

July 22, 2014

To: Council

Re: VPA Report

Hey Council,

I hope you're all doing well. It's been pretty quiet around the office lately.

I've been getting lots of feedback for my online petitions project, which is great! But you know how it is with consultation, the more the merrier. If you think you'll have five minutes to look over the proposal shoot me an e-mail (vp.academic@su.ualberta.ca) and I'll send it to you and listen to as much feedback as I can. I want to finalize it soon though, so I'll probably only take feedback for another week or so. I still haven't met with the Registrar's Office to discuss our information sharing agreement, which is important for how the ideal online petition would be structured, but that meeting is soon, so this project can feasibly be done in January.

The Registrar's Office has decided not to print calendars anymore. Not the calendars that show you what day of the month it is, the academic calendar that tells you what you need to graduate, important academic dates, etc. However, right now, the online version isn't as good as it probably could be, so in a very transparent and consultative manner the RO is going about talking to various stakeholders about what they would like to see in the updated online calendar. We have looked at a bunch of calendars across the country and determined that McGill's Calendar is the best and we should hope to emulate that. It is the most organized and easy to use. I will most likely be advocating for these specific things (I say most likely because I haven't run the advocacy strategy past the exec yet since the next exec meeting is tomorrow):

1. Easy navigation
2. Web integration
3. Easy search and find functions: <http://www.mcgill.ca/study/2014-2015/courses/search>
4. Ability to filter sections / criteria
5. Ability to switch back and forth between sections that are appropriately organized (probably a site map would be good)
7. Easy to find calendars from previous years (since the calendar that applies to you is the one published the year you started)

This also might not be a bad time to ask for a degree tracking mechanism on Beartracks. For example, you take this guy <http://www.registrar.ualberta.ca/calendar-archive/calendar-2010-2011/Undergrad/Arts/chart1.html> and it checks off as you go. I normally don't like going way out of the scope of conversation when advocating to the University, but in light of this project, I feel it appropriate to put it on their radar at this time. I also want to look at making course descriptions easier to find on Beartracks, but again, that is slightly tangential.

If you have an amazing idea that isn't listed please let me know.

August is right around the corner and that means so is Be Booksmart! Everything is pretty much finalized for that at this point. There are several different facets to the campaign.

1. Hard copy advertising (ex: posters, window stickies, banners, standees, handbills)
2. Advocacy to staff (letters to the provost, deans, department chairs, and professors)
3. Great supports (su.ualberta.ca/usedbook will be up and running in time and obviously SUBtitles is established already)
4. Press Release
5. Website update <http://su.ualberta.ca/governance/advocacy/bebooksmart/students/> (changing all the wording on everything to make it less vague)

So everything has really come together, which is very exciting. Let me know if you want to help me stick up posters in late August, I'll probably figure out a free lunch or something for volunteers.

Another interesting but kind of small thing that I'm doing related to textbooks is looking into changing SUBtitles policy so that books that are one edition old can be consigned, because right now they will only take the newest edition. I still have to look further into the reason that this policy exists in the first place, but if it's all internal it shouldn't be a painful process at all.

I'm working closely with Student Group Services along with the Great and Honourable Nicholas Diaz (VPSL) to see if we can help with figuring out ways to help navigate the implementation of the new Dean of Students policies and constitutional reviews. We have these big meetings to really hash everything out and get to the bottom of issues and see what's possible. Of course, change is usually slow when it comes to large units, but I really do feel good about the progress we've made so far and the topics we've identified.

Navneet (VPX) and I had a meeting with R.H. Kim Campbell to discuss issues surrounding women in governance. We spoke about why it's important to have women in governance, what the issues are and where they possibly stem from, and brainstormed loosely possible solutions. The strong and fashionable Navneet and I need to meet again to talk about more solid ideas, but the session with Ms. Campbell definitely gave a lot of direction and a lot to think about.

The whole executive team met with President Samarasekera last week. It was very much a get-to-know-each-other meeting, although we did bring up a couple of issues, for example, Open Educational Resources and student mental health. It was agreed that lines of communication would be kept open between us.

Also last week, I participated in choosing a new HR manager for the Students' Union. It was a good discussion and I gave a lot of input.

Anyways, that's all for now, see you at council!

All the best,
Kathryn Orydzuk

This is Council Bingo.

This is how you play: Whenever something described in one the boxes happens in council you cross it off. You win by getting a straight line across, up and down, or diagonally. Higher difficulty wins include getting an X, a box around the outside, or the full board crossed off.

This is the prize for winning: ETERNAL COUNCIL GLORY, almost Craig Turner level, but not quite. Also I'll probably buy you a BEvERage sometime, and for higher difficulty wins a pitcher might be negotiated.

You speak in favour of a motion	A fellow councilor uses the word fiduciary	A fellow councilor quotes Bylaw or Political Policy	A fellow councilor calls a point of order	The meeting goes longer than three hours
You spot a fellow councilor on Facebook	A fellow councilor uses up their whole speaking turn	A fellow councilor calls for division	You give a presentation to council	You agree with something the wise and wondrous VP Academic says
Plans are made to go to RATT after council	Any presentation is given to council	FREE SQUARE Council has quorum FREE SQUARE	You ask one of the execs a question	The Speaker bangs his gavel
A motion fails	You call to question	A fellow councilor moves a motion	A fellow councilor arrives late	A fellow council gets censured
You challenge the Speaker	You actually read the exec reports	A fellow councilor moves to make an amendment	A fellow councilor moves to make an amendment to an amendment	You speak against a motion