

January 1st, 2015

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

From: William Lau, President 2014-2015

Re: Report to Students' Council (for January 6th, Meeting) [Mid-term Goals Update]

Dearest Council,

I hope you all had a restful and meaningful holiday break. I've assigned myself a few tasks over the holidays: 1) Source two pianos to install on campus as "public pianos", 2) Organize an "open conversation" on the topic of student (mental) health to brainstorm ideas to address the issues, and 3) Write this report. Updates on these items will be integrated in the report as I provide an update to my goals that were set for this year.

I'd like to start my report by going through initiatives outlined in the Spring/Summer Goals Document, then finish off with an update on initiatives that have sneaked onto the priority list.

The Executive Committee will be presenting on our goals at the Council meeting, and a thorough read-through of our reports will allow us to have a more lively discussion!

2014-15 Goals

Students' Union Strategic Plan

Vibrant Campus Strategy (Student Mental Health)

Student Participation Protocol (Student Consultation)

Student Life Central (Student Involvement)

Flight & Hotel Deals

**Students' Union Alumni Relations*

**UA-SU Financial Relationship*

**Accessibility of Education at the University of Alberta*

**Initiatives that have sneaked onto the priority list*

Students' Union Strategic Plan

- Strategic Planning will be completed before May 2015;
- Driving principle behind the writing of the plan is to ensure that the plan will be “usable”
 - Colloquial language
 - Short & digestible
 - Measurable & specific strategic goals
- Current draft is attached at the end of this report
- Next steps:
 - Draft Critical Success Factors and Strategic Goals in collaboration with Sr Managers
 - Ratification of Strategic Plan at Students' Council
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Vibrant Campus Strategy (Student Mental Health)

- The creation of a campus wide strategy is facilitated by University Wellness Services and will begin with a World-Café styled session during Health Week (March 2015).
- Current SU efforts:
 - Hosting an “*Open Conversation*” on student (mental) health for campus stakeholders to brainstorm and share ideas (January 23).
 - Exploring changes in the Terms of Reference for the *Board, Safety, Health and Environment Committee (BSHEC)* to include reporting and accountability of student health statistics and efforts to the Board of Governors.
 - Moving forward with the support of a Vice-Chair of the Board. A meeting in December got cancelled; currently rescheduling.
 - Exploring integration of *Values in Policy*. Writing values-based policy will ensure that institutional values flow through decision making at all levels and strengthen our institutional culture.
 - Aiming to have a draft proposal by the end of January and approval in April 2015.
 - Peer Support Centre
 - Exploring *satellite offices* to increase accessibility of peer support. Currently in conversations with Lister and Campus Saint Jean.

- Peer Support Centre (cont'd)
 - Exploring new *outreach initiatives* to deliver the service in a more direct manner.
- Public Pianos on Campus
 - Have already secured two locations on campus with Facilities & Operations:
1) pedway between HUB and humanities, and 2) pedway above Health Sciences LRT station.
 - Secured two “street pianos” over Christmas holidays with Don’s Piano.
 - Pianos will be moved in February 2015 and “installed” on campus!

Student Participation Protocol (Student Consultation)

- A handbook is being produced to define consultation and act as a guideline for units on campus that seek student participation.
- Currently in the process of final edits between the Acting Dean of Students, GSA President and myself. Scheduled to have a finalized copy this January.
- Next steps:
 - Present the finalized handbook to various units on campus; and
 - Transition the handbook to the next Executives.

Student Life Central (Student Involvement)

- Structuring of the front desk in the lower level of SUB to offer information on a broad range of extracurricular & co-curricular opportunities on campus, driving stronger collaboration between related programs such as those providing funding and grants to student initiatives.
- Completed!
- Next steps – Evaluation:
 - Already received feedback on improvement of digital signage and more in depth student opportunity advising.
 - ie, A student going there now could learn about how BearsDen works, how to find student groups, but perhaps not to the level of actually getting recommended student groups based on their interest.

- On a similar note, we are also exploring connecting first year students to student groups earlier. Currently exploring opportunities to communicate prior to Orientation, ie registration for Orientation.

Flight & Hotel Deals

- Arranging partnerships with airlines, car rental dealerships and/or hotel chains to provide financial benefits to our members.
- Delegated to Executive Coordinator, with no progress due to shuffling of 2-900 admin units.
- Currently at the bottom of the priority list.

**Students' Union Alumni Relations*

- Bringing our alumni back to SUB in September for Alumni Weekend was a true blessing. We now have a team of engaged SU alumni ready to fundraise for SU initiatives.
- Our first project will be to fundraise for an endowment that could subsidize venue costs (rental costs for the Dinwoodie Lounge or the Myer Horowitz Theatre) for student-programming.
- Next steps:
 - Sort out logistics and policies behind fundraising relating to the University (January 2015)
 - Launch the campaign with alumni team (Dependent on conversation with Office of Advancement)

**UA-SU Financial Relationship*

- With the Dean of Students' Office cutting our services grants last Spring/Summer, there has been a need for a broader conversation about the UA-SU financial relationship, from services grants, to costs associated with operating the Students' Union Building.
- This is a crucial conversation at this time given the administrative turnover with the University and the lack of documentation of past agreements.
- Next steps:
 - This conversation will initiate in January 2015 and we have Senior Administration's commitment to come to agreement by the end of April 2015.

**Accessibility of Education at the University of Alberta*

- When the Board of Governors discussed the CPI increase to tuition for the upcoming year, I brought up how the conversation around cost of education must be paralleled with a conversation around accessibility of education. An action item was assigned at the end of the meeting to Interim Provost, Olive Yonge and Vice President Finance & Administration, Phyllis Clark.
- Next steps:
 - Senior Administration is currently collecting statistics.
 - We will be invited to join the conversation in January 2015.
 - We will present findings to the Board in February 2015.

Happy New Year,



William Lau

[President](#) 2014-2015 | [University of Alberta Students' Union \(UASU\)](#)

Governor | [University of Alberta Board of Governors](#)

P: (780) 492-4236 | **F:** (780) 492-4643 | **E:** president@su.ualberta.ca

Address: 2-900 Students' Union Building (SUB); Edmonton, AB T6G 2J7

Twitter: [@UASUpresident](#)

2015 SU Strategic Plan [Part 1] [DRAFT]

What We Do

Our Mission is to serve, represent, and engage students.

There are four pillar of what we do in service to that mission:

- We offer **services and businesses** that provide for the practical, social, academic, and personal needs of students.
- We organize **events and programs** that bring our campus together, help people connect, and build community on campus.
- We provide **space** for students to relax, study, and socialize. The Students' Union Building is the living room and civic centre of campus.
- We **advocate** for student interests to the University and all levels of government.

Why We Do What We Do / Where We Want To Go

We want to enrich students' University experience.

Our vision of a successful future is one where students:

- Feel accepted and welcome on campus;
- Thrive in a vibrant intellectual community;
- Are empowered and confident in their ability to succeed; and
- Contribute to the larger society as active citizens and effective leaders.

The Way We Do Things

How we achieve our vision is important – the values we live are part of who we are.

Do what's right, not what's easy.

We believe that acting with integrity and respect is essential to an open, collaborative, and democratic organization.

Inspire change for the world.

We strive to create a community where effective involvement shows students that they can change the world.

Act with unbridled compassion.

We help students make the most of any challenges they face by providing an inclusive and caring environment.

Always keep moving.

We adapt and innovate to meet the challenges and opportunities of our dynamic student environment.

Plan for tomorrow.

We act with future students in mind by making sustainable choices.