May 25th, 2017
To: Students’ Council
Re: Report to Students’ Council

Dear Students’ Council,

I hope you all have met the first few months of “summer” with open arms; I know I’m overly excited for the sun. It has been a very busy few weeks so I will give you a brief update on some things I’ve been up to:

**Alumni Council Year End Meeting**

The whole exec team was invited to attend the Alumni Council’s year-end event. This group is the representative body of the over 270,000 UAlberta graduates who are apart of the Alumni Association. The Council celebrated the successes from the past year and looked to the future while appointing their new executives and members. I would like to give special congratulations to both the current President Mary Pat Barry for her leadership over her term, and to President-Elect Ayaz Bhanji who is sure to continue that great work and more over his time.

**Launch of Stride**

The University of Alberta Students’ Union has officially launched a new cohort program called **STRIDE**. This program is aimed at encouraging greater participation of women and gender-variant individuals from all backgrounds – race, ethnicity, indigeneity, sexuality, and ability - in student governance. The program aims to equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and networks to run for student governance positions and make meaningful change on campus. You can read more about the project at: [http://www.su.ualberta.ca/governance/stride/](http://www.su.ualberta.ca/governance/stride/)

**Syllabus Database**

I have begun meeting with various stakeholders to start my work on giving student’s access to course syllabi. The Center for Teaching and Learning has created a tool for professors to construct syllabi in E-Class, a sort of a fill-in-the-blank form that populates a PDF of the syllabus. This tool is being used or will soon be used in a number of faculties including the Faculty of Dentistry & Pharmacy and the Faculty of Physical Education & Recreational Services. This project will be ongoing over the summer and into the year.
Be Book Smart Campaign

The Be Book Smart campaign will be taking place again for the 2017/18 school year. While the campaign is still in its early planning stages, I have met with both the Centre for Teaching and Learning as well as a representative of the Campus Alberta Open Educational Resources (OER) Initiative. This initiative was a 3-year government funded initiative designed to: assist with reducing the costs of a post-secondary education for students; and, provide students and faculty members with the flexibility they need, offering updated, relevant content for learning. I hope to continue working with this initiative and the legacy it has left on campus to influence the Be Book Smart Campaign and to raise awareness around OER’s.

Increase to English Language Proficiency Scores

A motion to improve the English Language Proficiency scores was brought before the GFC Academic Standards Committee. It was approved and will be sent to Academic Planning Committee for recommendation. The motions read as:

   Motion 1: “the minimum overall TOEFL score be increased 4 points to 90, with no change to the required score of 21 on each band” (TOEFL is American)
   Motion 2: “the minimum band score for the IELTS Academic be increased from 5.0 to 5.5, with no change to the required minimum overall score of 6.5” (IELTS is the British)

After consultation with both the International Students’ Association and the Chinese Students’ Association, I voted in favor of the change. The increase in the scores will ultimately lead to a higher level of success for non-native English speakers. There was also conversation at committee of various faculties examining the test scores for their specific program admissions, including in the faculty of Nursing, to see if they need to be changed in anyway. I encourage you to reach out to your counterparts on your faculty associations to discuss this matter.

I am happy to answer any questions anyone has – feel free to send me an email or drop by my office hours on Thursdays from 3:30-4:30 in 2-900 SUB.

Best regards,

Shane Scott
Vice President Academic