Dec. 5th, 2016
To: Students’ Council
Re: Report to Students’ Council

**Council Report #16: EMP FEST, EMP FEST, EMP FEST!**

Hello Council,

I know you are all studying hard with finals coming up. I hope that you’ve also found time to relax and destress between your study sessions these past few weeks. I’ll keep today’s report fairly brief!

**UASU**

**EMP FEST**
The majority of my time these past couple weeks has been spent working on EMP FEST. As I am sure you all know, the application for event proposals went live last week and I am very excited to see what kind of programming different organizations put through for event approval! The EMP FEST Advisory Committee also had it’s first meeting last Friday, where we discussed the weeks key events, possibilities relating to outreach and event approval mechanisms. It was a very good meeting that brought together individuals representing the SU, Alumni Relations, the Career Center, University of Alberta International, as well as student representatives. Over the past couple weeks I have been meeting with representatives from various career centers across campus such as Arts, Sciences, Business and Campus Saint-Jean to ensure that there is optimal programming for a variety of students from all across campus. In addition, we are finalizing a $5000 event sponsorship from the office of Alumni Relations to help run the event, one that will help ensure this event is the best possible for students here on campus.

**Gateway Podcast**
On the 21st, I had the opportunity to talk about Student Financial Aid through grants, as well as the cost of tuition in a podcast hosted by the Gateway. I enjoyed the conversation I had with Oumar about supporting students by lowering the cost of education, especially through grants, as well as our stances on tuition.

**UASU Podcast (The Voice of the Union)**
Just last week I sat down with Fahim and spoke with him about the Lister Meal plan for this weeks episode of the Voice of the Union. We had a very good talk about the impact the

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proposed changes to the meal plan would have had on our students. Please be sure to tune in and give it a listen!

**Senate**

Last Thursday and Friday I was off at our quarterly Senater Plenary. During Senate, we spent much of our time hammering down our where we plan to focus our efforts in regards to the Strategic Plan. Of the many presentations to Senate there were a few that really stuck out. There was one by the University Provost Steven Dew on the state of the university. His presentation touched on the tuition review, deferred maintenance funding as well as general university operations. In addition, we had our Friday morning plenary at the John A. McDougall school near Kingsway, were we had the opportunity to listen to the effect the Senate’s USchool Program has on the low income and underpriviliged students attending the elementary. It was incredible to hear the testimonials by the teachers on the effect the program has had on keeping many of these kids in school, and helping them develop a love for learning. (Kudoos to the teachers and administrators who came out at 7:30am to speak to us about the programs effects!) However, the session that was by far my favourite was the Panel on Racism capping off our Friday morning plenary. The panel brought in experts in discrimination and racism such as a professor from the UofA (Melinda Smith), a city councillor and representatives from the City of Edmonton, members of the aboriginal community and a representative from John Hopkins. The panel discussed their own experiences, ways to combat racism as well as how to push for greater cultural education. They also provided a great answers to my question on how to move conversations about race and racism outside of the semi-insular circles of people who care, into the circles of people who do not. I am happy to have listened to, and taken part in such impactful discussion.

That’s all for today folks! I wish you all the best of luck on your finals. I am sure that you will do stellar on your exams.

“Life is a highway, I want to ride it all night long” - Tom Cochrane,
Mike Sandare