



Greetings!

This shall serve as the official report of the Secretary of the Dalhousie Computer Science Society for the Fall 2006 term. I will briefly outline the requirements of this position, what I did over the course of the semester, and touch upon other activities I contributed to. Finally I will conclude with a list of recommendations for future secretaries and provide a template for meeting minutes.

1. Duties of the Secretary

The position of secretary at first glance is not a difficult one. The secretary is required to attend all meetings of the CSS, take a roll call and minutes at each meeting, and circulate them to Council before the next meeting. Furthermore they are tasked with writing all official correspondence on behalf of the Society, however this is often farmed out to others.

The most important aspect of this position is the minutes; institutional memory in any society is key and the only way to provide this is via rough transcripts of meetings. You may be asked to carry out other duties at the discretion of Council as you are an Executive but are perceived to have a rather light workload.

2. I attended all meetings but two of the CSS this term. I preferred to take notes on my laptop as the meeting was going on. I found that the easiest thing to do would be to copy the meeting's agenda (circulated but the president) into AppleWorks/Word/LaTeX/whatever your preferred programme is so I would have a template to follow and be able to focus on taking down the particulars of the discussion, not concerning myself with headings and formatting issues. Before the meeting is called to order start a roll call at the top of the page, you can have people sign in on their own, but I found it was easier for me to do it, that way I knew who was present and could take notes while people were talking without looking at them because I knew who they were. This is also good for the first few weeks because you can familiarize yourself with the councilors and their positions.

I tried to focus on particulars of a discussion, noting the important aspects of a debate, pros and cons, who was making what point, etc., and I always wrote out the whole motion on the table, the names of the mover and seconder and the outcome of the vote. I try to set this off in some manner as motions and their outcomes are usually the important aspects of minutes discussed at future meetings. Having them noted in an obvious manner makes it easy to find. Make sure that the president allows for people to note their support/opposition/abstention from any vote, they may feel this is important and you are the one in charge of recording such things.



Finally, after a meeting I would review the minutes, check spelling and accuracy, etc. I had a heading I attached to most of them and kept it standard (for the most part) throughout the term. Now that we have the logo I would recommend doing something similar to the heading for this report, noting that they are minutes, the time/date/location of the meeting, page numbers and your name. Once they looked okay I would save them as a .pdf, so everyone would be able to view and changes could not be made to individual copies (any changes that need to be made are to be discussed at the next CSS meeting and approved there), and sent them off to the CSS mailing list.

Sometimes people would email me with changes they wanted to have made, I would incorporate them into a different version of the minutes, bring up the request at the next meeting, have them approved and then re-circulate them. This semester Kate, the CSS Treasurer has been posting them online for me, however you can obviously do that yourself. If anyone mentions a report, or if a policy or report is accepted/approved at Council be sure to get a copy of it and append it to the minutes before you circulate them. Often the InfoDesk Manager's report is the only thing to append, but if Constitutional amendments are approved or whatnot it is useful to append things like that as well.

That is pretty much it. You may find that they give you other stuff (like writing thank you letters to donors or volunteers or whatever) but that is pretty rare.

3. Because I am a social person and I like planning big events I tried to help out the Social Rep. (who is usually buried in work for GeekBeer and other projects) by planning Snowball with another member of Council. This went insanely well and I am submitting another report about large-scale event planning to complement the Social Rep's Manifesto. I also tried to help out at GeekBeers (setting up, serving as bartender, etc.) as often as possible. I worked on the Open House for CSS, and helped with some ACM events too. You don't have to do this, but there is always a need for volunteers and it is usually tons of fun!
4. Recommendations:
 - a. Create a template for minutes and stick with it. Be sure the president sends out an agenda before the meeting. Collect regrets from councilors so they will not be penalized for non-attendance when they have an excuse. Note these in the minutes.
 - b. Get minutes out as quickly as possible after a meeting... some people will complain rather loudly if they do not have enough time to read them, despite the fact the 95% of Council will never download the attachment.

The End!



Appendix A

Dalhousie Computer Science Society Minutes Time – Date – Location Compiled by: *Your Name Here*

Roll Call:

Person 1 – Position (if applicable)
Person 2
Et al.

Absent with Regrets:

-Person A – Position
-Person B – Position

1. Approval of Last Meeting Minutes
2. Approval of the Agenda
 - a. Amendments
 - b. Motion, approval
3. Old Business
 - a. Item 1
 - b. Item 2
 - c. Etc.
4. New Business
 - a. Item A
 - b. Item B
 - c. Etc.
5. Reports from Positions
 - a. President
 - b. VPI
 - c. VPE
 - d. Treasurer
 - e. Etc.
6. Question and Answer
7. *Additional Topics Here*
8. Adjournment

Appendix A: InfoDesk Manager's Report
Appendix B: Snowball Budget
Appendix C: Etc.