

August 27th, 2013**To:** Students' Council**Re:** Report to Council

Hey Council,

Before I proceed with my report, I would like to acknowledge that our university and our Students' Union are on Indigenous land. Specifically: Cree, Saulteaux, Metis, Blackfoot, and Nakota Sioux. They are faculty, staff, students, family, and friends, and they are still here. I acknowledge that we meet on treaty 6 territory. That treaty governs the relationship between first-nations and non-first nations citizens. I am thankful for this opportunity for us to meet on this land today. This statement will be included at the front of my report to council until either the time that my term ends, or Council moves to makes a similar statement available for public viewing.

The last few weeks have seen some important developments on the Board front. The Minister of Advanced Education, Thomas Lukaszuk, has responded to the Board's Comprehensive Institutional Plan submission for the U of A. His response raises a number of concerns which I will address here.

EAE Acceptance of CIP and Imposition of "Independent Consultants"

As you may have heard, Thomas Lukaszuk, the Minister of Enterprise and Advanced Education, has accepted U of A's Comprehensive Institutional Plan. However, Lukaszuk saw fit to impose some restrictions upon acceptance of the CIP. He stipulated that the U of A needs to balance its budget more quickly, and is going to send independent financial consultants to help.

The other members of the Board and I share a number of concerns over the conditions imposed by Lukaszuk. First of all, our university is already under tremendous strain from the

enormous budget cuts imposed by the Province, so asking us to further accelerate the deficit reduction process is quite unreasonable.

Second, the imposition of independent financial consultants is both unnecessary and insulting. Our administration has done and is doing an exceptional job managing the finances of this institution. The U of A has enjoyed more clean audits and balanced budgets than the Province, so it seems somewhat contradictory for the Province to be imposing closer financial oversight. It's also unclear why this imposition is necessary; what is Lukaszuk trying to achieve by doing this?

Either way, the Board needs to respond decisively and factually. I think there are a number of myths about the U of A floating around which need remedying, and perhaps now is an opportunity to challenge them. Whatever comes of the oversight from the independent consultants, the U of A needs to turn this into an opportunity to educate the public about the importance of post-secondary education.

That's about it for now. If you have any questions about the CIP or the "independent consultants," please don't hesitate to ask myself or President Kusmu.

In Solidarity,

Brent Kelly

Undergraduate Board of Governors Representative 2013-2014 | [University of Alberta Students' Union](#)

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