

**Date:** December 15, 2020

**To:** Students' Union Council

**Re:** President 2020/21 Report #16

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Dear Council,

It's been just over six months since I started my term as UASU President along with this wonderful team that I've been able to work closely together with. None of us knew the extent of challenges imposed on us this year from the global pandemic that we're in, the massive budget cuts to the UofA, the largest Academic and Administrative restructuring at the UofA, a provincial wide PSE review, addressing campus sexual violence, u-pass, academic quality just to name a few. The last six months have been incredibly challenging for us all, working day in and day out to make sure the quality of the student experience is the best. And we've seen some incredible wins for the student body. Often people don't know what our roles are, but there's a lot that goes on in the background that I certainly took for granted before I joined student governance. I've learnt so much in the past months, and come to a newer understanding of the words resiliency, perseverance and stability.

I'm so grateful for my team that I can depend on, and trust to do their best for students. I'm grateful for those who came before me who have mentored and helped me become who I am today. I'm grateful for so many student leaders who are passionately pushing for what's right not what's easy. There's a lot to do still, but I'm in good company and we're in this together.

I know it's exam season, and finals are just around the corner, but if you're reading this and you're stressed out, burnt out, at your lowest point - I've been there too and you can always reach out to me or sometime for help. Just know that you are worth it, and so loved, and valued just because you exist. I want to reach out and thank you for all your hard work as members of the Students' Council - I recognize that it is not easy doing the work you do in an online environment and so I am grateful. The rest of my report will be a summary of some of the things we have been working on over the past few months.

- Approved Executive Committee Standing Orders include training for indigenous course
  - Determine the required training on Aboriginal Peoples of Canada which the Executive Committee must receive
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Task Force (EDIT) meetings biweekly
- Worked with our Department of Research and Advocacy to launch the 2020 Annual General Survey (over 3100 responses) along with the release of the [2019 survey report](#)
- Pushed for and was successful in the [extension of winter break](#) by 1 week to help students, faculty and staff rest and recover from this challenging semester
- Extensive advocacy around student concerns regarding Academic Restructuring
  - Survey report on [student concerns about restructuring](#)
  - Hosted student town hall
  - Advocated for student concerns heard at council, COFA, FAs, etc to the ARWG
  - Pushed for more presentations by university at Students' Council, Council of Faculty Associations
- Advocating for mental health during a global pandemic
  - [Empower Me](#) – Mental health resources – is made available via the StudentCare Health and Dental Plan

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**Joel Agarwal, President**

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- [Peer Support Centre](#) moved online
- Extensive advocating, discussions and strategy regarding the academic experience and quality of education in an online environment
  - Extensive push against the use of online proctoring ([here](#), [here](#), [here](#) etc.)
  - [Remote delivery: what works what doesn't](#) report
  - [Student attitudes regarding reading week](#) report
  - [Education ambitions survey](#) report
- Approved Student Advocacy Program Lead Job Description
  - Overview of job description
  - Advocacy vs. ombuds services
  - Representation and bridging role – student focused assistance
  - Situations where opposing members may want to access this service
  - Term or permanent position to start? If substantial changes to scope
  - of the role as it sorts out exact scope
- Marketed [Executive goals document released](#)
- Ongoing improvements with [UASU Perks](#), and launch of Android app
- Campus Sexual Violence strategic discussions and vision for the next months and research report regarding [hiring of sexual violence prevention coordinator](#)
  - Report on harmful experiences in [work integrated learning learning](#)
- Executive Media Training
- The [Sustainability + Capital Fund launches](#) to deal with critical sustainability issues on campus. Student projects can receive up to \$10,000 in funding
- Working extensively with the [International Students' Association](#) towards their status as a Student Representative Association (SRA)
- [Alberta 2030 Submission](#) discussion & submission to GoA & McKinsey
  - Participation in McKinsey challenge panel, roundtable discussions, townhalls etc
- CAUS office move to SUB bringing UASU an additional \$12,275/year revenue (increasing our reliance on non-student fees) which will go back to student services, advocacy and needs
- Ride transit negotiations with the City of Edmonton and extensive planning for the U-Pass referendum
- OER #BeBookSmart [Lunch'N'Learn](#) & advocacy and OER Conference, within the university and abroad

I wish you all the best with your final exams, and hope you have some time to rest afterwards. Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and see you all in the new year!

Yours Sincerely,



**Joel Agarwal**

University of Alberta Students' Union President