



# **UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, JAMAICA**

## **STUDENTS' UNION COUNCIL MEETING**

### **COUNCIL'S SUMMARIZED JULY REPORT**

**The UTech, Ja. student populace is requested to NOTE the developments and the recommendations presented in this report.**

**Submitted by: UTech, Ja. Students' Union Council  
COUNCIL 2023/24  
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, JAMAICA STUDENTS' UNION COUNCIL**

Publication Date: March 21, 2024

## **Executive Summary**

During the Month of July, the Council ensured advocacy was seen on all levels. The purpose of this report is to highlight the matters for noting, matters arising and matters for action of all reporting portfolios with the aim of ensuring full transparency to Y.O.U on the happenings and plans of the Council.

### **1. Executives**

#### ***1.1. President***

##### ***Matters for Noting***

- ***Refund of Academic Records***

In communication made to the University's Acting President, the Students' Union president requested that students who received progress reports as opposed to the transcripts they paid for be refunded. This request has been granted, and as such a form will be sent out to gather the necessary data from students that were affected. This refund will be credited to the student's account.

- ***Minimum Owing balance***

The council is aware of the financial struggles faced by students. As such, we advocated for the university's management to increase the minimum owing balance from \$2500 to \$10,000, to which they have agreed. Therefore, late fees will only be applied to a student's account if they are owing \$10,000 or above after any given census date.

- *First Installment of Fee payment*

The Council is aware that there are various uncontrollable issues faced by students, especially during the beginning period of the academic year. As such, the president requested that for reasons found valid over which the student has no control the late fee not be applied. The University Management has agreed that the first installment of fees will be exempted from attracting a late fee for students who have applied for Add/Drop and are experiencing delays, as well as, other internal circumstances over which the student has no control.

- *USU Updates*

This year's council is guided by the theme 'Serving T.E.A (Transparency, Engagement, Advocacy) all year long. In an effort to increase transparency as well as awareness around Advocacy being done on the student's behalf, the council will be reintroducing the USU Updates series which will provide updates to Y.O.U on what your councilors are doing for you.

- *Tuition Increase*

The President wrote to the Acting President of the University requesting that the fee increase being proposed be considered for semester 2 as opposed to semester 1 and that the Union dues be increased to \$3,500 to facilitate the offering of additional Grants and Bursaries for the benefit of the students. Following additional advocating by the USUC, the university administration agreed to our request to cap the increase at no more than 5%.

***Matters Arising***

- *Communication Regarding Module Modalities by Faculty*

Several faculties/schools have yet to issue the modality of classes to students. The academic preparation committee met on July 14, 2023, to determine the way forward. There is still to be a solid outcome and as such an update should be provided Friday July 28, 2023.

***Matters for Action***

- *Finalize Budget*

The budget for the academic year 2023/24 is currently not yet finalized. The president, alongside the VP of Finance, will conduct a review of the submitted budgets by council members and the necessary steps taken to have this published as soon as possible for transparency purposes.

- *Formation of Committees*

In aim of better serving Y.O.U, the following committees are to be established: Finance, Event Approval, Sponsorship, Policy Reform and Electoral Committee to increase accountability, opportunities and advocacy levels of the Council. .

***1.2. 1st Vice President, Academic Affairs, Clubs and Societies***

***Matters For Noting***

- *Help Desk System*

The UTech, Ja. Students' Union Council Academic Support Unit is currently

working on ways to improve response time, as well as, the accuracy of responses to issues and queries received from Y.O.U through the helpdesk system. An update of the 'frequently asked questions' section is also underway.

***Matters Arising***

- *Clarity on Important Dates for the 2023/24 AY*

The 1st Vice President is aware of the recent confusion surrounding dates for the upcoming academic year. The official calendar is currently in the approval stage and will be shared with students as soon as this is done.

- *Missing and Incorrect Grades*

There are currently students who are reporting issues regarding not receiving their grades, as well as students reporting receiving incorrect grades for the summer session. The 1st Vice President is currently looking into the matter.

***Matters For Action***

- *Clubs and Societies Constitution Review*

The 1st Vice President, alongside the Director of Elections and Regulatory Affairs, will be working on reviewing the constitutions for the various Clubs and Societies for approval for the upcoming year.

