

December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016

**To:** Students' Council 2016 – 17

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

**Re:** Students' Union Council Report #16

Hi Council,

This is our last meeting for the calendar year, and then we'll all have a break for our finals and exams. I hope you all take some time to rest, as we've had a very busy year together on Council.

Here is an update on my activities:

### **1. International Student Tuition**

We have had over a whopping 1 200 responses to our survey on international student tuition, which I will take time before the December 16<sup>th</sup> Board meeting to convert into a short report for Board members. As of now, over 80% of the respondents were international students, and over 80% of all respondents strongly disagree with the motion to increase tuition by 3.01% for international students. I am happy to share more data with any councilors who request it.

### **2. Residence Life Task Force**

The review of residences being done by an independent third party is moving forward, with both current and alumni residents and employees at the U of A being surveyed on a variety of factors behind their experience. VP Ghossein and I are hopeful that there will be substantial data to be analyzed and discussed starting in January.

### **3. CAUS & Provincial Advocacy**

CAUS has been busy finishing up both their submission to the tuition review (<http://tuitionreview.alberta.ca/>) as well as their budget submission. VP Sandare and I took the time to contribute towards the up-front grants and bursaries section, but there are also recommendations to roll back tuition to 1992 levels after indexation to inflation, regulate international student tuition and MNIFs, and provide sustainable multi-year funding to universities. CAUS also had a policy committee meeting, where we spoke about our asks around the governance of universities and student associations as outlined in the Post-Secondary Learning Act.

VP Sandare and I met with the Dentistry Students Association, who have had concerns around how the Alberta student loans system works with their program for a few years now.

### **4. U-Pass**

Thanks to a lot of hard work between the SU VP Ops-Fis in Edmonton, especially VP Paches here and VP Amy Beard over at Macewan University, the U-Pass coverage has extended to three more

municipalities around Edmonton. This should make transit more accessible for students here, and we're hoping is a good sign for when we go to referendum on renewing the U-Pass.

## **5. Board of Governors**

Board Learning and Discovery Committee had a packed meeting where we discussed the evaluations of our faculties through President's Visiting Committees and annual reviews. The Provost also reported to BLDC on some of his office's activities, which included a joint submission to the government on the tuition review alongside the U of C and U of L.

I also had a meeting with our Board Chair Michael Phair, to discuss the possibility of a joint submission around providing tuition backfill funding for the post-secondary institutions as a result of the recently announced tuition freeze.

## **6. Provost's Office**

VP Banister and I had a meeting with the Provost, where we received an update on a few moving projects such as experiential learning and the Lister Meal Plan that was voted down at BFPC last week. We also discussed some of our concerns around international student tuition and the timelines they are working with for approval.

## **7. Alumni Council**

I attended the Community Engagement committee meeting of Alumni Council, where we discussed how community organizations could benefit and engage with Alumni Council to achieve our goals. There may be a role for the Students' Union to play here in the future in connecting with alumni.

## **8. CASA & Federal Advocacy**

CASA had its final policy committee meeting for the year, where we outlined our major tasks for the remainder of the year. We've essentially got three months left (January to March), but amazingly we've checked off 8 policy renewals, 1 brand new policy approval and 1 white paper on student financial aid. The to-do list is currently at 2 new policies to be written and 1 white paper on student employment, which I'm confident we'll be able to accomplish within three months.

## **9. Dean of Students Office**

VP Ghossein and I had a meeting with the Dean of Students around some of our respective mental health initiatives and some of the potential changes to the current iteration of the Student Experience policy under UAPPOL.

## **10. Edmonton Student Alliance**

I attended a meeting of the Edmonton Student Alliance, where we firmed up our mandate and also discussed whether a all-executive meeting of the ESA would be effective.

## **11. Presence and Relevancy**

I had a few interviews this week, one with the Gateway around our thoughts on making post-secondary more affordable, specifically with respect to tuition. I also chatted with the Edmonton Journal about some of our priorities for the remainder of the year.

The executive had a very productive brunch meeting with Edmonton City-Center MP Randy Boissonnault, where we shared some stories from both of our times with UASU and chatted about government priorities. We also had dinner with our Health and Dental plan provider StudentCare, who have been quite supportive of UASU projects such as our recent renovations.

That's all from me folks! Have a great end to your semester, all the best for your finals, and enjoy the holidays.



**Fahim Rahman**

President

[University of Alberta Students' Union](#)

2-900 SUB | (780) 492-4643 | [@UASUpresident](#)