

Vice-President Academic Council Report

Date: September 23 2011

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INTRODUCTION

September has been a very busy month, but an equally enjoyable one. Because of the sheer amount of meetings, reports and planning that has taken place or been written over the last two weeks, this report may be a bit longer than usual. I will, however, keep each heading explanation as short as possible. Here goes:

STUDENT ATTRIBUTES

I co-chaired the first full membership of the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies. As co-chair, I kept the meeting to exactly one hour (we started at 1pm and ended right at 2pm, with no exceptions). The meeting began with a presentation about the student attribute literature, led by Dr. Heather Kanuka, the Centre for Teaching and Learning. We then did introductions, discussed the terms of reference and agreed on a future meeting schedule. Following this, I met with the co-chairs on September 21 2011, where we discussed an undergraduate and graduate-specific working group idea for the future.

NB: The terminology is now student attributes, rather than graduate attributes. The latter term is misleading, as many automatically think that we refer to actual graduate students. This is because the term “graduate attributes” was created in Australia, where graduates are undergraduates in Canada, and post-graduates are graduate students in Canada.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Following the release of the Academic Integrity Survey Report, I met with Chris Hackett of the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. Mr. Hackett also presented at the most recent Council. Over the last two weeks, I have put Mr. Hackett in touch with the ISSS and CBAS, and will attempt to do so with other faculty associations. Moreover, I sat down for an interview with *The Gateway*, and an article will be written in the near future on this subject.

SUSTAINABILITY: CERTIFICATE, GREEN GRANT AND SAW

With sustainability being one of my goals, I have taken some strides forward to promote academic sustainability. I will be hosting a session called “Sustainability and Student Attributes,” to be hosted in the SUB Alumni Room from 4-5pm on October 19. This will be a panel of students and faculty, followed by an audience discussion. Moreover, I applied for a Green Grant to help fund the event. Finally, I met with Dr. Susan Barker from the Office of Sustainability Academic Advisory Committee to discuss the Sustainability Certificate, which is one its way.

We had a good discussion, and the certificate looks to be brought forward through university governance within the next few months.

ALUMNI AWARDS

Along with the rest of the executive, I attended the university's Alumni Awards. This is the second consecutive year that I have attended, as this is an outstanding event. I feel very proud to be a U of A student, and it is a great experience being around so many proud alumni. I can't wait for next year's edition of the awards.

TRANSFER CREDITS

I attended the monthly Transfer Credit Task Force, where the committee discussed internal transfers (between faculties) and recommendations to be included in the report to the Provost. On a related note, I was not able to attend the Standing Advisory Council on International Engagement on Wednesday September 21, because of Ombudservice interviews. However, councillor Zinyemba was there, and Ann Gordon proxied for me.

SPACE PROPOSAL AND URS IDEA

Later today, I will send off a space proposal to the Dean of the Faculty of Science, in order to secure a large space within CCIS for the Undergraduate Research Symposium. Right now, I have part of CCIS booked, though I want to maximize the space that we receive for the November 18 event. I also had the idea of hosting the symposium not only in CCIS, but in Telus Centre as well. This would allow for more posters to be presented, and ensure that both Science and non-Science students are able to walk through the poster competition, view the workshops and panels and truly interact with the event.

GFC AND STUDENT CAUCUS

The first GFC of the semester took place on Monday September 19. Most of the meeting was filled with presentations, such as the university's international student outlook and one on student engagement. GFC Student Caucus went very well, with an outstanding turnout. Moreover, the student turnout of around twenty students at GFC was excellent, and it is only going up from here.

GOALS DOCUMENT

I spent a few days completing the five-month executive goals review. Reflecting on the year up to this point was a valuable experience, and there are some evident areas of success and areas for improvement. Student attributes has gone quite well, but undergraduate research and academic materials will take up significant chunks of time over the next weeks. I look forward to you all seeing the goals update, and I encourage you all to be as critical as possible.

APC

I filled at the GFC Academic Planning Committee for the President. The agenda was fairly light, with three major documents on the table for discussion: the university's annual report to the government and external unit reviews for Arts and Pharmacy. The documents are online at University of Alberta governance, and I encourage you to read them. They are fairly quick reads at 10 pages for the external unit reviews and 65 pages for the annual report.

URI ADVISORY BOARD

Directly following the APC meeting, I attended the Undergraduate Initiative Advisory Board. We discussed the terms of reference for two sets of undergraduate research funds, and I presented for five minutes about the upcoming November SU Undergraduate Research Symposium (URS).

INTERVIEWS

I spent two half-days interviewing for the Student Ombudservice position that is vacant. We sifted through over one hundred applications, selected a handful of individuals for interviews, and are now in the process of selecting our top candidate. On a different note, I sat down for a handful of interviews with *The Gateway*, related to academic integrity, academic materials and the AcaDream Team. Interviews with Metro and the CBC were also conducted.

SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES

As sponsorship chair of the executive committee organizing the Canadian Nursing Student Association western regional conference, I put together a sponsorship package for health and nursing-related organizations in Western Canada. In only a few weeks, we have raised over \$5000. I'm nearly finished the sponsorship package for the Students' Union URS, and will begin to meet next week with university stakeholders in order to fundraise.

CSL COURSE

I'm now registered in Community Service Learning 100, where much of the class discussed themes relevant to student attributes. We even discussed the Academic Plan in class. I think that this environment will ensure that I hear from a diverse group of students, rather than fall into the habit of not consulting students on a consistent basis.

THINK ABOUT VPA!

Although it is only September, I encourage you to think about running for VPA. There is so much to learn in this position, and you have the incredible opportunity to change others' lives for the better as they progress through university.

CONCLUSION

As you can see, the last two weeks have been hectic. Remember that my door is open, and that I encourage any student to come talk throughout the day. You can call me as well at 780.492.4236 and e-mail at vp.academic@su.ualberta.ca. Thanks for your time and enjoy the rest of the day. I look forward to your questions.