***1.3. VP Finance***

***Matters For Noting***

- *Accountability Measures*

As a means of further accountability and transparency, the VP Finance has ensured the implementation of measures to enhance proper record-keeping of financial transactions within the council. Such measures include; the creation of cash disbursement approval forms and the restructuring of the budget line items based on recommendations made by the University's Finance and Business Departments.

***Matters Arising***

- *Accountant*

The need for an Accountant has been one that stems from last year's Council. The last update received was that individuals were shortlisted for the position and that interviews are to be conducted.

***Matters for Action***

- *Completion of Budget*

The budget for the academic year 2023/24 is currently not yet completed. The VP Finance, alongside the President, will conduct a review of the submitted budgets by council members and the necessary steps taken to have this published as soon as possible for transparency purposes.

***1.4. VP Student Services***

***Matters for Noting***

There are currently no matters for noting from the VP Student Services portfolio.

***Matters Arising***

- *Summer Grants*

The summer grants were not issued as planned. Therefore, the allocation that was made for summer grants will be used for the issuing of ECD Grants.

***Matters for Action***

- *Love Bus Initiative*

The VP Student Services will be meeting with the bus drivers to discuss the way forward for this upcoming academic year as it relates to the continuation of the Love Bus initiative.

***1.5. Executive Secretary***

***Matters for Noting***

- *Teach the Youth Program*

The Executive Secretary, alongside the Director of Community Service and other council members, successfully carried out the execution of the 2023 Teach the Youth Program.

***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the Executive Secretary portfolio.

***Matters for Action***

There are currently no matters for action from the Executive Secretary Portfolio.

## **1.6. VP Public Relations**

### ***Matters for Noting***

- *Teach the Youth Marketing Support*

The VP Public Relations assisted with the execution of marketing strategies in support of the overall execution of the 2023 Teach the Youth program. Such strategies include content creation for posting and drone shooting videos.

### ***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the VP Public Relations portfolio.

### ***Matters for Action***

- *InterFaculty Debate Competition*

With the aim of increasing student engagement, the VP Public Relations will continue plans surrounding the execution of the annual debate competition to be held in Semester 1 of the upcoming academic year.

- *Mass Meeting*

The VP Public Relations will commence plans for the execution of the first mass meeting of the academic year to be held in Semester 1.

## **2. Representatives**

### ***2.1 Graduate Students' Representative***

#### ***Matters for Noting***



- *Graduate Student Lounge Enhancement*

The Graduate Student Representative is seeking ways to improve the graduate student lounge space to ensure it is soothing to the basic needs of students while occupying the space. One such way was the implementation of a filtered water system.

***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the Graduate Students' Representative portfolio.

***Matters for Action***

There are currently no matters for action from the Graduate Representative portfolio.

***2.2 Resident Students' Representative***

***Matters for Noting***

- *Advocacy regarding GPA Requirement for Dorm Readmission*

The stance that was held by the accommodations unit is that for students to be admitted or readmitted to any Hall of Residence their GPA must be 2.7 or above.

The Resident Student Representative however, advocated for this required GPA to be reviewed. After a meeting held with the accommodations officer, Mrs.

Isaacs-Brown, she decided to go with a GPA requirement of 2.5

and above instead

until next academic year.

***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the Resident Students' Representative portfolio.

***Matters for Action***

There are currently no matters for action from the Resident Students' Representative portfolio.

***2.3 International Students' Representative***

***Matters for Noting***

- *Fixed Exchange Rate for International Students*

The council is aware of the issue regarding fluctuating exchange rate charges for international students' tuition. We raised the matter to the University's Acting President and the management has agreed to apply a fixed rate moving forward which will be charged as the selling rate of the National Commercial Bank.

- *Extension of stay stamp assistance*

After speaking with the International Student Office regarding challenges being faced by International students with the process, they have stated that it is within their intention to reinstate the process of assisting international students with garnering the extension of the stay stamp needed from the immigration office.

***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the International Students' Representative portfolio.

***Matters for Action***

There are currently no matters for action from the International Students' Representative portfolio.

***2.4 Faculty of Law***

There was no report submission from the Faculty of Law Representative for the month of July.

***2.5 School of Engineering***

***Matters for Noting***

● *FENC Scholarship Session*

The School of Engineering (SOE) Representative, alongside the School of Computing and Information Technology Representative, held a scholarship forum on the 27th of June 2023, which covered matters relating to scholarship application and availability.

