

October 4, 2016

Dear Council,

As the wildness of GovWeek wraps up, I have been slowly getting back into “normal” days at the office. Please find below an update on my work!

1. Projects

GovWeek

GovWeek has concluded. It was a busy week and thank you to everyone who hosted or attended sessions/events. Special shout out to Discover Governance who took a leading role in helping on the ground! My highlights from the week were the Women in Governance Panel, Keynote Mayor Don Iveson, and the Michael Janz talk. I am currently compiling the data and information to write the GovWeek impact report. This report will discuss the processes leading up to GovWeek, the strengths and challenges of the week, as well as the resources allocated to it. I am hoping that this report will be used if GovWeek is to happen again in the future. Although it is still tentative, it appears that we had the highest amount of people running in the by-election and survey data preliminarily shows that GovWeek had a positive impact on that. This report will be completed before our November 1st Council meeting and will be made available to the public online.

Flexible Course Loads

I met with someone from the Office of the Registrar to discuss if students taking fewer than a full course load were eligible for all scholarships and financial aid if they go through Student Accessibility Services (SAS). In general, it was a good meeting as many scholarships allocated by the University do in fact work with SAS to give student accommodation, however that is not always the case with government funded scholarships and financial aid.

Interdisciplinary Learning

Now that GovWeek is done, I am spending more time planning the Interdisciplinary Learning Conference scheduled for February. I will be meeting with more campus stakeholders and planning with my University Governance Advisor, Surma.

2. Meetings & Committees

GFC

GFC met last Monday. It was a unique meeting as we started with a smudging ceremony which I have never experienced at another University meeting. After, we were updated on the Institutional Strategic Plan, President Rahman gave a presentation on the SU Executive goals, and we discussed items such as the Transmittable Pathogens Policy, the terms or reference and membership of the Academic Governance Review Ad Hoc Task Force. I will be sitting at the Undergraduate Student on this task force. It is a very important group as they will review how authority is delegated in academic governance, which has the impact to substantially change how GFC and its committees work. Also, if you sit on GFC please attend the GFC Student Caucus meetings which are usually held a week before the meeting, as they are very beneficial in understanding and preparing for what goes on at the meetings.

4. Other Exciting Endeavours

Podcast

Another highlight from GovWeek was having my colleagues from CAUS attend. The VPA's from ULeth, UofC, Mount Royal, and MacEwan all came down to discuss the Textbook Broke campaign, which advocated for more open educational resources. If anyone is interested in learning about that, you can find the video recording on the CAUS Facebook page. While they were down here, we taped a segment on Textbook broke Alberta for the Voice of the Union podcast. This podcast is now available on iTunes and I would highly suggest you subscribe!

Turban Tying Event

As many of you know, the Sikh Students Association and Students' Union chose to respond to racist posters on campus with a Turban Tying event in SUB last week. The event drew a crowd of hundreds of people, including politicians and media. Thank you to everyone who came out to help celebrate and learn more about the Sikh culture.

Thank you for reading this report and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



Marina Banister