

**Date:** September 10, 2020  
**To:** Students' Union Council  
**Re:** President 2020/21 Report #10

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Dear Council,

With that, the spring and semester has wrapped to an end and we're heading into an incredibly exciting semester filled with many large scale decisions. Fall 2020 brings many challenges, but also incredible opportunities to ensure that we have the ability to study at a high quality institution, have an accessible education and one that financially supports those who need it most.

Monday, the Executive team and I were thrilled to share some words to incoming first year students at [President's Address](#) along with the University of Alberta President, Bill Flanagan and President of the Alumni Association Heather Raymond. Though we were not able to do this in Quad, in person, thousands of students were able to attend online and participate in the traditions and hear of the advice of the presidents.

In addition to the activities occurring during [Week of Welcome](#), which includes a Free movie night, a Speaker Series, Campus Kick off Concert, Art in SUB and of course, RATT on the Patio; we have some exciting work and advocacy ahead of us. The executive



team was also able to

meet with Ellen Schoeck, who was able to give us a fantastic tour of the University of Alberta campus. There is truly an incredible history here at the UofA.

In addition to the week of welcome festivities, I was interviewed on [Alberta Prime Time](#) earlier, talking about some of the challenges and hurdles that face students as we enter into the fall semester. I was asked about safety on campus, academic quality, tuition and mental health. We are continuing to push for the best outcomes in these challenging times.



Here are some more updates from the last while in addition to what has been happening as part of week of welcome:

**Alberta 2030:**

- VP Ley is on the Alberta 2030 guiding coalition where we are ensuring the student voices are heard during the system wide PSE review
- We are working incredibly hard to ensure student perspectives are included in the consultation process. We are preparing a submission which we will send to the Government of Alberta to ensure
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**Board of Governors:**

- September 3rd, and Friday the 4th, I spent ten hours at the Board of Governors Strategic Retreat where we discussed important happenings that are overtaking the minds of a lot of people at the UofA
- We met with Minister Nicolaides and discussed important issues surrounding the state of Post Secondary in Alberta, and the Alberta 2030 Review
- Included in the strategic retreat which will be discussions around the Academic Restructuring initiatives and the Service Excellence Transformation (SET)

**Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS)**

- We are working on a provincial campaign for the fall semester with some fascinating messaging. VP Ley has been doing an incredible job as CAUS chair, and we are doing important work
- The CAUS home office will be officially moving into the UASU Students' Union Building after the board unanimously approved a proposal to shift offices to save finances. We are excited to have the opportunity to host the office in SUB

**Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA)**

- At the Policy and Strategy Conference earlier this year, CASA membership helped set research and advocacy priorities, and are now in the finalization stages. CASA priorities should be released in the next few weeks
- For those of you who may not be aware, former UASU President Akanksha Bhatnagar recently got a job with CASA as Communications and Public Relations Officer! We are so proud of the incredible work she is doing, now, federally as a full time staff!

**Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG)**

- Last council meeting, Provost Steve Dew presented the work which the ARWG has been working on. The process is arduous and intense, and we are continuing consultation with many stakeholders on campus.
- Some of the concerns that were raised during that council meeting were surrounding:
  - Consultation
  - EDI
  - CSJ, Augustana and Faculty of Native Studies
  - Faculty autonomy and identity loss
  - Student representation on GFC, Board etc
- I have been bringing these concerns and thoughts to the ARWG and we are engaging in great conversation. I hope to provide a more fulsome report once more materials are publicly available

My office hours are by appointment, and I am happy to meet in person safely on campus if you are comfortable. Email me at [president@uasu.ca](mailto:president@uasu.ca) and I would love to buy you a coffee from Daily Grind! If you read this far, email me with the subject line “pizza” to get a prize (before the end of Council on the 10th).

Yours Sincerely,



**Joel Agarwal**  
University of Alberta Students' Union President