

# STUDENTS' COUNCIL LATE ADDITIONS

---

Tuesday August 3, 2010  
Council Chambers 2-1 University Hall

## LATE ADDITIONS (SC 2010-08)

2010-08/1	<u>SPEAKER'S BUSINESS</u>
2010-08/2	<u>PRESENTATIONS</u>
2010-08/3	<u>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT</u>
2010-08/4	<u>BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS</u>
2010-08/5	<u>QUESTION PERIOD</u>
2010-08/6	<u>BOARD AND COMMITTEE BUSINESS</u>
2010-08/7	<u>GENERAL ORDERS</u>
2010-08/8	<u>INFORMATION ITEMS</u>
2010-08/8g	Zach Fentiman, VP Operations and Finance Please see document LA 10-08.01
2010-08/8h	ERC/AP!RG report Please see document LA 10-08.02
2010-08/8i	Rory Tighe, VP Student Life- Report Please see document LA 10-08.03
2010-08/8j	Aden Murphy, VP External Please see document LA 10-08.04

July 30, 2010

To: Students' Council

Re: Report to Council

---

### **Facilities & Operations Orientation**

I, along with the executive, met with Don Hickey (VP F&O) and representatives from Facilities & Operations on Wednesday, July 21, 2010. The primary objective was for the meeting to act as a “meet and greet” and it went very well.

### **Operating Policy Review**

I have delivered a final draft to the Executive Committee for their review. I expect this to be in place sometime next week, officially.

### **Operations & Finance Advisory Board**

The first meeting of the OFAB was Monday, July 27, 2010 @ 7:00pm. A hiccup occurred (the meeting was to take place at Room At The Top, but it was closed!) moving the meeting to an alternate, competitor location. Great discussion and ideas came out of the meeting—I'll be drafting meeting notes later to discuss with management.

### **Peer Support Centre**

Rory and myself are in discussions right now regarding the possibility of finding alternate space for the Peer Support Centre (providing better linkage to Student Counselling Services and a more private space). Will provide updates as things progress.

### **SUBstruction Projects**

Doors, stairs, postal outlet modifications are now complete. Let me know what you think—I'm especially interested in whether the air curtains are disruptive from an acoustic point of view.

### **Access Fund Selection Committee**

The Access Fund Selection Committee met Thursday, July 29, 2010 for a short meeting to grant Access Fund monies.

### **Personal Academic Stuff**

I have completed my second midterm for the summer class. Woo! Final exam is on August 12, 2010.

### **Upcoming Dates of Significance**

Tuesday, August 10, 2010 @ 5:30pm – Grant Allocation Committee Meeting

Tuesday, August 10, 2010 @ 9:00am – PAW Centre Meeting

Thursday, August 12, 2010 @ 6:00pm – Budget & Finance Committee Meeting

Yours,  
Zach

**Prepared by:** Rory Tighe, Vice President (Student Life)

**To:** Students' Council 2010/2011

### **Health & Dental Plan**

We are working on the communication strategy for the year. I will be getting in contact with the Health & Dental Plan Committee in the next couple of weeks to hear their final thoughts before we finalize the communication strategy. I will also be talking with Studentcare to work out a timeline for negotiating the premiums for the next two years. Also, we have asked the Health & Dental Plan Office to install a drop box so that students can drop off forms after hours and it has recently been installed.

### **Programming**

We are continuing the logistics discussions for the Week of Welcome. I am very excited to say that there will be a strong cohesiveness between Clubs Fair, Orientation and Week of Welcome activities. We are in the final stages of planning for Week of Welcome activities and are working hard to get the arts and crafts for the theme created. If you want to help make WOW fantastic this year we are in need of volunteers! We will be in Dinwoodie Tuesdays at 6 PM, Thursdays at 7 PM, and Saturdays at 1 for the rest of summer if you are interested. For more information or other WOW volunteer opportunities be sure to email Brennan Murphy, our Student Programmer, at [brennan.murphy@su.ualberta.ca](mailto:brennan.murphy@su.ualberta.ca).

### **Student Services**

We are working with The Dean of Students to coordinate our service delivery efforts. We are looking at joint service agreements, physical space planning, and marketing efforts. Altogether we are trying to improve service delivery on both ends and find commonalities that we can capitalize on. I am also working with our Senior Manager of Student Services to design a services review process for the Students' Union's services over this year. We also have a new Assistant Manager Student Services to welcome, Johanna Comartin. She is not new to the Students' Union and we are all very excited to work with her this year. Finally, we are currently hiring a new Manager of Student Group Services. We are aiming to have the position filled by mid-August.

