

# STUDENTS' COUNCIL LATE ADDITIONS

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Tuesday, August 7, 2007  
Council Chambers 2-1 University Hall

## LATE ADDITIONS (LA 2007-08)

**2007-08/1      SPEAKERS BUSINESS**

2007-08/1a      Announcements-Re-distribution of the retreat evaluations will take place on Tuesday August 7, 2007.

**2007-08/3      EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

2007-08/3a      Executive Committee- July 23 & July 25,2007

Please see document LA 07-08.01

**2007-08/6      GENERAL ORDERS**

2007-08/6g      **ERUVBETINE MOVES THAT** Council Remuneration (Bill #1) be removed from Bylaw and put into Students' Council Standing Orders.

**2007-08/7      INFORMATION ITEMS**

2007-08/7f      Steven Dollansky, VP External- Report

Please see document LA 07-08.02

2007-08/7g      Working with the Bookstores to reduce Textbook Costs- Report

Please see document LA 07-08.03

**Executive Committee Report to Students' Council August 7, 2007**

- 1. The following motion was passed at the July 23, 2007, 2007 Executive Committee meeting:**
  - a. LE/GAMBLE MOVED THAT the Executive Committee approve the involvement of the U of A Students' Union in the multi campus event (yet to be named).  
VOTE ON MOTION 5/0/0 CARRIED
  
- 2. The following motion was passed at the July 25, 2007, 2007 Executive Committee meeting:**
  - a. DOLLANSKY/JANZ MOVED THAT the Executive Committee approve an expenditure not to exceed \$3100.00 from the Special Project Reserve for the purchase of cell phones and appropriate minutes and data package.  
VOTE ON MOTION 5/0/0 CARRIED
  
- 3. There were no motions passed at the July 30, 2007 Executive Committee meeting.**
  
- 4. There were no motions passed at the August 1, 2007 Executive Committee meeting**

## VPX Report to Council

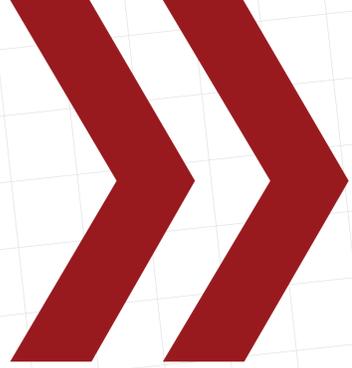
August 7, 2007

Hello Council,

I apologize for not having this in the main agenda package, but due to a combination of about seven million different things it is in the Late Additions. Anyways... here is what is new in the world of your VP external.

1. **U-Pass** – We have worked with the University to develop a communications strategy for the U-Pass which will be followed by everyone who is involved with implementation to ensure questions are answered and the messages are not mixed. The first option will always be a referral to the website [www.ualberta.ca/u-pass](http://www.ualberta.ca/u-pass) where you are greeted by three friendly looking students and should be able to find the answers to any question you may have. The contract was signed and we have received several media stories already with more in the works.
2. **Camp Out in Quad** – Our first major event is taking form. Pam, Don, Colin and I have been working to get the ball rolling on an event which will be fun, raise some money for the United Way, and create public awareness of the housing problems facing students. We will hopefully begin in the afternoon of September 27<sup>th</sup> with a barbeque, music, and volleyball tournament in quad. This will be followed by a movie night in SUB and possibly a related event in RATT, and will be capped off with a pancake breakfast on Friday morning, free to all those who survived (and anyone who enjoys pancakes). Want to help us out with planning?? Email Pam about CPAC because it should be a lot of fun. ([avpex@su.ualberta.ca](mailto:avpex@su.ualberta.ca)) Get your teams ready and tell your friends.
3. **MP Blitz 07** – 5 down 2 to go. Kudos to the advocacy department for helping prepare the lobby document, Janz and I have been very well received.
4. **MLA Blitz 07** – 0 down 18 to go. We are preparing a new lobby document for these meetings, which will hopefully start taken place later this week. Stay tuned.
5. **EAS** – Admittedly this is going slower than I had hoped due to ridiculous things like sleep and eating getting in my way. We will hopefully have a launch event in late August. We recently drafted a follow up document to city council from our lobby meeting last month, no feedback as of yet (because council is on vacation).
6. **CAUS** – Had a very productive campaign meeting in Calgary last week. We are going to be deciding on a designer very soon and I am fairly confident it will be the UASU's Marketing Department, which practically guarantees a good result. Minister Horner continues to use deflection tactics on where the increased federal funding will be spent, which is disappointing. Lastly, we were happy to here ACTISEC will be partnering with us for our provincial election campaign.
7. **Senate** – Daniel Eggert has unfortunately had to resign from the Senate. Senators Kehoe, Laroche and myself are working to find a replacement for your appointment.
8. **CPAC** – Campaigns Planning and Action Committee will be getting underway very soon, we hope to have three or four councilors help us out. It is the group that plans events, helps promote advocacy and generally will be a lot of fun. Let me know if you are interested!
9. **Meetings** –
  - a. August 7 – Rahim Jaffer MP Edmonton-Strathcona
  - b. August 9 – Karen Wichuk U of A External Relations
  - c. August 13 – Dima Utgoff U of A Residence Services
  - d. MLAs

