

May 30, 2017

To: Students' Council

Re: Report to Students' Council

Hello Council,

I hope everyone is having an excellent start to your summer. Whether you are continuing your studies, working, traveling, or just taking some well deserved rest – summer is always a great time to reflect and plan for the upcoming year. Below is a report summarizing my last few weeks at work. I have been out of town at conferences for the majority of time since our previous meeting, so external advocacy has been a primary focus in the month of May. I am currently writing this report in Ottawa at the Canadian Alliance of Students Associations conference. As always, if you have any questions I am happy to either provide a written response or answer during council.

Goals

STRIDE

One of my platform goals is to increase diverse representation in student governance. As such, I am pleased to announce the launch of STRIDE, a cohort program aimed at encouraging greater participation/involvement of women and gender-variant individuals from all backgrounds – race, ethnicity, indigeneity, sexuality, and ability - in student governance. The program aims to equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and network to run for a variety of student government positions and make meaningful change on campus. Although, 56% of undergraduate students at the [University of Alberta](#) are women, between 2005 and 2016 women have held only 30% of council seats and have made up only 25.5% of the 102 candidates running for executive elections. While there are many reasons for this imbalance, a survey conducted by the Students' Union found that women were more likely to feel inadequate or ill-prepared for leadership positions on campus, compared to men. STRIDE aims to give the knowledge and community necessary to empower more women and gender-variant students to get involved in decision making at the University of Alberta. More information and applications available at www.sustride.ca. I would appreciate councilors help in sharing this program and application form widely within their networks!

University BusinessBoard meeting and dinner

Governor Sandare and I had our first Board of Governors meeting and dinner a few weeks ago. The dinner was done in collaboration with the Faculty of Arts, as such we learned about the unique programs that the faculty offers. It was interesting to learn more about the board dynamic at the meeting, especially the difference between open and closed sessions.

PLLC Report

As many of you may have noticed, the University recently publicized a report on the current and future state of the Peter Lougheed Leadership College. That report can be accessed here <http://blog.ualberta.ca/2017/05/report-released-on-peter-lougheed.html>. If any members of council have questions, VP Scott or I would be happy to answer.

Internal SU BusinessGoals compilation

I am currently work to compile a document that will outline the UASU executive teams goals for the upcoming year. I suspect this will be completed early June. The executive will then present our goals to Students' Council.

External AdvocacyCAUS Changeover

VP Larsen and I were in Canmore two weeks ago to meet up with our counterparts in the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS). This is our provincial lobby group. Highlights from the weekend include agreeing on our provincial advocacy priorities, as well as VP Larsen being elected Chair of CAUS!

CASA Foundations

VP Larsen and I are also in Ottawa at the Canadian Alliance of Students Associations (CASA) Foundations conference. At the conference we learned a lot about federal advocacy for post secondary students, as well as elected our new board of directors.

ESA Initial Meeting

Lastly, VP Larsen and I attended our first Edmonton Student Alliance (ESA) meeting. This is more of an information sharing group than an advocacy group, however this will be an interesting year for the organization because of the upcoming municipal election. There

seems to be a desire to do some collaborative work to engage students in the upcoming election. The VP External from Students' Association MacEwan University (SAMU), Parvin Sedighi, was elected Chair of the ESA.

Other Exciting Endeavors

If you have not already done so, please remember to register for GovCamp, which is coming up very quickly! It is a great experience to get to know student governance better here at the University of Alberta.

As always my spring/summer office hours are Wednesday's from 12:00PM-1:00PM in Students' Union Building (SUB) Suite 2-900. Please feel free to drop by during this time if you ever want to chat.

Thank you for reading my report and happy to answer any questions you may have.

Marina Banister
UASU President