### **Student Engagement Plan**

The Student Engagement Plan is coming along very nicely. We had two writers of the Academic Plan, Leah Trueblood, former UASU VP Academic, and Frank Robinson, Dean of Students, come to give the group a presentation on the Academic Plan. It was a truly amazing and unique opportunity and I am very excited and thankful for the experience. We are close to finalizing a process and timeline and will begin information collecting as early as mid-August. Things are progressing very smoothly and I can't wait to see what comes out of it.

### **Residences**

I have been meeting with the University to talk about the new Residence Community Standards. The changes are very substantive and are largely focused around creating a peer run

restorative justice process in residences to replace the old peer run judicial discipline system. This has been a long-going process but the conversations are picking up now as the new changes will be brought to University Governance sometime in the next couple of months.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Ask during council, stop by the office, or send me an email at [vp.studentlife@su.ualberta.ca](mailto:vp.studentlife@su.ualberta.ca)

# Report to Council

10-08-03

Prepared by: Aden Murphy, VPX – July 15, 2010

---



**To:** Students' Council of the University of Alberta

Hello Council!

Welcome to an exciting eighth meeting of UASU Students' Council. It is with a heavy heart that I submit my report to Council only in Late Additions, as my report writing timeblock was hijacked by conference planning phone calls.

## Student Financial Assistance and Media

In the wake of the 3<sup>rd</sup> report of the Canadian Student Survey, conducted by CASA and its provincial partners, it came to light that the majority of students did not understand how the student financial assistance (hereafter abbreviated to SFA) system worked, and as such were at risk of missing out on available resources when in need.

After the story on the subject in the Edmonton Journal, I was asked to participate in a panel discussion on student financial aid literacy on Alberta Prime Time, an Access TV current affairs program. This required a great amount of preparation, but I can speak in mind-numbing detail about the SFA system.

Moral of the story: if you or anyone you know thinks they don't qualify for loans or bursaries, check out [canlearn.ca](http://canlearn.ca) or [alis.alberta.ca](http://alis.alberta.ca) or talk to someone at SFAIC and find out for sure.

## Partners Conference and New Federalism

This will be my second discussion of the Partners Conference coming up in August. As this discussion has gone forward, it has gained momentum and importance, as more and more schools are viewing this conference as key to completely restructuring our federal lobbying. The reason this discussion is worth having is that there is much potential for better lobbying to be done. An organization with many more members and a bigger budget would have a much greater capacity to advocate for its students. This is the gold at the end of the rainbow that makes this whole deal worth pursuing.

But between us now and that metaphorical pot of gold lies the quandary of getting 7.5 provincial organizations to agree to a structure that ensures efficient and accountable governance without distancing itself too much from its members. It must also try to maximize its financial resources without unduly straining its members.

Needless to say, this is a fascinating subject and a poli sci student's dream. It's just a large amount of work in the meantime. If any of this sounds interesting to you, please ask.

## Fun Fact Time!

Since the past several weeks have involved a large amount of SFA work, here's a bit of a primer.

First off: bursaries are synonymous with grants, but are different from loans and scholarships.

Bursaries are needs-based, which means that eligibility is based on financial need, not academic performance. This is what we call non-repayable assistance. There are relatively few programs available. We view bursaries as the most cost-effective way of increasing access for students from underrepresented groups, such as low-income families, families with low educational attainment, rural backgrounds, or First Nations/Métis backgrounds.

Scholarships are merit-based, which means that you get them for doing well in academic or extra-curricular work. While they are useful if you are in financial need, we don't usually count them towards making school more affordable or accessible.

Student loans are specialized, subsidized loans provided by the federal and provincial governments in concert. They are more easily available to students, and extremely important for many students to be able to finish school. Loans, or repayable assistance, are the most commonly used form of SFA.

While the Alberta Student Loans program has been significantly improved over the past few years, last year it came at the expense of the bursary side of aid. The province suspended the vast majority of its bursaries, including the Alberta Opportunities Bursary, the Northern Student Supplement and the Student Loan Relief Benefit. We don't yet know what the end result of these cuts will be, we will likely see much higher levels of student debt for high-need students, and the possibility of some students dropping out due to finances. We'll follow up on this later.