

Date: 11/02/2019

To: Students' Union Council

Re: Vice President Academic 2019/20 Report #11

Hello Council,

It's pretty crazy that we're already in November! Here are some important updates on the work I've been doing over the past few weeks:

1. Meeting with Vice-Provost (Indigenous Programming and Research)

I had a fantastic meeting with Dr. Florence Glanfield, the first Vice-Provost (Indigenous Programming and Research) at the University of Alberta! We chatted about some of the ARRC Recommendations that were officially launched just last month, and other academic related issues.

After discussing that the last Aboriginal Student Success Survey was done in 2015, we decided that the University is going to implement another survey in the Winter Semester of 2020. I am excited to be working with the Vice-Provost office in getting this done and moving the ARRC recommendations forward. Shout out to Councillor Nathan Sunday for sending me the results of the 2015 survey results!

Here are some other items that we discussed during our meeting:

- Implementation of an Indigenous Course / Pedagogies of learning
- Learning for off-campus students
- Aboriginal success award
- Centralized portal for Indigenous resources: university is in progress
- Aboriginal specific academic advising

2. Open Education Conference

The University of Alberta Centre for Teaching and Learning funded me to go to Phoenix, Arizona for the #OpenEd19 conference where I learnt an incredible amount about many topics from student advocacy, faculty initiatives and learning about other institutions OER initiatives.

Open Education is a large topic of discussion across America, and here in Alberta with the release of the provincial budget, we need more than ever sustainable methods of funding Open Education. As you've heard me say many times, and at the Be Book Smart fair - textbooks are one of the largest expenses for students after tuition, rent and food.

88% of students at the University of Alberta think they're paying too much for textbooks, shelling out an estimated \$1750 per year. President Bhatnagar presented on two sessions on inclusivity in Open Education, as well as affordability and publishers.

Joel Agarwal, Vice President Academic

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I have a whole google folder of notes from the Open Ed conference, so if you're interested in learning more, please email me and we can chat about it!

3. Research Event

We are very close to finalizing the Research Event happening on November 21st from 10AM-2PM. The planning committee is looking for people to be a part of the Human Library. If you have been a part of undergraduate research, or know anyone who has - please fill out [this google forms](#), or share it with others!

4. Faculty Association / SU Councillor / SU Exec Mixers

We hosted the second mixer at Deweys where a few FAs, Councillors and the SU Execs were able to meet and get to know each other over some snacks! This was a great time to chat and build connections between the various parts of the Students' Union as an organization.

5. Council of Faculty Associations

I ran on the idea of increasing collaboration between Faculties given the fact that interdisciplinarity is key in many initiatives. The COFA Collaboration fund terms of reference were looked at during Senior Board, and we are close to finishing this to promote more collaboration on campus. I am excited to see how this will be equipping students to get out of their silos and meet with students in other faculties across campuses.

The Academic advising survey which was done last year has been put into a one page summary and submitted to the Vice-Provost (Programs) for further discussion. I am excited to see how this will impact academic advising here at the University of Alberta.

6. University Finance Portfolio Retreat

I was able to be a part of the University Finance Portfolio Retreat where faculty and administration listened to we the students and our priorities. I spoke strongly about the importance of experiential learning opportunities for students, work integrated learning as well as open and inclusive learning pedagogies. They were quite attentive and impressed with our suggestions.

7. Campus Food Bank: Trick or trEAT Drive

Myself as well as some of the other execs volunteered for the Campus Food Bank Trick or trEAT drive and in total with all the volunteers, we collected 3600 lbs. of food and over \$850! It was such a heartwarming experience to see so many people come together and raise food and money for students who need it.

8. General Faculties Council

At the last GFC meeting, three new students were appointed. Welcome to Alana Krahn (Business), Larry Zhong (Engineering) and Olivia Harris (Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation)!

The Freedom of Expression draft principles were discussed at GFC for the second time with the final version due by December 15th. If you have feedback, please let me know.

My office hours this term are by appointment, so let me know if you have any further questions. Looking forward to seeing you all at Council!

Cheers,



University of Alberta Students' Union Vice President Academic
Joel Agarwal