

September 11th, 2012

To: Students' Council

Re: Report to Council

Hello Council,

Welcome back to school! It seems like summer only started yesterday but we are already back to the grind. I hope that you are excited for your new classes and that you will bring new energy into your roles as Councillors for the upcoming year. The executive and our staff in 2-900 have had quite the productive summer and we have already successfully achieved a number of our goals. It is scary to think that our terms are already more than 1/3 completed. Time is running out but if we can maintain this momentum throughout the next eight-months we will have a highly successful year.

Here is an update on the past two weeks:

Orientation and Week of Welcome

Orientation and WoW have been extremely fun! I am going to provide you with a point form list of all of the amazing events (in chronological order) that I have had the pleasure of attending in the past two weeks. A big thank you and congratulations to all the staff, volunteers, and participants that made this week such a success. I would especially like to thank the VPSL for an absolutely outstanding Week of Welcome!

Thursday, August 30

-UAI International Student Transitions Orientation Pancake Breakfast – Arts/Business Quad

Friday, August 31

-Spoke at UAI International Student Transitions Orientation – CCIS

Monday, September 3

-Attended Orientation Presentations

Tuesday, September 4

-Athletics Orientation Presentation with VPSL – Van Vliet Lecture Theatre

-Alumni Association BBQ – Hawrelak Park

-Presidents' Address – Hawrelak Park

-Volunteer Appreciation Party – Dewey's

Wednesday, September 5

-CSJ Week of Welcome BBQ – Pavilion McMahon

-Wayne Lee Hypnotist – Myer Horowitz Theatre

Thursday, September 6

-SUz-A-Palooza – Dinwoodie Lounge

Friday, September 7

-The Lorax – Free Movie – Myer Horowitz Theatre

Saturday, September 8

-Mainstage Concert – Dinwoodie Lounge

Lister Update

The Lister issue has once again eaten up the majority of my time in the past two weeks. We have not made a lot of progress in our discussions with the University administration however we are hoping to meet with them again this week. We are still awaiting their confirmation. Here is a blow-by-blow summary of what we have been up to.

- Interviews with the following media outlets
 - Alberta Primetime Appearance
 - CTV National Appearance
 - Globe and Mail interview
 - Gateway Interview
 - Shaw TV Appearance
 - Global TV Appearance
 - Metro Interview
 - CBC Radio Appearance
 - CBC Interview
- Numerous internal strategy meetings
- Met with the LHSA to hear their concerns regarding the current environment in Lister and problems faced during move-in weekend
- We have achieved correspondence (though minimal) with the University admin office
- Developed a stakeholder information response to the Sept. 5 Gateway articles and sent this out to the heads of the university bodies that had been forwarded a copy of the articles
- Held information/update meetings with Councillors to provide more background on the issue and answer questions

Health and Dental Plan – Shoppers Drug Mart Discount Program

We received an offer from Studentcare to participate in a 10% discount network provider program with Shoppers Drug Mart. We have declined the offer due to logistics issues, the requirement for Shoppers to use our logo on the discount card, a variance between the potential perceived/real benefits for students, and to accommodate concerns from the University Pharmacy and the GSA.

Fall Reading Week

I have been spending a lot of time with Kyle Marshall (SU University Governance and Advocacy Advisor) working through Dean and FA consultation for the Fall Reading Week. It seems that we may need to make a few changes to the proposal as it was not well received by a number of Deans at Deans' Council. This has been quite a frustrating process as we are now in a similar situation we were in last year before Rory met with all of the Deans to get their feedback and make the changes that we put into the newest version of the proposal. I will keep you updated on this project as it progresses. Over the summer we have achieved the following:

- Contacted all Deans (except Medicine and Native Studies – new Deans) for feedback
- Met with Alex Nilson (ESS President), Ken Soong (APSA President), and Jessa Aco (BSA President)
- E-mail communication with Carlo Martin (AUGSA President)

- Met with AASUA (Association of Academic Staff University of Alberta)
- Met with Dean Berger (Augustana), Dean Lynch (Engineering), Dean Molzahn (Nursing)
- Met with Donna Cave (University Wellness Centre) and contacted Robyn Everall (Provostial Fellow on Mental Health)
- Met with Indira V. Samarasekera (President), Carl Amrhein (Provost), and Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting-Provost)
- Met with Registrar's Office team and Frank Robinson (Dean of Students)
- Met with Garry Bodnar and Marion Haggerty-France (University Governance)
- Presented at Deans' Council – Sept. 5th

and much more...

