

Date: August 25, 2020
To: Students' Union Council
Re: President 2020/21 Report #9

Dear Council,

I cannot believe that the summer is almost over, and we are rolling into the Fall semester of 2020. Time certainly flies, and the past four months have been full.

- The fall semester brings upon us new challenges and opportunities. The ambitious vision that [U of A for Tomorrow](#) brings to us some exciting changes, and we must ensure that student issues are being addressed. On the Academic Restructuring Working Group, we have explored a full range of models of potential groupings of faculties which you will be able to get a better sense of today presented by Dr. Steve Dew. Over the past 4 months, the ARWG has been:
 - “The ARWG will develop recommendations for structural changes to faculties and departments at the University of Alberta, and will identify processes and strategies for achieving these recommendations. Recommendations may include proposals to create, merge, close, or re-profile Faculties, Departments, Divisions, Centres or Institutes.”
 - I hope you all take the time to ask questions during the presentation, and continue to provide input in this process.

- Provincially, VP Ley and I are working incredibly hard to ensure that student voices are heard in the Alberta 2030 Review. You have all heard VP Ley’s presentation at last Council meeting, and we are continuing to work on submissions to the GoA.

- Thank you to the Councillors who came out to share their experiences with City Council regarding the UPass. Here are the key things that happened at City Council last week: We got confirmation that the City would allow all domestic students under the income thresholds, regardless of whether they still live with their families, to qualify for the Ride Transit program. This is positive and will provide support for most domestic students living in Edmonton and making under \$33,000 per year. This was also not confirmed until today, despite correspondence with ETS on this point for the past 6 weeks. However, we still have numerous concerns:
 - 1. International students remain ineligible for the Ride Transit program.

- 2. Students who are under 18 may not be able to qualify for the Ride Transit program.
- 3. The application process time will prevent many students from accessing the program until October.
- 4. The city seems to be reinventing their standards on the fly regarding which documents proving income will be accepted in lieu of tax statements.
- 5. This solution does not offer many or any savings (depending on municipality) for students residing in the capital region but outside of the City of Edmonton.
- We are continuing to work with the City of Edmonton, ETS, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that these students are being served.

I've been involved quite extensively in the Presidential Installation process for Bill Flanagan, and looking forward to officially welcoming him at the Ceremony in September.

My office hours are by appointment, so please email me and we can set something up (president@uasu.ca). If you read this far, email me with the subject line jazz to get a prize!

Yours Sincerely,



Joel Agarwal
University of Alberta Students' Union President