

November 7, 2017

**To:** Students' Council

**Re:** Report to Students' Council

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Hello Council,

It is hard to believe my term as President is already half over. It truly has flown by.

It has been a busy few weeks since my last report! Please find an update on my work below.

### **SU Business/Internal Projects**

#### Cultural Group First Meeting

I hosted my first round table meeting for international student and cultural student groups! The meeting had low attendance but excellent discussion. All members in attendance agreed the meetings are beneficial and that we should be twice a semester moving forward. The purpose of the group is to get advice on SU advocacy, help facilitate connections in our community, and to better support students who come from various cultural backgrounds.

#### STRIDE

The executive and I will be attending a STRIDE meeting soon. At the meeting the executive will be on a panel about our experiences as well as help with advocacy training.

#### Student Rights

After lengthy discussions with SU staff, I have re-conceptualized my goals around student rights. Instead of using a top down model of striking a committee first, we have decided to do more research into the landscape of existing rights on campus. After this research, we will do thorough consultation on where students feel like there are gaps in their rights on campus and then do a campaign highlighting the existing resources. After this point we will have a better understanding of where the most urgent areas of need are, so the later formed committee can start working with more direction.

## **University Business**

### University Governance Meetings

In the past few weeks I have attended a Board of Governors dinner and meeting. The most notable item discussed at that meeting was the upcoming proposed faculty based cuts. The University has done a press release on the cuts, which can be found <https://blog.ualberta.ca/clarification-on-preliminary-budget-planning-parameters-183b82caed4e>. VP Scott and I are working with Faculty Associations to make sure students are consulted about what the proposed cuts to their faculty may look like. VP Larsen and I are also keeping a keen eye on the government to see any potential response to the University's statement. I am happy to answer any questions about this.

I attended a General Faculty Council and Academic Planning Committee meeting. The GFC meeting had several robust discussions regarding the PLLC, USRI's, and changes coming to graduate students. VP Scott can provide more information on these items.

VP Paches, VP Ushakov, and I attended a Mandatory Non-Instructional Fee Oversight committee meeting. This is the first meeting I have been able to attend since I have taken office as President. At the meeting we discussed the Academic Price Index as well as student priorities for the spending of MNIFs.

### Grand Council of Indigenous Elders

The executive and I attended a dinner for the formation of the Grand Council of Indigenous Elders. It was a very powerful event where indigenous alumni shared their story about their experience here at the U of A.

## **External Business**

### Provincial

VP Larsen and I had a meeting with Doug Schweitzer, former United Conservative Party leadership hopeful, where we discussed post-secondary issues. Mr. Schweitzer was very receptive to our meeting and it was productive. VP Larsen and I also dropped into an informal consultation gathering that Minister Marlin Schmidt was hosting. Many students from CSJ were at the event, since that is the Ministers riding.

In the upcoming week the executive and I will be attending the CAUS/Counterpart conference in Edmonton. This is where all the executives from ULSU, SAMRU, SAMU, and UCSU come together to discuss our work. At the same time, VP Larsen and I will be

participating in fall advocacy days where we meet with different MLA's to discuss post secondary issues.

### Federal

I will be attending an Internal Review Committee meeting for CASA in the coming days. I have been underwhelmed with the work of the committee so far and keenly anticipate what will get done in the coming meetings.

## **Other Exciting Endeavors**

### Media Appearances and Speaking Events

I have been speaking at lots of events in the past few weeks. These include a conference for young community leaders hosted by the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation and a conference for Alberta Health Professionals. At both events I spoke about the importance of student advocacy, diverse perspectives in politics, and the work we do at UASU.

I have had some recent media appearances in my capacity as President. These include a post-election analysis of the municipal election on CBC, an interview with CBC regarding sexual violence on campus, and participated in a fun segment on CJSR to help raise money in their annual fundraising show.

### Everything else!

VP Larsen, VP Scott, VP Paches, and I attended a tour of the new U of A Islamic Botanical Gardens. It is an absolutely beautiful venue and I cannot wait to return in the summer when it has been completed.

The executive and I had a dinner with the Alberta Pharmacy Students' Association. It was a very fruitful and fun meeting. We have been working with APSA very regularly over the past few years, as they have had a change in their faculty administration and we have been helping with the transition process.

The Students' Union had our annual Awards Night where we give out over \$100,000 in awards! From the décor, to the keynote speaker, to the awards given out – it was a spectacular event! Congratulations to all the Councilors who received awards.

The executive and I watched "Get Out" in the Myer Horowitz on Halloween. It was very spooky.

**Personal**

I recently become the newest (and youngest!) member of Avenue Magazine's Top 40 Under 40, Class of 2017! It is a great honor to get the award and I am very grateful to the Students' Union and University community for all the opportunity and support, which has led me to where I am today.

I will be taken a weekend vacation to Jasper with a few SU friends! It will be nice to bond with them in a more informal setting.

**Closing Remarks**

My Fall semester office hours will be Thursdays from 12:00PM-1:00PM in SUB 2-900! Feel free to drop by if you have any questions or would like to discuss anything.

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

Marina Banister  
UASU President