

Dear SFSS Board of Directors,

It is very disappointing the SFSS Board of Directors is using the 'recent incidents' as a pretext to justify refusing to address the decision of the SFSS to evict SOCA on December 14. It is very unfortunate that we have been met with condemnation due to one of our members stating her discomfort with being challenged. The unfortunate response of the SFSS to bring this simple interaction in official email communication to detract from the actual conversation is disingenuous. We believe that the SFSS has shifted the conversation unnecessarily and a simple interaction is being shaped as much more than what it needs to be. This is a prime example of the SFSS using the power it has to suppress groups that the SFSS is supposed to work in alliance with. A direct example of how to not treat an organization, for example threatening organizations to not go to the Peak or else 'all conversations will be shut down' in addition to just not acting in good faith. This is using the power imbalance and abusing power to ignore the concerns that the many groups are facing.

This has shown that there is a lack of cultural and racial sensitivity training in dealing with marginalized people and marginalized groups. These interactions show the lack of respect the SFSS shows to organizations they serve. We believe that the SFSS is not concerned enough with finding a way moving forward, but rather suppressing our representatives. We also believe the SFSS has also not listened to us regarding our concerns on being treated with disregard and condescension which was shown by the SFSS Administration in a previous meeting. They would not listen to the negative effects of evicting us as a marginalized student group on campus which currently have had space since 1997. Their responses to our concerns about these meetings were disheartening to say the least. As the President stated, "Our CEO can have a direct approach", we have become increasingly concerned with how operations are controlled by the CEO within the SFSS. Especially when those operations affect marginalized students.

There is a growing trend in the SFSS of acting in bad faith, delaying conversations, and not communicating clearly as it relates to groups having issues that require urgent attention. We urge the board members of the Simon Fraser Student Society to engage with the membership, the students, with all organizations which students are members, volunteer in or are a part of. There are various student groups who have been having problems with communication, the transparency and the lack of respect that the Simon Fraser Student Society has been showing to them. We call on all members of the board to take an introspective look with how the board may serve your constituents better and listen to the voices of the different groups.

We are not pleased with the SFSS's blatant abuse of power, the constant disregard for less powerful groups and the institutional roadblocks you erect for groups that have challenged your decisions. We hope that you do truly understand the need for the Black Community that SFU Students of Caribbean and African Ancestry represent on campus to continue to have a space that we may continue to raise awareness, and educate the campus community on issues of race, as well as to maintain the fellowship and provide resources and support services that we do as an organization. We call on the well-meaning members of the board to feel free to reach out to have a conversation as to how to respond to persons that are uncomfortable.

We implore the board to never condemn people for expressing their concerns, especially concerns from students that have been raised. Whether it be:

- Staffing issues arising within the SFSS
- Students of Caribbean and African Ancestry and the issue of space and racial and cultural insensitivity of the SFSS
- First Nations Students Association and their concerns of being coerced on finances and space issues by the SFSS as shown in the May 25 Board Minutes that was posted without their consent
- SFPIRG and their concerns of being under duress by SFSS Administration to sign a lease agreement
- The Out on Campus Collective and their concerns of being voiceless in helping to shape the direction of the Out on Campus
- The Women's Collective who have had similar concerns on voicelessness.
- The Veggie Lunch who have not been engaged in light of the SFSS discussion to renovate the Forum Chambers
- The Mini Mart in the SFSS who were consulted early on in the BuildSFU that now risks losing space and has communication issues with SFSS
- Other groups raising a myriad of concerns such as HI5, Embark, CJSF etc. who have had problems with the SFSS recently.

There is a pattern with the lack of communication and an overall shredding of the relationships that SFSS has had with many groups including SOCA over the last three years. We wish the conscience of well-meaning board-members to hold itself to account, to stop being siloed and engage these various groups on the issues, and realize that it's the students who are in charge and you can make the hard decisions to fix these systemic issues.

As such, since the SFSS had postponed the scheduled meeting between SOCA and the SFSS. We hope that you will soon see us as a priority along with other groups losing space instead of the time-sliced shared space model proposed by the CEO and also, address other issues arising with the SFSS as an institution.

We wish the very best for the remainder of your term on board, and good luck.

Best,

The Executive Team,

SFU Students of Caribbean and African Ancestry

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