

June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**To:** University of Alberta Students' Union Students' Council 2015-2016

**From:** Navneet Khinda, POTSU 2015-2016

**Re:** Report to Students' Council (for June 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting)

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### Snapshot

1. Vacation
2. Speech from the throne and Bill 3
3. Exec goals
4. Academic standards committee
5. Board of Governors
6. Academic Planning Committee
7. Conference Board of Canada Skills Summit
8. SU management meeting
9. Hired new DRPA!
10. Coming up: Board coffees, Calgary CAUS meeting, lunch with SAMU

Dear Council,

I have had a pretty great time at work for the last week and a bit. It seems that things are slowly picking up speed ... before you know it, everything will be flying by *so* fast.

I was away on a short **vacation** from June 5-10<sup>th</sup> in Iceland, which really helped me feel more refreshed and ready for another awesome year!

On Monday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, I went to the **Core Managers meeting** – it's where the senior managers in the Students' Union get together to discuss issues in their departments. We're currently looking at renewing our SU logo! Right after that, I watched the NDP government present their **Throne Speech**. It was very short and quite interesting.

Even *more* interesting was the announcement of **Bill 3**! On June 18<sup>th</sup>, the Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act reversed many of the previous cuts to healthcare and education. Of the \$682 million, \$103mn is for K-12, \$40mn for post-secondary, \$500mn for healthcare, \$39mn to human services, and \$1mn to the minister responsible for the status of women. Here's what's coming for post-secondary education specifically:

- Cancellation of the 1.4% budget cut put forward by the PC government
- Freezing tuition *and* mandatory non-instructional fees for two years
  - Funding this freeze by providing a 2% increase in funding

- Rolling back market modifiers
  - Funding the rollback by giving \$22mn to the institutions
- Getting rid of market modifiers as an option in the Regulation

***These are some of the biggest (positive) changes to come at once that we have seen in a long time.*** This sets us up for a really solid year and to hopefully make more long-term changes. Bill 3 provides some good interim measures to stabilize PSE while the government works on the review of tuition and funding models. You can read more in VP Hanwell's report!

Besides rejoicing over the news, we have also been working on our **goals**. We will present them to you at this meeting; it's similar but slightly updated from the presentation given at GovCamp.

I also had a couple important meetings to attend. On June 18<sup>th</sup>, I went to the **Academic Standards Committee (ASC)** in place of VP Rahman. There's nothing major to note here. There are some minor changes for some programs. The more substantial discussion was about English language proficiency for international students.

That evening I attend the Board Recognition Dinner for all retiring Board members. It was a great evening! On June 19<sup>th</sup>, we had our **Board of Governors meeting**. Notable items:

- President Samarasekera gave her report on the Change Agenda;
- The University adopted a revised statement of investment principles and beliefs with a new section on "social responsibility";
- Dr. Roger Epp, Dr. Brenda Leskiw, and Dr. Robert Luth will be leaving the Provost's office;
- The \$50 Faculty Student Fund (aka the Law Faculty Membership Fee (FMF)) was rescinded.
  - *Part of the negotiations surrounding the law market modifier was that if the Law Students Association agreed to a tuition hike, the \$50 that students pay to hire a placement officer would be rescinded. However, given Bill 3, there may be changes that need to be made to this motion again.*

On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, we had a lovely "Farwell Tea" in the **Provost's office**! That afternoon, I also had an impromptu meeting with PSE celebrity, **Alex Usher**! He's a consultant and does a lot of research work related to post-secondary education. You can follow his blog at [higherstrategy.com](http://higherstrategy.com).

On June 24<sup>th</sup>, I attended the **Academic Planning Committee (APC)**. We received an update on Bill 3's potential impact to the University. While this is good news for the university as well, there will be some administrative hurdles in implementing all the changes. The government is expecting a budget impact letter from the University by the end of September.

Today (June 25<sup>th</sup>), I attended a “VIP Breakfast” hosted by the **Conference Board of Canada**. They’re currently looking for sponsorship and for a variety of stakeholders to attend their conference in November. Following that, I spent most of the day at our **mid-year Management Meeting**. The managers in the Students’ Union all got together and we discussed our vision, goals, and upcoming projects for the year. It’s always a great session!

In other news:

- I attended the Senate appreciation lunch on June 24<sup>th</sup> – it is a great way to say thank you to the Senate staff and I had a really nice time!
- I went to the Lougheed Hall Groundbreaking on June 24<sup>th</sup> – while the SU has had issues with the Peter Lougheed Leadership Initiative, I am glad to see the progression of the initiative. There are lots of ways for the SU and University to work together on promoting leadership development.
- We finally **hired a new Director of Research and Political Affairs!** I am incredibly excited!

Coming up:

- Meetings with Board members;
- CAUS meeting in Calgary;
- Lunch with Students’ Association of MacEwan University Executive;
- REMINDER: Please book a one-on-one session with me! I’ve already met a handful of Councillors and I would love to meet most of you by the end of the summer.

Let me know if you have any questions!

Cheers,



**Navneet Khinda**

President 2015-2016

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