



July 25, 2013

To: Students' Council 2013-2014

Re: Report of the Vice President Academic

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Hello Council,

Below you'll find an update of my activities from the past two weeks.

#### **I. Attributes and Competencies**

The Graduate Students' Association VPA and I wrote to the Provost urging him to continue the work on integrating transferable skills, character attributes, and competencies into University curriculum. We followed up with the report we submitted in the spring, urging him to show leadership through the hiring of a Provost's Fellow to continue work on the project. We've yet to receive a response.

#### **II. New University Governance and Advocacy Advisor**

Kyle Marshall, our UGAA has left us to pursue further study. I've been involved in the hiring of a new UGAA, and am pleased to welcome Surma Das to the role. Surma has extensive experience working as a researcher and involvement in non-profit advocacy groups. She'll be a tremendous addition to our team.

#### **III. Technology**

I met with the AVP Digital Strategy, AVP Information Technology, and the Director of AICT to discuss priority technology initiatives for students. These included better processes to reduce the cost of textbooks, easier to navigate rules, cleaner BearTracks, and a more effective online calendar. Due to budgetary pressures, all three individuals were unable to make tangible commitments at this time.

#### **IV. Tuition, Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees, and Budget**

President Kusmu and I have been involved in a number of budget-related meetings over the past few weeks. At the Tuition and MNIF Budget Advisory Committee we shared our misgivings around the increase to the international student differential. At a separate meeting we presented the University with a summary of our MNIF report which we will be publishing next week. They've promised to provide feedback in the near future. Finally, we received a budget briefing surrounding the 2013-2014 budget. It described the process by which Faculty budgets were



determined and re-emphasized that how budget cuts are managed are up to the Deans. We were not given data on the 2013-2014 budget other than what is already publicly available. Moreover, the University has refused to provide us with any greater detail around the current budget besides the very summative information contained in the consolidated budget.

#### **V. Miscellaneous**

We had an Executive retreat to discuss broad issues as a team. I have been working away on plans for the Fall and Winter semesters, working on changes to Discover Governance, and finishing my goals document. I've also made preparations for a more formal student survey to take place in the Fall term.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call me at 780-492-4236, or email me at [vp.academic@su.ualberta.ca](mailto:vp.academic@su.ualberta.ca).

Sincerely,

  
Dustin Chelen