● *SOE Preparedness Meeting*

As various faculties/schools of the university plan to resume an in-person modality

for the upcoming academic year, the SOE Representative proposed a series of readiness tests for the School of Engineering to the Head of the School. In aiding this proposal, the first meeting was held to discuss the school's current state and explore plans to improve on its readiness level for the return of students face-to-face.

- *Academic Log*

- Electrical Networks 1 (ELE2001)*

- The SOE Representative would have shared a module request form with the student body to gather data regarding module offerings that they desire for Semester 1 of the 2023/24 AY. As a result of this, students who were unsuccessful in the last offering of the Electrical Networks 1 module, will be allowed to enroll in the module for the upcoming semester.

- Matters Arising*

- There are currently no matters arising from the School of Engineering Representative portfolio.

- Matters for Action*

- There are currently no matters for action from the School of Engineering Representative portfolio.

## ***2.6 College of Health Sciences***

- Matters for Noting*

- *Modality of the upcoming academic year*

The College of Health Sciences Representative has been actively engaging the necessary administrative personnel regarding an update on the modality for each module offering within the College for the upcoming academic year and awaits such information to be distributed expeditiously.

- *Academic Log*

*Western Campus Nursing Students Delayed Practicum*

The College of Health Sciences (COHS) Representative was made aware that nursing students at the western campus suffered a major disadvantage when they were unable to complete the second section of their rotations within hospitals as the sites were not informed in a timely manner. The COHS Representative made contact with the COHS Western Campus Liaison who then informed the Representative that a solution was communicated by the Head of School regarding the delaying of practicum until the next practicum period and the substitution of required grades with others. This was communicated again by the Representative in aim of increasing further awareness around the matter.

***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the College of Health Sciences Representative portfolio.

***Matters for Action***

- *Red Light Green Light*

With the aim of increasing student engagement, the COHS Representative in collaboration with the SOBA/JDSEEL Representative, will be working on the planning of the annual execution of the Red Light Green Light Party.

## ***2.7 Caribbean School of Architecture***

### ***Matters for Noting***

- *Modality of the upcoming academic year*

Though it was communicated by the Head of School via an email that the Caribbean School of Architecture is a unit within the University and is mandated to implement the modality announced by the Acting President, the CSA Representative has been actively seeking further clarification regarding the modality for each module offering within the School for the upcoming academic year and awaits such information to be distributed expeditiously.

### ***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the Caribbean School of Architecture Representative portfolio.

### ***Matters for Action***

- *Vending Machine Installment*

The CSA Representative plans to make contact with a new source in aim of getting a vending machine placed on the school's building.

- *Renovation of Office Space*

The Caribbean School of Architecture Representative, alongside the School of Building and Land Management Representative, will meet to commence the renovation of the office space to ensure that the space is conducive for visits by students following the resumption of school.

## ***2.8 Faculty of Science and Sport***

### ***Matters for Noting***

- *Modality of the upcoming academic year*

The Faculty of Science and Sports Representative received and distributed information regarding the list of module offerings and their respective modalities for this upcoming semester to his constituents via social media platforms.

### ***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the Faculty of Science and Sports Representative portfolio.

### ***Matters for Action***

There are currently no matters for action from the Faculty of Science and Sports Representative Portfolio.

## ***2.9 School of Building and Land Management***

### ***Matters for Noting***

- *Modality of the upcoming academic year*

Though it was communicated by the Head of School that the School of Building and Land Management (SBLM) will be taking a blended learning approach this upcoming semester, the SBLM Representative has been actively seeking further clarification regarding the modality for each module offering within the School for the upcoming academic year and awaits such information to be distributed expeditiously.

***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the School of Building and Land Management Representative portfolio.

***Matters for Action***

- ***Renovation of Office Space***

The School of Building and Land Management Representative, alongside the Caribbean School of Architecture Representative, will meet to commence the renovation of the office space to ensure that the space is conducive for visits by students following the resumption of school.

***2.10 Faculty of Education and Liberal Studies***

There was no report submission from the Faculty of Education and Liberal Studies Representative for the month of July.

***2.11 School of Hospitality and Tourism Management***



***Matters for Noting***

There are currently no matters for noting from the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management Representative portfolio.

