all identified issues within the institution of policing.

*Vice President Town and Vice President Abouelnaga.*
Motion carries by consensus with Councillor Shi, Vice President Abouelnaga, SJUSU President Hymers, Councillor Dhillon, Vice President Town, Vice President Guevara, Councillor Leo, Councillor Jolicoeur-Becotte, Councillor Hallen, Councillor Yang, Councillor Ye-Mowe, Councillor Souza, and Councillor Zhu noted in favour; and with Deputy Speaker Hunte, Councillor Sharma, MathSoc President Wang, Councillor Dosen, Councillor Schwarze, and Councillor Dong noted in abstention.

Comments:
Councillor Zhu: 'I believe that we all deserve a voice.'
Councillor Yang: 'I believe the merits of the motion itself are valid and that the consultation and justification given by the exec are reasonable. I condemn however that the methods and actions that occurred during this meeting and felt that the debate was done in bad faith by some participants.'
Councillor Ye-Mowe: 'I am disappointed of our collective inability of council to engage in this discussion in a constructive manner'
Deputy Speaker Hunte: 'This was rushed to a Council special meeting, and one week’s delay to conduct a plebiscite was deemed too lengthy a delay.
Councillor Sharma: 'I respect the debate here today and (if it passes) wish the executive and RAISE success with this advocacy, or (if it fails) that this be considered at EAC and a more comprehensive stance be brought to Council. I wish "to reflect as best as I can the wishes of my constituents on this matter. I am disappointed in the conduct of this meeting. I wish WUSA success in advocating for its students.'
MathSoc President Wang: 'I, as president of MathSoc, shall be abstaining from the main motion at hand, as I believe it is the best reflection of what my society members want.'
Councillor Schwarze: 'Noted abstention for the lack of decorum and other procedural failings, as well as the array of personal attacks that persisted throughout the meeting, particularly the calling Councillors’ intentions and honour into question for representing the stated interests of their constituency, and the lack of a mandate from WUSA student membership on this issue.'
Councillor Dong: 'to reflect as best as I can the wishes of my constituents on this matter. I am disappointed in the conduct of this meeting. I wish WUSA success in advocating for its students.'

ADJOURNMENT

Be it resolved that the Speaker adjourned the meeting at 5:46 PM.
Federation of Students’ Council Agenda

Special Meeting

Online Meeting

Chair: Abbie Simpson  Secretary: Alana Guevara

Until further notice, all meetings will be held fully online through the Microsoft Teams platform. All students are welcome to connect to the meeting in order to listen or participate; connection information to be distributed in advance through the Council mailing list or may be requested by contacting speaker@wusa.ca.

ATTENDANCE

Please convey regrets to the Speaker of Students’ Council at speaker@wusa.ca.

Attendees:

- Simpson, Abigail (Abbie) (President)
- Hunte, John (Deputy Speaker)
- Gondosiswanto, Evelyn (Assistant Secretary)
- Guevara, Alana (VP Operations and Finance)
- Town, Megan (VP Education)
- Abouelnaga, Nada (VP Student Life)
- Jolicoeur-Becotte, Marie
- Fatima, Aiman
- Ghuwalewala, Vidyut
- Singh, Jaineet
- Yanez, Jairo
- Narang, Aryan
- Dragusin, Rebecca
- Manas, Suri
- Couzens, Nathanial (President, ASU)
- Souza, Angela
- Hallen, Frances
- Ma, Joseph
- Lindstrom-Humphries, Delaine (President, EngSoc A)
- McGee, Ellen (President, EngSoc B)
- Yang, Edward
- Ye-Mowe, Stephanie
- Dhillon, Jaskaran
- Shi, Victoria (President, ESS)
- Schwarze, Matthew
- Dong, Catherine
- Sharma, Kanan
Federation of Students  

August 9, 2020

- Ukrani, Mahaveer Jai
- Zhu, Karl
- Wang, Yuqian (Ina) (President, MathSoc)
- Azam, M. Sikandar
- Dosen, Nick
- Macci, Sumayyah
- Parmar, Mokhash
- Roxas, Nikka (Niks) Ysabella

