Date: 11/17/2020  
To: Students’ Union Council  
Re: Vice President Operations & Finance 2020/21 Report #14

Dear Council,

It has been almost a month since we have seen each other, and it has felt like one of the busiest yet - that, or I’m tired, or both. It’s sad to see the COVID case numbers rising; I have taken my plants home from the office in case of a lockdown. I hope that your reading week was pleasant and restful!

Transit Updates

UPass Update: Almost official

I am very pleased to finally be allowed to provide Council with an update on the outcomes of the UPass negotiations for the 2021-2025 contract, which are just wrapping up.

Here are the key highlights (and some context):

- $180 per semester, for all four years of the contract
  - This is the current UPass price, were COVID not preventing the program’s use
  - There has never before been a UPass contract without a price increase
- Expanded exemptions*
- Around $30,000 in financial aid for students who need it most, in the 2021 year

*Details about exemptions are still being drawn up under the agreement in principle, so details may change. Exemptions are being expanded under this contract to include students over the age of 64, students on AISH (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped), and those whose primary residence is an exceptional distance beyond the transit service areas of the outlying UPass municipalities.

Winter Transit: Seeking improvements for International students

As Council may know, ETS has insisted on continuing with the current COVID alternative to the UPass program: temporary student access to the Ride Transit Program and to Youth fare rates regardless of age.

However, we are working on a plan with the Registrar’s Office and ETS to make it so that International students who do not have access to required documentation can use needs-based funding approvals/eligibility as proof of low income. We will keep you updated on this plan, which is subject to ETS’ final approval.

Alana Krahn, Vice President Operations & Finance
2-900 SUB | 780 492 4241 | vp.finance@su.ualberta.ca
Sustainability & Capital Fund

Green Fund
The Sustainability & Capital Fund empowers students to have a direct impact on the sustainability and accessibility of campus through the Green Fund: a portion of SCF set aside for student and student group projects. The SCF Committee has been working to create a meaningful application and adjudication process for Green Fund projects. We are hoping to launch our first call for projects at the beginning of December, and conduct our first ever round of adjudications in mid- to late-January!

Capital Projects
Council will hear much more about SCF and capital projects in my presentation at this meeting. Suffice to say that the SCF Committee has created a list of adjudication questions that reflect students’ sustainability priorities and objective needs, after much hard work and discussion.

Projects by FNMI Students or Featuring FNMI Content
The SCF Committee was fortunate to hear a presentation by one of our members, who is our dedicated member from Aboriginal Students’ Council. Beth gave the Committee a great resource for considering Indigenous perspectives on sustainability and conservation. One of the results of this discussion was the decision that students who choose to identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in their Green Fund application should be invited for a discussion with the Committee if their definition of sustainability differs from the Committee’s in such a way that the application might be turned down. This is to ensure that Indigenous perspectives on sustainability are respected, and that FNMI students are given an equitable opportunity to enrich our campus.

As for projects featuring Indigenous content, consultation will be done with the applicant to determine if the Indigenous culture(s) or nation(s) which they are representing in their project are their own. The aim of this measure is to ensure that the Committee is not endorsing projects that engage in appropriation of Indigenous cultures.

Other Noteworthy Happenings
There are many meetings that have happened since I have last seen you. Please don’t hesitate to let me know if there is anything you would like to know about!

As always, if you have any questions about the contents of this report, or simply want to talk, please feel free to reach out! Stay safe and healthy.

All the best,

Alana Krahn
University of Alberta Students’ Union Vice President (Operations & Finance)