

Fri, Oct 23, 2009 at 3:46 PM

Ubysey,

I am writing to remind you of the AMS' Media Communications Protocol. Please be advised that:

- All media requests that you have must first be brought to the attention of our Communications Manager, Kelli Seepaul at communications@ams.ubc.ca and myself at president@ams.ubc.ca.
- No AMS staff members are permitted to speak to the media unless authorized by Kelli Seepaul or myself.

If you have any questions or hesitations whatsoever, please contact me at president@ams.ubc.ca.

Please communicate this message to your editors, staff, and volunteers.

Regards,

Blake Frederick

Monday, October 26, 2009 8:36 AM

Hi Blake,

This is a foolish policy.

Cheers,

Paul Bucci

Mon, Oct 26, 2009 at 9:37 AM

Paul,

Thank you for your feedback, but you haven't offered any reasons why you are unhappy with the policy. There are a couple of reasons why the policy exists:

- It is outlined in both the AMS Bylaws and AMS Code of Procedures that the President must act as the spokesperson for the Society.
- Staff, since they are not elected to their positions, cannot rightly speak on behalf of the Society.

Before you write an editorial about this issue, also keep in mind:

- It is standard practice for an organization to have one designated spokesperson.
- Every single other media outlet that I have interacted with this year has understood and accepted as common practice the AMS' Media Communications Protocol.

Regards,

Blake Frederick

Mon, 26 Oct 2009 10:13

Hi Blake,

As far as I know, we are not going to air our dirty laundry, so you shouldn't expect an editorial. Now, each of you are individual, autonomous people, and therefore have your own opinions on things. We would like to hear those opinions. It is important for students to hear what the people who represent them and work for them have to say, and this does include staff members. This goes doubly for student politicians such as yourselves, where movement in an organization is extremely quick. We need to know what the people who may be representing us tomorrow think before they are elected. How can we do that if there is no record? So there's that for the theoretical argument.

On a practical level, communities need to interact closely with each other. In any small town, which UBC basically is, the politicians and the media interact on a personal level. It's not only a personal, friendly thing to do, it's a major part of actually being able to do their jobs. Your policy basically excludes the possibility of that relationship being developed. If you tell your people that they simply cannot talk to the Ubysey, they won't, and don't, and we can't do our jobs.

On a personal level, you are creating hostility unnecessarily. Despite what you may think, we are not evil people who are out to destroy the AMS at all times. We're actually just students trying to work for students the best we can. We will write about you when you screw up, and call you on your bullshit. But we will also write about the good things you do. You need to allow people to talk with us like human beings.

Beyond that, your policy creates suspicion. We think that you have something to hide when you don't talk to us. And, as journalists, when we think you have something to hide, we will try to find it.

Recently, I called out Tim Chu on this policy, which you have no doubt heard about. We were trying to get a quote like, "I feel good about getting this job." Is that really something that your employee should be disallowed from saying? Especially in this situation, where it was a controversial issue. You are doing a direct disservice to students when you stop dialogue.

I mean, come on. You're student politicians. If you get called out on something, it goes away quickly. I can't see what you could possibly be afraid of. If your ideas are sound, then show them off. If they're not, we'll say that, then you can fix it.

The last point I have is that the policy has no precedent. We have always talked with the AMS casually and without this weird hierarchy. The other media outlets will just talk to you because you are the only person who matters to them. No one else cares about the smaller people, because they are interested in the AMS as an important organization in an important university. We are interested in the AMS as a group of people who shape our community, and being able to talk to those people is essential for us. So put simply, they will talk to just you because they

don't care about students, they care about UBC. We care about students. If you do, too, you'll allow us to talk to your people instead of just you.

Well, I could go on forever about this, and I'm having trouble ending the e-mail, so I'll just go with:

You are destroying the community you are trying to build when you don't talk to us. We want to be friendly, but you are not allowing us to.

Thanks,

Paul Bucci

Mon, 26 Oct 2009 17:14

Hey Blake,

Scratch what I said before about not writing an editorial—we just received a copy of the memo sent out to all AMS employees stating that "A breach of this protocol could lead to serious consequences," if your employees are to speak with us including "off the record" conversations. Our news department believes that this is grounds for a real story. I don't know why you are trying to turn this into an all-out war between our organizations, especially after the talk we had this summer about ways we could start working together. But, oh well, I guess. Give me a shout.

Sincerely,

Paul Bucci