Expected Absences:

- Yang, Eumin (Edward)
- Surdi, Julian (President, SciSoc)
- Chen, Jason
- Helka, Amanda Nicole
- Ahmed, Mehida
- Ikeno, Victoria (Vicky) (Designate, RASC)
- Leo, Shanelle
- Easton, Benjamin (Chair of the Board)
# Order of Business

1 Preliminaries
   1.1 Call to order *(Attention)*  
   1.2 Territorial Acknowledgement *(Information)*  
   1.3 Approval of the Agenda *(Decision)*  

2 General Orders
   2.1 Ontario Police Services Funding *(Decision)*  

3 Announcements  

4 Adjournment *(4:00PM)*  

Appendices
1 PRELIMINARIES

Adding items to the agenda requires a two-thirds vote, although new items of business can still be raised without needing that vote once the entire agenda is complete.

1.1 CALL TO ORDER

Be it resolved that the Speaker calls the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

1.2 TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Pursuant to Federation Policy 50, Indigenous Engagement and Inclusivity, the Federation of Students’ Council acknowledges:

The University of Waterloo is on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to the Six Nations, which includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.

1.3 APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Be it resolved that Council approve the Agenda, as presented.

The Speaker assumes the motion to adopt the Agenda, as presented or amended

2 GENERAL ORDERS

A general order is an item of business that is ordered to be taken up at a meeting. Time limits to discussions indicate the point at which the Speaker will end the discussion unless Council directs otherwise.

2.1 ONTARIO POLICE SERVICES FUNDING

Whereas Executive Committee adopted a resolution and put forward the following quote to a newspaper,

WUSA supports the reallocation of police funding towards programs with proven efficacy. We believe a shift in funding would support increased provision of social services to improve issues like mental health, addiction, and homelessness. WUSA is concerned about systemic inequities and their interplay with traditional police services. Especially for this reason, we stand behind the restructuring of current policing systems to incorporate de-escalation tactics, harm reduction programs and training to address inherent biases.

Whereas, the provincial government recently announced $6 million dollars in funding for the Proceeds of Crime Front-Line Policing Grant.
Whereas, there are significant concerns with the current institution of policing, as presented by the Executive.

Be it resolved that the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association holds the following principles, concerns and recommendations:

Principle: Public safety and wellbeing of students should be a key priority for the provincial government.

Principle: Investment in social services has been shown to decrease the prevalence of non-violent incidents currently handled by the police.

Concern: Current strategies for the funding and operation of law enforcement have adverse, dangerous impacts on marginalized individuals and communities.

Concern: Current strategies for the funding of law enforcement deprioritize funding available for proactive social services.

Recommendation: The provincial government should allocate more funding to urgent response programs for non-criminal events.

Recommendation: The provincial government should allocate more funding for community-driven, social services which act proactively to address concerns including crime, violence, homelessness, addiction, human trafficking, sexual violence and mental health.

Recommendation: The provincial government should invest in efforts to investigate systemic issues with policing in Canada and work to address any and all identified issues within the institution of policing.

Submitted By: Vice President, Education Town.

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Any Councillor may make an announcement not exceeding 1 minute in duration, which may be followed by up to 2 minutes of follow-up questions. No motions may be introduced from an announcement.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of Council is scheduled for August 23, starting at 10:30AM, on Microsoft Teams.

4 ADJOURNMENT

Be it resolved that the Chair adjourns the meeting no later than 4:00PM.
APPENDICES
Ontario Police Services Funding

Submitted by: Vice President, Education Town
Presentation in collaboration with RAISE
How WUSA’s advocacy works

1. Issue identification
2. Advocacy position developed
3. Advocacy position approved
4. Action is taken
For example

- CESB
- Post-secondary accessibility
- Workload
- Online proctored exams
- Student Performance Evaluations
- Transit
- UPass
- Housing
- Federal budget submissions – WUSA, UCRU
What already happened?

