

September 5, 2013

To: Students' Council 2013-2014

Re: Report of the Vice President Academic

Hello Council,

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

I. Be Book Smart

On August 28, the SU launched its reinvigorated Be Book Smart campaign. First held in 2008, the campaign features advertisements located near the Bookstore encouraging students to consider alternatives to purchasing new textbooks. Orientation participants were also given bookmarks and information on ways to save money. My hope is that www.bebooksmart.ca will become a hub of information for students and staff who care about reducing the burdensome costs of textbooks. I'm now working on reaching out to instructors to encourage them to think differently about how they use textbooks.

II. Special COFA Advocacy Working Group Meeting

I held a special meeting with Faculty Association leaders to share information and discuss the University's budget situation. FAs provided the SU with valuable advice surrounding the Government's letter of expectation, which we will share with the University. Each FA has unique needs when it comes to protecting their students from the budget cuts, but they collectively agreed on a few important principles. First, FAs should have access to more detailed data about where the University spends its money. Second, they should be briefed on the process by which next year's budget cuts are determined well in advance of a final decision. Third, the SU should play a role in supporting their advocacy efforts and helping them reach out to their members. I'll be working over the next few weeks to advance their needs based on these principles.

III. New Manager of Discover Governance

I'm pleased to announce that the SU has hired Rebecca Taylor as the Manager of Discover Governance. In her role, Rebecca will coordinate the Student Governance Centre located on the 6th floor of the Students' Union Building. Discover Governance will play a greater role in coordinating efforts to enhance the effectiveness of student representatives, collaborate more closely with those involved in SU governance, and will be better equipped to link student representatives to the information they need.

IV. Miscellaneous

I participated in Orientation, Clubs Fair, and Week of Welcome activities over the past week. I attended meetings of GFC Exec, TBAC-MBAC, the Committee on the Learning Environment, the Academic Standards Committee Subcommittee on Standards, the Student Financial Aid Task Force, and the SU-Registrar's Office working group. Lastly, I had a number of meetings with University executives including the President, Provost, and VP University Relations.

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.

Sincerely,


Dustin Chelen