

July 20th, 2014

**To:** University of Alberta Students' Union Students' Council 2014-2015

**From:** William Lau, President 2014-2015

**Re:** Report to Students' Council (for July 22nd, Meeting)

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Hey friends,

I'm not sure if I've mentioned it before, but I often wish that more international students and those from outside Edmonton had a chance to experience an Edmonton summer; we really are *festival city*. Besides the usual work within our SU, I've been spending my personal time on gathering like-minded youth to participate in Edmonton's multicultural scene. I would love to chat about that if it's something you are also interested in. Anyways, the past two weeks have been productive: a couple highlights being a conference setting our federal priorities and a Provincial event on Student Financial Aid.

### ***External Advocacy***

#### *Federal Advocacy (CASA) with VP Khinda*

- Last Council meeting, VP Khinda and I were away in Nova Scotia at the CASA Policy & Strategy Conference, setting our priorities for the upcoming academic year.
- Board Action Plan: The CASA Board's priorities are membership, governance, advocacy, policy & research and communications.
- Two major membership issues addressed at the conference was clarity around Board roles, and refining the exit process respecting the common value of "easy-in-easy-out".
- The top three advocacy priorities are: Access & Financial Aid, Mental Health and Youth Employment.
- CASA is also undergoing a strategic planning process year that I will be supporting.

*Provincial Advocacy (CAUS) with VP Khinda*

- VP Khinda has been diligent with her work on the Tuition & Fees Working Group (refer to her written report).
- Our executive team is attending a CAUS Roundtable in Calgary on July 23-24.
- VP Khinda and I attended a session hosted by the Ministry of Innovation and Advanced Education: “Let’s Talk About Supports for Post-secondary Learners”. Our role was to provide a student perspective to identify student aid strategies to remove financial barriers to a post-secondary education.
  - Civil servants facilitated conversation among university administration, university services staff and students.
  - Outcomes of the session are not yet available. Issues discussed range from increasing the proportion of grants, to shifting of current granting dollars from targeting completion to targeting progression in a degree program.
  - Stakeholder feedback along with feedback from other stakeholder dialogues and surveys will contribute to the development of a Student Aid 3-year Strategic Plan.

*Municipal Advocacy with VP Khinda*

- We are following up with our municipal partners to join our voices in asking the province to resolve the issue around Residential Property Taxes.
- In a meeting with University Facilities & Operations, they stated that savings from the decreased expenditure would go to deferred maintenance in residences.

*Internal Advocacy**Board of Governors with Governor Hansra*

- Board meetings are complete for the year. Meetings resume in September, and I will be sitting on the Board Learning and Discovery Committee (BLDC) and the Board Safety, Health and Environment Committee (BSHEC).
- Board Chair Doug Goss will be presenting on August 5<sup>th</sup> on the role of the Board as well as the Board’s vision for our institution.

*Student Participation Protocol with VP Diaz and VP Orydzuk*

- The handbook is in its final stages as we pass it around for final edits.
- A presentation to Council is in the pipeline.

*Student Health with VP Diaz*

- My key action item is to send out a joint “Call to Action” with both the GSA President and the University President to arouse the campus community in creating a Vibrant Campus Strategy through a facilitated 1-day event.
- We currently have the opportunity to be a partner in a national research project studying service delivery for youth with mental health issues. More information at [www.tramcan.ca](http://www.tramcan.ca)

*Break The Record with VP Diaz*

- We have the Dean of Students’ support to plan BTR for March 2015!

*Prayer Space with Councillor Zeinnedine*

- I have attached the proposed plans for the Prayer Space to my report.

*New Partnerships with Facilities & Operations*

- Student Group Services will work with F&O to identify spaces on campus for student musicians and student groups to fundraise via musical performances.
- Our Initiatives manager will work with F&O to explore the opportunity of installing SUBstations (charging stations) across campus.

***Students’ Union Internal Projects****Students’ Council*

- If you could not only have support to understand the operations of Council, but support in your day-to-day activities as a Student Councilor, what might you want/need?

*Strategic Plan*

- This is planned for Fall 2014.
- There will be two spots for Student Councillors on the Strategic Planning Committee.

All the best,

**William Lau**

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