• Aligning with our annual plan, we were developing a racial equity advocacy strategy – including work related to police
• Exec Committee approved a stance and submitted a quote to a newspaper

WUSA supports the reallocation of police funding towards programs with proven efficacy. We believe a shift in funding would support increased provision of social services to improve issues like mental health, addiction, and homelessness. WUSA is concerned about systemic inequities and their interplay with traditional police services. Especially for this reason, we stand behind the restructuring of current policing systems to incorporate de-escalation tactics, harm reduction programs and training to address inherent biases.
What already happened?

• Exec Committee planed to bring a formal stance to our regular council meeting for approval
• The Ontario Government announced $6 million in funding for the Proceeds of Crime Front-Line Policing Grant [1]
• In consultation with RAISE and the AVP Equity, the Executive wish to write a response letter to the Office of the Premier
What are we asking for?

• Approval of the presented principles, concerns and recommendations as the position of WUSA
• Seeking Council approval as Councillors did not feel comfortable delegating this decision to the Executive Committee or COPS
What is “defunding the police”?

• A shift in funding towards social services
• This way, police wouldn’t respond to certain emergencies like those involving substance abuse, domestic violence, homelessness or mental health [2]
• Social workers and healthcare workers are better suited to respond to these kinds of situations
• Police are a symptom of white supremacy intended to eliminate Black and Indigenous, among other marginalized, lives
Why is such a movement needed?

“The Minneapolis Police Department, which is held up as a model of progressive police reform. The department offers procedural justice as well as trainings for implicit bias, mindfulness and de-escalation. It embraces community policing and officer diversity, bans “warrior style” policing, uses body cameras, implemented an early intervention system to identify problematic officers, receives training around mental health crisis intervention, and practices “reconciliation” efforts in communities of color.” [2]

• And yet, George Floyd died at the hands of the Minneapolis Police.

• Obviously this is one specific example illustrating a broader problem
But we are in Canada?

Ethnicity of people killed in encounters with police between 2000-20

Victims by ethnicity compared to that group's total proportion of the Canadian population

Note: Population is based on annualized figure over a 20-year period. Ethnicity is unknown in about 25% of cases.
So what can be done?

• Increase in police funding does not equal a decrease in crime (source includes 60 years of data) [4]

• Research proven methods to reduce crime are: education equity [5] and equitable work opportunities [6]

• We don’t need to be “tough on crime”

• We need to stand up for marginalized communities
Where does that leave us?

- Principles are value statements that outline our organizational beliefs on a particular issue [7]
- Principle: Public safety and wellbeing of students should be a key priority for the provincial government.
- Principle: Investment in social services has been shown to decrease the prevalence of non-violent incidents currently handled by the police. [8] [9] [10] [11]
The problems we identify

• Concerns highlight an issue we have with current circumstances, based on evidence and our values [6]

• Concern: Current strategies for the funding and operation of law enforcement have adverse, dangerous impacts on marginalized individuals and communities. [3] [12] [13] [14]

• Concern: Current strategies for the funding of law enforcement deprioritize funding available for proactive social services. [15] [16] [17]
The solutions

• Recommendations offer concrete solutions to the issues highlighted in principles and concerns [6]
• Recommendation: The provincial government should allocate more funding to urgent response programs for non-criminal events. [18]
The solutions

- Recommendations offer concrete solutions to the issues highlighted in principles and concerns [6]
- Recommendation: The provincial government should allocate more funding for community-driven, social services which act proactively to address concerns including crime, violence, homelessness, addiction, human trafficking, sexual violence and mental health. [18]
References


References (continued)


Questions?
My colleagues have expressed general views which I acknowledge and agree with. I will now present the results of my consultations. The views stated are not my own but are those of constituents.

I received the following statements in favour:

- “I support the reallocation of resources to mental health and other initiatives. I don’t think tactics like de-escalation programmes or bias training are effective, but I would love to see this funding moved to other necessary mental health resources on our campus (particularly since our campus is already known for not supporting those with mental health issues).”
- “personally based on what I’ve researched, defunding is the solution to go with and while I think WUSA should emphasize student advocacy, 1) I think police services do affect everyone including students and 2) I think that WUSA should still be advocating for societal issues based on the opinions of their student body. I think all I can ask is that before going into the meeting that independent research is also done by you and the other representatives so that people are all informed.”

