

Date: May 19, 2020

To: Students' Union Council

Re: President 2020/21 Report #2

Dear Council,

It's been quite a full past two weeks in office already. Here are a few things I've been up to lately.

1. Executive Committee

The executive committee has been meeting regularly and is in the process of working on our executive goals document. This document is the primary document used by the executive team in our year, and is being influenced heavily by COVID-19. Much of this pandemic means that priorities, goals and projects will need to be adapted in order to respond to the impacts it is having on students and our community. We will be presenting our executive goals in the coming weeks to gain some feedback.

2. Internal University

- Board of Governors

- The first Board of Governors meeting was on Friday where we heard a presentation from Peggy Garritty the Chancellor-elect who is set to take office June 18th.
- The President, David Turpin provided an update on the budget situation and we know that 635 positions have been lost in 2020/21. COVID-19 is only making things more challenging
- I'm happy to announce that the advocacy of former Undergraduate BoG representative Rowan Ley and former President Akanksha Bhatnagar have paid off! Webcasting of Board of Governors' meetings has been approved for future open session meetings which will make it more accessible for students to attend.

- General Faculties Council

- Academic Planning Committee (APC)
 - At APC there were discussions on the impacts of the budget and COVID-19 on financial situations, revenues and expenditures to some extent. The university has laid off hundreds of staff.
- Fall 2020 Classes
 - GFC held a town hall to gather feedback and concerns from the UofA community regarding the state of the fall 2020 semester - whether it would remain online, or be in person.
 - Last Thursday the University [announced](#) that for the Fall Term 2020: classes could be mostly online with limited in-person learning opportunities probably for labs and clinicals. The biggest considerations here are the health and safety of students and the quality of education.

- Student Wellness Course: I met with some university folks to discuss one of my platform points, a UAlberta 101 course which has quickly become quite relevant in the light of COVID-19. Initial discussion about what this could look like as well as plans for collaboration are in place and depending on how the year goes, it will be a project I work on throughout the year.

3. External Advocacy

- VP Ley and I had two meetings with the Minister of Advanced Education, Demetrios Nicolaides where we introduced ourselves as newly elected student leaders and advocated for university funding regulations. More about this in CAUS.
- **Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS)**
 - I'm so thrilled and proud of VP Ley for being elected as Chair of CAUS. He worked incredibly hard in his application, presentation and answered the interview questions phenomenally and I can't wait to see how well he does this year. I am also very excited to be working with the newly elected vice chair of CAUS, UCSU VP External Marley Gillies.
 - CAUS had their transition changeover e-retreat last week where there were 20+ hours of training, presentations and brainstorming on CAUS priorities. We will be formalizing strategy at a meeting next week.
 - CAUS along with ASEC and AbGPAC met with the Minister of Advanced Education, Demetrios Nicolaides where we pushed him on COVID-19 impacts on students as well as the investment management agreements (IMA) specifically on performance based funding (PBF).

In other news, I'm excited that the Sun is out and I'm looking forward to the growth of vegetables in my garden! As always, if you want to meet or chat - feel free to email me and we can set up an e-meeting!

Yours Sincerely,



Joel Agarwal

University of Alberta Students' Union President