Have a great meeting! – Steven Dollansky VPX



# HOW TO SAVE STUDENTS A MILLION DOLLARS

## *Working with the Bookstore to Reduce Textbook Costs*



### **TEXTBOOK COSTS**

Like tuition, the cost of academic materials continues to rise. According to Ripoff 101, a report done by the Ohio and California PiRG, textbook prices in the United States rose considerably faster than inflation. From 1997 to 2004, a student went from spending \$642 on textbooks to \$898. At the University of Alberta, Arts & Science undergraduates pay \$1200 every year in textbooks. If we index inflation into textbook prices in 1992, the cost should only be \$920.

Publishers are quick to put out new editions as fast as possible to prevent students purchasing used textbooks. They add costs to academic materials through “bundling,” where they give additional materials that are rarely used by the professor such as CDs or other supplements.

Publishers are not the only reason for the escalating costs of textbooks as University Bookstores play a large role as well. They determine what the final price of the textbook will be by calculating their overall costs and the margins they wish to charge students. Bookstores vary across the country, as they are either ancillary services (profit generation) or cost-recovery units. The University of Alberta Book Store transitioned from an ancillary service to cost-recovery, starting with the creation of the Book Store Advisory Group.

### **THE NEW PRODUCT: COURSEPACKS**

Coursepacks contain all of the material that is covered in the class, whether they are lecture notes, parts of a textbook, components of a book, or journal articles. They have a number of advantages over regular textbooks with all (or most) of the information pertaining to the course since it was designed to fit the course. Textbook production does not allow this to occur. Depending on the material used, a coursepack can cost from \$20 - \$75. The higher range surfaced recently due to increasing problems with copyright costs. Contrasting those prices with textbooks, which range from \$100 – \$200, the savings are quite evident for students.

### **NEXT STEPS**

**How do you save your students a million dollars?**

In November, the Book Store Association of Canada is hosting a conference in Halifax. Our Book Store is putting a roundtable discussion on our relationship over the years and how we can work together to further reduce the costs of academic materials. One of the first steps would be to put pressure on your own Book Store to take you so that you are both working with each other to deliver academic materials at the lowest cost. Local action is one of the easiest methods to reduce operating costs of your Book Store and therefore reduce the final costs of the textbook.

### **OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOOKSTORE**

In 1995, Garret Poston, the Vice President (Academic) of the Students' Union at the time, decided to do an academic survey of undergraduates to find out their largest issue. Over 90 % of students were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the costs of academic materials, representing one of the largest areas of academic concern for students. This prompted us to take a closer look in the practices of the Book Store.

Our campus advertised our Book Store as having the lowest textbook prices in all of Canada, but with some investigation we found this was far from the truth. Our prices were much higher than other Book Stores. In addition, although costs increased and revenues decreased, profits increased substantially due to increased textbook margins. When the Students' Union presented the information to then Provost and Vice President Academic Doug Owrap, he created the Bookstore Advisory Taskforce, built to bring together the main groups involved in academic materials: students, administrators, and bookstore officials.

Over time, we saw the Bookstore transition into a cost-recovery service unit with textbook margins being fixed at 25% of industry average. To reduce textbook prices, they reduced their own costs by decreasing the amount of full-time staff and increasing part-time staff. In addition, we worked together to create a new academic material: **coursepacks.**

### **COURSEPACK PROCEDURE**

Guides to creating coursepacks are distributed to professors throughout the year. They indicate the procedure for gathering material as well as the restrictions with using copyright material. To obtain access to them, Alberta has photocopy agreements with various authors and publishers. If the photocopied author/publisher is not on the agreement, then we require written permission from the author.

Once the material is submitted, a coursepack machine is used to print and bind the material in a coiled ring fashion. The costs of each coursepack are calculated which determines its final cost as we do not use this service for profit. The main driver of costs are copyright material, which in some cases will drive coursepacks over \$100. Once the coursepacks are finished printing, they are sent to the Book Store for sale and distribution.

### **EMERGING/ONGOING ISSUES WITH COURSEPACKS**

Over the past five years, the cost of copyright material has doubled from \$0.05/page to \$0.10/page. Publishers are worried (with good reason too) that coursepacks will take away from their bottom line and to compensate, they have increased coursepack costs.