

January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**To:** Students' Council 2016 – 17

**From:** Fahim Rahman, Students' Union President 2016 – 17

**Re:** Students' Union Council Report #18

Hi Council,

It only took a few weeks, but the semester has gotten busy quickly. I've spent a decent amount of time these days handling media interviews on the proposed program closures within Arts, as well as the troubling statistics released by [seekingarrangments.com](http://seekingarrangments.com).

Here is an update on my activities since we last met:

### **1. U-Pass Renewal**

Now that the referendum question for a four-year renewal of the U-Pass has been renewed, we are looking for students willing to get involved with the campaign. I'm hoping we can get the word out to as many students as possible about the details of the renewal proposal.

If you know anyone interested in participating in the campaign or who needs more information about it, I'm happy to field questions and direct folks.

### **2. CASA**

CASA's Federal Policy Committee met recently, where we discussed updating some of the policies that were last reviewed in 2014. The federal government also announced changes to the Canada Student Loans Program that we are reacting to from a policy perspective. Some of our policies were effectively implemented, such as the exemption on summer income for loan assessments, while others will now need to be modified because they were not fully implemented, like excluding spousal contributions in loan assessments.

I also put my name forward to serve on the CASA Board of Directors as Director of Policy, now that the position is currently vacant.

### **3. Dean of Students Office**

VP Ghossein and I had a meeting with the Dean of Students where we discussed many things, including potential next steps on the Lister meal plan.

I sent a letter to the VP Facilities and Operations regarding some of our concerns and comments surrounding the meal plan, and am hoping for a response soon if this item will be voted on at a Board meeting in the near future.

### **4. Residences**

VP Ghossein and I also attended a meeting of the Residence Life Task Force, where we received a preliminary report on the survey collected through the Residence Life Task Force. The information is insightful, but not finalized, which is why we are refraining from drawing any conclusions. There is a chance the Task Force will need to follow-up with stakeholders in case feedback from respondents are unclear.

## **5. Academic Governance**

I attended a meeting of the Academic Planning Committee, where we received updates on the Registrar's enrolment report as well as the graduate student enrolment report. There was also an update on the budget: our campus was told that Advanced Education is working hard to provide predictable budgets to institutions but they are in a tough financial situation.

A revised version of the teaching-intensive stream report that I have been working on will be discussed at an upcoming meeting of the Committee on the Learning Environment.

## **6. VP Research Search Committee**

We are still accepting applications for the position of a new University VP Research. The committee also noted that six Canadian universities, all within the U15, were searching for a new VP Research.

## **7. CAUS**

CAUS also had a Policy committee, where we examined our policies around institutional funding. There weren't too many policy changes or revisions that we had in mind for them, which will hopefully be voted on at an upcoming CAUS meeting. Following these revisions, our policy review will be complete.

## **8. Media Interviews**

This week has been very busy on the media front, with the story around the University of Alberta continuing to grow in its population of sugar babies picking up steam nationally. I have also been expressing concerns around a lack of student consultation for the proposed suspension of multiple programs within the Faculty of Arts.

## **9. Presence and Relevancy**

The executives are continuing to support the efforts of our organization in connecting with students. VP Banister, VP Paches and I attended the AntiFreeze dance competition and judged about 12 performances from competitors trying to win the competition. The groups of three were impressive.

VP Sandare and I also were judges at the JDC West Skit Night, which featured roughly 50 students per skit. The coordination and time required to pull off these skits were remarkable, and the contestants all performed very well.



All of the executives were present at the closing Gala for JDC West. All the executives were also at a post-secondary relations meeting with City of Edmonton Councilor Knack and the other schools of the Edmonton Student Alliance.

Lastly, in case anyone is interested in any SU Executive position, my door is always open to chat about the experience and elections process.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'FR' with a stylized flourish.

Fahim Rahman

President

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