***Matters Arising***

- *Food Handlers Permit*

The School of Hospitality and Tourism Management Representative is aware that students within the school are still facing issues regarding food handler permits. As such, the Representative is exploring other avenues so that the students of SHTM will be able to have access to it for the upcoming academic year.

***Matters for Action***

There are currently no matters for action from the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management Representative portfolio.

***2.12 School of Computing and Information Technology***

***Matters for Noting***

- *FENC Scholarship Session*

The School of Computing and Information Technology (SCIT) Representative, alongside the School of Engineering Representative, held a scholarship forum on the 27th of June 2023, which covered matters relating to scholarship application and availability.

- *CNS Pre-orientation form*

The SCIT Representative in collaboration with the Program Director for the Computer Networking and Security Degree (CNS) hosted a pre-orientation forum for incoming and returning students. The forum was used to address areas such as module selection, services offered to students, as well as an introduction to the SCIT Representative Body.

- *Mentorship Initiative*

The SCIT Representative has implemented a mentorship initiative for all students within the School. The initiative is currently in the early phase with mentors in training for first and second year students, as well as recruitment for industry professionals to mentor senior students on their professional paths.

- *Module Selection and Class Spaces Discussion*

The SCIT Representative engaged in discussions with the Head of School regarding issues surrounding module selection and availability of module spaces for the upcoming academic year. As a result, further discussions are expected to be held with the program directors and the timetable officer to ensure that this process goes as smoothly as possible for all SCIT core modules.

- *Modality of the upcoming academic year*

Though it was confirmed that the School of Computing and Information Technology will be taking a blended learning approach this upcoming semester, the SCIT Representative has been actively seeking further clarification regarding a full breakdown of the modality for each module offering within the School for the upcoming academic year and awaits such information to be distributed expeditiously once the timetable for the school is completed.

- *Internship*

The SCIT Representative has successfully established a relationship with Play Jamaica to provide internship opportunities for students within the School.

***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the School of Computing and Information Technology Representative portfolio.

***Matters for Action***

- *CIS Pre-Orientation Forum*

The School of Computing and Information Technology Representative plans to facilitate a pre-orientation forum on August 10th, 2023, alongside the Program Director. The aim of the forum is to sensitize incoming CIS students on their overall university life expectations and experience.

- *Diet Sheet Updates*

The School of Computing and Information Technology Representative plans to speak with the faculty administrator regarding the updating of the diet sheets for each program in the School of Computing and Information Technology. In addition to this, the representative plans to request that core modules be highlighted, and modules marked with (T) be explained properly on the diet sheet.

- *SCIT Jerseys*

The School of Computing and Information Technology Representative plans to design and release graphics for students to choose a SCIT Jersey of choice. The winning design

will be used to set the pre-order for student Jersey procurement. The jerseys will be offered to the students at a cost.

- *SCIT armbands*

The School of Computing and Information Technology representative Mr. Percival Roberts plans to begin the sale of SCIT armbands to start the process of income generation for the upcoming academic year. The generation of funds will go towards buying decorations for forums and other events that may arise. The Representative seeks the support of his constituents.

### ***2.13 Joint Colleges of Medicine, Oral Health and Veterinary Science (JCOLL)***

#### ***Matters for Noting***

- *Bus System (SOHP)*

The JCOLL Representative in response to reports received from students within the college did an analysis of the current bus system, has noted areas for improvement, and is currently in the process of addressing same.

#### ***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the Joint Colleges of Medicine, Oral Health and Veterinary Science Representative portfolio.

#### ***Matters for Action***

There are currently no matters arising from the Joint Colleges of Medicine, Oral Health and Veterinary Science Representative portfolio.

***2.14 School of Business Administration/Joan Duncan School of Entrepreneurship, Ethics and Leadership***

***Matters for Noting***

- *Modality of the upcoming academic year*

The SOBA/JDSEEL Representative notes that students within the Schools are currently still unaware of the modality of each module offering for this upcoming semester. As such, the representative continues to work toward gaining an official notice from the Head of School with this detail to be distributed expeditiously to students prior to the commencement of module selection.

***Matters Arising***

- *Academic Log*

*Introduction to Financial Accounting (ACC2001)*

The SOBA/JDSEEL Representative received complaints from students regarding them initially having a passing grade for the aforementioned module which was later changed to failing grades. As such, the Representative is currently looking into the matter.

