

Date: 02/06/2020

To: Students' Union Council

Re: Vice President Academic 2020/21 Report #3

Dear Council,

It's been a busy two weeks! Check out my report for an outline of what the past two weeks have been like for me, but don't hesitate to ask me any questions if you want more information!

Updates to previous questions

Extension of credit expiry date.

- I raised this issue at the Academic Standards Committee and it was quite well received. I was told the issue would be brought to the Academic Impacts Working Group where they would discuss this possibility.

Nursing Townhall

- I reached out to the NUA and they have put me in touch with their president. We are working together moving forwards on this issue

Drama Department online delivery

- I reached out to the Arts faculty association OASIS to see if their plans surrounding this issue. OASIS is in contact with their Department Associations but maintains a commitment to health and safety as a priority.

Libraries

- GFC passed the following motion on the 25th,
 - General Faculties Council directs that University of Alberta library services be made available as soon as possible, and to as full an extent as possible, consistent with the Chief Medical Officer of Health's directives and regulations. At a minimum, the University of Alberta Library will make it possible for faculty and students to receive library books and other materials by curbside pick-up or other contactless means as soon as possible after the Chief Medical Officer of Health permits.

CSJ

Alongside all of the other UASU executives I attended the AFCA Campus Saint-Jean townhall in order to show solidarity with CSJ, as well as offer institutional support to the Sauvons Saint Jean campaign. I have been in contact with the AUFSJ president in order to find how best the SU can support them at this time.

Nom Com

Nom Com has posted applications for the ARRC, SGC, and Sustainability students at large positions, as well as the senate. These applications can be found at UASU.ca/jobs. NomCom also passed an online vote to ratify the election of a Student Caucus member for the vacant pharmacy seat. Their ratification from council should be on the agenda today!

GFC

We hosted the first GFC Student Caucus meeting of the year on the 22nd. There was some great discussion about the agenda which was being brought to GFC the following monday and overall was a great introduction to the majority of the GFC Student representatives! I'm very excited to be working with all the GFC Student members this year, they are a very strong bunch of student advocates without a doubt!

At GFC there was an update to the University's EDI policy suite for their hiring practices, the approval of a new GFC committee meant to reduce confusion in the program approval process, and the approval of a Non-Credit Credential framework for the U of A. Alongside those items however was a presentation from Bill Flanagan surrounding upcoming academic restructuring at Ualberta.

Academic Restructuring

The university is planning major academic restructuring due to massive cuts they have received. In two years the University will have lost over 127 million dollars in funding from the provincial government. Bill Flanagan presented his two year plan to save 120 Million through administrative and academic restructuring. He hopes to drastically increase enrollment at the U of A over the next few years as well as reduce the number of administrative staff. The model which is being presented is based off of models in Australia and the UK, however the transformation of the institutions there took place over 10-15 years, rather than a full transformation within one as will happen at the U of A. It is worth noting that universities who have undergone similar transformations only have 6-7 faculties compared to the UofA's 18.

Experiential policy update project

I have begun working with VP Kidd and the UASU Director of Research and Advocacy to gather data on the experiences of Ualberta students with discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence while taking part in experiential learning. Alongside this we have been analyzing the policies of other U15 institutions surrounding protection of students during these opportunities. The end goal of this review is to change UAPPOL policy to add robust protections for students taking part in experiential learning programs such as Practica or Co-Ops.

Academic Materials Policy

Councilor Fotang, Councilor Montinero, and Myself have started on the renewal of the Academic Materials policy. Expect great things to come!

OER Summit Student Panel

Two weeks ago, President Agarwal and myself took part in an OER Summit panel on student involvement surrounding OERs. This panel was made up of Student Union Presidents and VPAs from across Alberta and had attendance from across Canada and parts of the United States. We talked about the importance of a strong consolidated movement for OERs in Alberta, as well as the unique opportunity Online Delivery provides for OER advocacy.

Personal life Update

I am now officially over a month into my term. Time has flown by mind bogglingly fast, and it's amazing to see how much work our team has done in just a month. Due to the social distancing measures my personal life is not too wild, but a few cool things have happened. Me and my partner have started getting into Go, which is a lot of fun for me as I hadn't played at all since I moved back from Japan. Also, in preparation for pride month me and AJ have been trying to support queer small businesses, we have a gorgeous new Progress Pride flag in our apartment from the QUILTBAG, and we have an order on its way with some sweaters from Gay Pride Apparel!

Remember, don't ever hesitate to reach out to me if you want to chat or have any questions!

All the best,

David Draper

University of Alberta Students' Union Vice President Academic