Residence Budget Advisory Committee

I attended RBAC with the Vice President Student Life and the DRPA. We discussed topics including changes to the residence contract (which I have described in earlier reports), the proposed rent increases for next year, and new housing projects. We also have great news in learning that Service Alberta has recently stated that the mandatory meal plan must (in the next few years) be operated under the rules pertaining to gift cards, in which case the university will no longer be able to have a minimum expiring balance on the card. This means that if a student does not spend the minimum balance within the course of the year they will not have to forfeit the remaining funds to the university. This is a great change for students!

Meeting with Athletics and the UAB – RE: Golden Bears and Pandas Legacy Fund

The VPSL, VPOpsFi, University Athletics Board Presidents, and me met with Dr. Ian Reade and Vang Ioannides from the Faculty of Phys Ed and Rec to discuss the changes we want to make to the way the Golden Bears and Pandas Legacy fund is operated. We are now drafting language for an agreement that will provide increased accountability to the selection process for projects chosen to receive funding and an additional check for the SU to make sure that the fund is being used properly. I think that this agreement will be very helpful for our relationship with the Faculty and the UAB in the future.

Integrated Planning and Budgeting Presentation

We attended a presentation from the University Administration explaining their budget creation process. I did not learn anything new as I had been to the presentation last year as VPSL but it did afford us the opportunity to ask a number of useful questions.

Shinerama Opening Ceremonies

The VPSL and I attended the Shinerama Opening Ceremonies. Shinerama is a nation-wide shoe-shining fundraiser that raises money for cystic fibrosis research. The UofA event was organized and operated by the Medical Students Association. The opening ceremonies featured speeches from the Dean of Medicine, the Mayor Stephen Mandel, and a young girl with CF. The speeches were very touching and heartfelt. I am very proud of what the Shinerama volunteers accomplished on Saturday!

University of Alberta Campus Ambassador Dinner

I had the great opportunity to attend a dinner with the Campus Visit Program volunteers and a number of honored guests from the UofA community. It was awesome to see all of the great things the CVP volunteers do and how much of an influence they have on the positive image we portray to prospective students.

TBAC/MBAC – Tuition Budget Advisory Committee and Mandatory Non-Instructional Fee Budget Advisory Committee

We had our first TBAC/MBAC meeting of the year. We received updates on the Access Copywrite agreement and discussed news from the Ministry. I was very adamant that we receive more information on the expense routing for the CoSSS fee and had a chance to ask some very aggressive questions regarding the transparency of CoSSS and the legitimacy of its existence. It looks like TBAC/MBAC could set the stage for some pretty heated discussions this year.

Lunch with Deputy Premier Lukaszuk

The VPX, DRPA, and I were fortunate to have the opportunity to meet with Deputy Premier Thomas Lukaszuk for lunch in RATT. Lukaszuk had a lot of new and fresh ideas for our province and explained his ideas of how students can get involved in the decision making process. We spoke to him on three of our lobby points: modifications to the Elections Act, MNIFs, and making PSE (Post Secondary Education) a focus in the new Social Policy Framework. We also touched on increasing affordability and accessibility to PSE through non-repayable needs-based grants and quickly talked about the Lister issue. Overall, I was very happy with the meeting and with RATT's new updated menu. Lukaszuk is a boss!

UofA Recruitment video and ecoREPS Video

I have recently become a UofA moviestar.

Just kidding but you can find me featured in the following video created by Max Hurd, Adam Gaumont, Brandon Kelm, and their team from the Registrar's Office. ualberta.ca/motion I think that they did a great job with the video and capturing the importance of student engagement.

I will also soon be featured in a video promoting the ecoREPS program.

Summary

The past few weeks have been extremely busy and I am pretty tired but I am motivated to know that everything I am doing is affecting students in a positive way. I have also started class now so that is a bit of a change. This fall I will be taking Operations Management 352 – a mandatory course for my degree – sounds exciting hey...

If you have any further questions, suggestions, or concerns, please do not hesitate to follow-up with me, either in person at SUB 2-900, by phone at 780-492-4236, or by email at president@su.ualberta.ca.