I received the following statements against:

- The government does not care about what undergrad student associations think about police
  - “we should be as non-partisan as possible and only put resources in advocating for directly student-related things”
  - This issue “has literally nothing to do with this school”.
  - WUSA is using its platform to “virtue signal for causes you personally believe in, that have absolutely nothing to do with the student body you’re supposed to represent” and “using your positions in WUSA to do so is unprofessional and further advances the view that WUSA is a useless joke”
- General dissent towards WUSA
- WUSA should focus on student-specific advocacy. Tangential advocacy efforts like this contribute to my opting out of your fees. (pp)
- A student expressed that while this is something that should be discussed, it is not WUSA’s place to discuss it. Our job is to speak and act for the students. They went on to list some of their ideas for suitable advocacy objectives:
  - ways to help international students enter the country if they want to for class
  - proper quarantine spaces and rides into campus from the airport
  - advocate for students off campus (international time zone issues, internet or equipment issues)
  - bus pass issues
  - healthier food options on campus
  - more mental health resources
  - help with online courses
  - getting the gym or study spaces reopened

- Miscellaneous other concerns
  - Fees
  - Imprint
  - Bus pass
  - Parking
  - Online learning
  - A global pandemic

- “This [line of advocacy] just made me opt-out the WUSA advocacy fee.”
• “This is irrelevant and shouldn’t be happening. Waste of time and money. This is why no one takes WUSA seriously”
• Distaste for lack of originality, and a desire for us to seek genuine change through not yet explored avenues
• A student expressed the following
  o defunding the police is still a fringe political position which has not been fully fleshed out or has its impacts explored
  o “Few people have the balls to be publicly, non-anonymously against this motion. It’s socially un-acceptable to not want to defund the police. I would never share my opinion about this in public except with close friends because I’m not trying to get cancelled.”
• “The campus police don’t even have weapons, something tells me there hasn’t been a lot of abuse caused by them”
• “There are TONS of other things, that WUSA should be focusing on right now, and personally this falls so low on that list that it’s frustrating to see all the effort that has already gone into this” and “I am disappointed in you WUSA. Do better. Serve your WHOLE student body better. Your actions need to directly help students. Fight for what we need NOW, in a pandemic, in a movement, and in our educational careers. Don’t jump on the bandwagon just because people asked you to take a stance.”
• “I really do agree with the statement given but I understand what others say about this not be related to student affairs. If WUSA wants to learn from this moment of police reform in the public conscience they should focus on how the wateroo police interact with students. Personally, I have only experienced moments where police are very patient with drunk students (lol), but that isn’t the complete perspective of UW students. Any area of police interaction with the student body that could be improved should be considered to be improved.”

For the feedback expressed above, I support RAISE advocating for this issue without WUSA taking a stance as a whole.
**Articles to read:**

The Skin I’m In: I’ve been interrogated by police more than 50 times—all because I’m black (Desmond Cole)

Defunding The Police Will Save Black And Indigenous Lives In Canada (Sandy Hundson)
[https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/defund-police-canada-black-indigenous-lives_ca_5ed65eb2c5b6ccd7c56bdf7d](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/defund-police-canada-black-indigenous-lives_ca_5ed65eb2c5b6ccd7c56bdf7d)

Explainer: what ‘defund the police’ really means (Liz Monteiro)

**Videos to Watch:**

How to raise a Black kid in America (5:12):
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Us70DN2XsfM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Us70DN2XsfM)

Public Safety is Anti-Black (17:36):
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHsE1RRcbFM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHsE1RRcbFM)

**Books to read:**

Policing Black Lives (Robyn Maynard)

![Policing Black Lives book cover](image)

**Podcasts:**
I donated, now what?

ANTI-RACISM
PODCASTS

compiled by Sarah Bruder Fischer and Krystal Khan

1619

ABOUT RACE

momentum

Pod: Cause

seeing

white

1619