***Matters for Action***

- *Red Light Green Light*

With the aim of increasing student engagement, the SOBA/JDSEEL Representative in collaboration with the COHS Representative, will be working on the planning of the annual execution of the Red Light Green Light Party.

## **2.15 Western Campus**

### ***Matters for Noting***

There are currently no matters for noting from the Western Campus Chairperson portfolio.

### ***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the Western Campus Chairperson portfolio.

### ***Matters for Action***

- ***Western Campus Orientation***

The Western Campus Chairperson will continue to aid in the planning of the 2023 Orientation for the Western Campus, which is inclusive of planning for the execution of a Western campus freshers social on that specific day.

## **3. Directors**

### ***3.1 Sports***

There was no report submission from the Director of Sports for the month of July.

### ***3.2 Editorial***

There was no report submission from the Editor-In-Chief for the month of July.

### ***3.3 Special Projects***

There was no report submission from the Director of Special Projects for the month of July.

### ***3.4 Health and Safety***

#### ***Matters for Noting***

There are currently no matters for noting from the Health and Safety portfolio.

#### ***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the Health and Safety portfolio.

#### ***Matters for Action***

- ***Health Fair***

The Director of Health and Safety will commence the planning of the execution of the annual Health Fair execution.

### ***3.5 Community Service***

#### ***Matters for Noting***

- ***Teach the Youth Program***

The council executed the 21st staging of it's Teach the Youth Program that ran from July 3, 2023 through to July 21, 2023 under the theme 'Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders, Unlocking Potential' which benefited over 600 students from neighboring communities such as August Town, Kintyre, Tavern, Highlight View and Sandy Park.

***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the Director of Community Service portfolio.

***Matters for Action***

- ***International Coastal Cleanup***

The Director of Community Service aims to have the annual International Coastal Cleanup executed on September 16, 2023. As such, the Director will be completing the registration process before the stipulated deadline and commence planning for the proper execution of the activity.

***3.6 Spiritual Development***

***Matters for Noting***

There are currently no matters for noting from the Spiritual Development portfolio.

***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the Director of Spiritual Development portfolio.

***Matters for Action***

- ***Collaboration with Indian High Commission***

The Director of Spiritual Development aims to establish a working relationship with the Indian High Commission for the execution of Mindful Movement Session(s)



through a collaborative effort. As such, the Director will be taking the necessary steps toward achieving this goal set out to benefit students on a spiritual level.

### ***3.7 Elections and Regulatory Affairs***

#### ***Matters for Noting***

There are currently no matters for noting from the Director of Elections and Regulatory Affairs portfolio.

#### ***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the Director of Elections and Regulatory Affairs portfolio.

#### ***Matters for Action***

- *Methods to Raise Awareness about the Students' Union Council*
  1. Weekly campus walks
  2. Engagement in question and answer sessions focused on the Students' Union Council, with Union merchandise as prizes.
  3. Infographics

The council seeks to improve on the awareness level surrounding council members in a personal and professional scope; with a specific focus on their roles and functions. As such, the council will be implementing a 'Fun Facts' series aimed at providing information about the various roles and responsibilities that exist.

### ***3.8 Entertainment and Cultural Activities***

#### ***Matters for Noting***

There are currently no matters for noting from the Entertainment and Cultural Activities portfolio.

#### ***Matters Arising***

There are currently no matters arising from the Director of Entertainment and Cultural Activities portfolio.

#### ***Matters for Action***

- *Freshers Social*

With the aim of increasing student engagement, the Director of Entertainment and Cultural Activities will be working on the planning of the annual Freshers Social for its execution.

## **Conclusion**

This report was submitted in an effort to provide the UTech, Ja. student populace with a summarized yet detailed update on the happenings and doings of the UTech, Ja. Students' Union Council. It is the expectation that addressing the items under Matters Arising and approving the recommendations provided under Matters for Action will greatly enhance students' academic life while improving the image of the University internally and externally. The Students' Union Council is cognizant that policy making can be a slow and tedious process, but we are determined to work with the University to find amicable solutions to the issues faced by students on all levels.

*Submitted by:  
UTech, Ja. Students' Union Council  
October 23, 2023*