

Date: 07/09/2021

To: Students' Union Council

Re: Vice President Academic 2021/22 Report #10

Dear Council,

Happy September! I hope all of you got the opportunity to enjoy the first three days of the Week of Welcome and to enjoy the Clubs Fair! Below is a summary of what I have been up to over the last two weeks:

Zero Textbook Cost Indicator Program

In my last update of the program, I told all of you that we had reached 270+ responses to the ZTC form shared with instructors at the end of August.

As of today, we have blown that number out of the water!!! I now have some more solid numbers to share with you. As of last week, the ZTC program registered 740+ course sections as ZTC. That equates to 614+ UNIQUE COURSES at the University of Alberta. This program is HUGE for us as a Students' Union and a University because we are now finally able to see what Zero Textbook uptake is like at our institution. This information will help save students money, increase access to education, inform our advocacy efforts in the future and help direct appropriate and informed supports to instructors teaching in this format.

SRA Summit Planning

As we get into September, I will be ramping up planning for the SRA Summit. I will be sending out a form to all Student Representative Associations to express what they see as significant issues on campus that don't get much attention. This information will help to inform the scope of the Summit.

The Summit has a tentative date set for the first weekend in November (Nov. 5 - 6, 2021).

Meeting the College Deans

Over the last week, Rowan and I have met with the College Deans to discuss several topics about the new colleges. As many of you know, a campaign promise of mine was to work to implement a pass/fail grading system for course electives as a way to increase interdisciplinarity among students who are hesitant to step out of their comfort zone or risk jeopardizing their GPA. Rowan and I presented our proposal to the college deans, who were very receptive to the idea of this new grading scheme. We are optimistic that through collaboration with the Registrar's Office, we will make significant progress with this proposal.

Support for In-Person Learning

Currently, we are in the process of creating a google sheet to share with students that identify every classroom on campus that have been upgraded over the summer to have lecture streaming and recording capabilities. Currently, the IST has upgraded 66 lecture theatres and classrooms to have this capability. We have taken the information the Registrar's Office has provided and curated a form to help you identify courses that you may have in one of these upgraded classrooms.

While this is not a perfect solution to a growing concern about covid safety in classrooms on campus, it is a good starting point. At the same time, we continue to advocate for students who may be sick and can't attend class or don't feel comfortable attending class because the lecture theatre is full and social distancing cannot occur.

The form should be up by the end of the week, and this will allow students to see if they have a course in a lecture theatre with this capability. Students will then be able to go to their instructor and request that an alternative option to attending lectures be provided, such as a live stream while class is going on or posting a recording that uses the technology in the theatre/classroom.

Bylaw Committee

Second Principles of Bylaw 200 will be going to Bylaw Committee for approval at the next meeting.

Policy Committee

Councillors Amer, Beasley, Dhillon and I are currently wrapping up the consultation for the Second Principles of the Experiential Learning Political Policy.

Student Group Committee

The Student Group Committee will be meeting next week to discuss complaints and referrals received over the summer months.

Cheers,



Abner Monteiro

Vice President Academic
University of Alberta Students' Union