

**Date:** 21/09/2021

**To:** Students' Union Council

**Re:** Vice President Academic 2021/22 Report #11

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Dear Council,

I hope all of you are doing well. Here is a summary of what I've been up to over the past couple of weeks. As always, please don't hesitate to ask me any questions if you have any.

### **SRA Summit Planning**

I've created a form to collect SRA responses on what they feel many of the most prominent issues on campus are. Once we gather these responses from SRAs, we will filter and group them to narrow down on 1-2 topics for the Summit.

### **Academic Integrity Working Group**

I am currently working with the University to develop an eclass page with a series of modules on academic integrity and academic citizenship. This resource would span all disciplines and utilize resources the University already has. This project will be to frame academic integrity and citizenship in a positive light, highlight why students should care, help students through situations they may encounter in University, and take a universal design approach with current students in mind.

**So what is Academic Citizenship?** Academic citizenship encompasses the benefits and responsibilities of belonging to the academic community and all interactions with and within the academic community. Every member of the university community enjoys certain rights and advantages related to academic freedom and, as a result, has a shared responsibility for academic integrity. Following principles of academic integrity, equity, diversity, and inclusivity, academic citizenship safeguards research and scholarship integrity, maintains the value of your degree, contributes to a rich academic culture, and ensures the safety, dignity and inclusion of all members of the academic community.

**Why did this project start?** When students enter University, many assumptions are made. For example, that students know how to cite correctly, read the code of student behaviour, or always read their entire course syllabi. Many students who have had issues with academic integrity face problems about these things and get through uni without really developing the proper skill set for academic integrity violations or being an academic citizen. This issue tends to become problematic food for many students down the road in their actual jobs.

**How can you be a part of it?** Please reach out to me if you are interested in being a part of the project! This will be a volunteer opportunity that will take up approximately 8 hours between October and December. Over that time, you will have the chance to:

- **Consult** with the working group
- Be a part of a few **focus groups**
- **Be a film star** and participating in scenario-based videos for the modules
- **Provide feedback** on the consultation process and films
- **Pilot the modules** and provide feedback for final edits

This is a fantastic opportunity to champion something that is an issue on campus and needs action. As student leaders, our voice is fundamental in ensuring that this eclass page is created with students in mind and is of value to us. Please reach out to me with any questions you have, and I highly encourage you to join me in being a part of this project!

### **Academic Accommodations**

Over the past couple of weeks, I've received several highly concerned students about their previous accommodations that are now changing in delivery. Of these, the most prominent are the note-taking service and exam accommodations. The delivery of these services this year is very disappointing on the University's part. Many students only found out 1-2 weeks into the semester that the University made changes to accommodations they have been using for years. VP Dixon and I have met with the Dean of Students Office and requested the following:

- Accessibility Resources send an email to students ASAP that clearly outlines what is happening, what is changing, what students registered need to do, and how these changes may impact their accommodations.
- The Dean of Students Office finds a way to support students who need exam accommodations like 1.5x or 2x time multipliers. Students are anxious, instructors can't be in two places at once, and we need a solution before entering full midterm mode.
- The Dean of Students looks at overhauling the current academic accommodations system. Currently, it is a very tedious and time-consuming process to get a formal diagnosis for accommodations. It can be costly to get a diagnosis; some instructors may deny accommodation requests despite a diagnosis. The software used to book accommodations is terrible. Most of all, the students who require accommodations are required to request accommodations for each of their courses. Nothing about this process is student-centred, and we have started advocating for replacing the current system with one that has students in mind.

### **Student Group Committee**

The Student Group Committee will be meeting on Friday, September 17th, to discuss an item related to the Undergraduate Psychology Association and the recommendation to the Students'

Council on improving the relationship between the Students' Council and the International Students' Association (ISA)

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abner Monteiro', enclosed within a large, loopy oval stroke.

**Abner Monteiro**  
Vice President Academic  
University of Alberta Students' Union