

VPA Council Report

By: Emerson Csorba

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Hi everyone,

I hope that you are all starting off the week well. I cannot express how excited I am at the moment. Some incredible things are happening right now within the university, and I'm doing everything possible to make the most of the opportunities presented to us. Here is a quick recap of what is happening.

DEFERRED EXAMS

At the January 18 2012 GFC Academic Standards Committee, there was a discussion item regarding the rationale behind deferred exam fees existing. As it stands, students can have their fees waived for reasonable accommodation, but that is more for things like religious holidays. Something like falling very ill before an exam or having a family member pass away does not fall under reasonable accommodation. Along with the Associate Deans of Engineering and Business, I spoke in favour of completely waiving deferred exam fees across the university. The rest of the room spoke in favour as well, and now I'm working to make sure that this becomes official. The ALES representative declared on the floor that they are from that moment on, no longer having students pay deferred exam fees.

This is a gigantic development within the U of A. As it stands, a student that is unable to write exams can pay up to \$230 in deferred exam fees during one exam period. This should not be the case. Please ask me questions about this issue.

GRADUATE STUDENT ATTRIBUTES

The *Plan* is on pace to be done by January 31, as I outlined in my One-Hundred Days War Plan. For whoever is the next VPA, I expect them to continue on the work with graduate student attributes. We have made quite a bit of progress this year, and 2012-2013 is going to see even more done in this area.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The VPSL Colten Yamagishi and I did another video blog, this time focusing on AntiFreeze 2012 and the upcoming World Record event. I cannot emphasize how important it is to me to see SU executives getting out of their offices to engage with students. Meeting new students and getting them more involved has a very positive effect on the U of A community, and it provides a lot of energy for me to work even harder as VPA. This is pretty much the reason why I ran for VPA in the first place, and I'll defend my stance against anyone that disagrees.

NATIVE STUDIES STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Along with the Student Governance Advisor, Amanda Henry, I met with the NSSA Executive. We agreed to extend their probation period by only one month, rather than three to four months. This is primarily because the NSSA needs to present at CoFA and Students' Council prior to coming off probation, which can happen in early February at the earliest. The NSSA has made tremendous progress this year, in numerous ways. I am very proud of their many accomplishments.

EXAM REGISTRY

I sent an e-mail out to the 9000+ professors at the U of A, asking them to add their exams to the SU Exam Registry. In December alone, 16 000 students went to the SU Exam Registry. Considering this, it's vital that the Exam Registry be current with its exam offerings.

DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY EVENT

Along with the General Manager Marc Dumouchel and the VPSL Colten Yamagishi, I attended this day-long event on deliberative engagement. It was a good learning experience, and I intend to incorporate the learnings into an upcoming SU Awareness Week. Think Malcolm Gladwell's *The Tipping Point* and his discussion about Hush Puppies. Only this time, we're applying this to the Students' Union.

COUNCIL OF FACULTY ASSOCIATIONS STRATEGIC PLAN

Quite a bit of progress was made this week on the CoFA Strategic Plan, as many FA leaders shared their thoughts on a SWOT analysis of CoFA. The Strategic Plan looks to be done by April 30 2012.

REPLACE YOURSELF

As a member of Students' Council, I offer this advice: replace yourself. Find one or two people to run for your seat in March 2012.

If you have any questions, please let me know. Feel free to contact me at 780.492.4236 whenever you have questions or would like to meet.

Cheers,

-Emerson

SPORTS REPORT

Following in VPSL Yamagishi's footsteps, I'm now adding a sports section to my VPA report. For my first report, I'm focusing not on the scores of the recent Pandas and Bears games, but their team performance in AntiFreeze. In the University Athletics Board (the

student representative group for Varsity athletes) opening season in AntiFreeze, they placed fourth overall and finished top three in several major events, including a first-place finish in Happy Feet II, the dance competition. A link to the dance can be found here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMhWXNhT3Sw&feature=plcp&context=C34b0c9cUDOEgsToPDskJKxKGeolnBwQ-crRGmbtuu>

Overall, it's great to see the UAB in AntiFreeze, and I highly encourage you all to attend their Legacy games in the near future. At the moment, our volleyball, hockey, basketball, wrestling, swimming and track and field teams are all ranked in the top 10 nationally. Make sure to go watch them play!