



January 1, 2015

To: Council

Re: VPA Report

Dear Council,

I hope your break went well! I originally wrote this report on December 19th, published it on the VPA blog, and posted it to the Council Facebook page then.

A couple of things happening that you should be aware of:

VP Academic Job Shadow Day!

This will be happening from 9-5 on January 30th, please shoot me a message in some form if you would like to come so that I have an idea of how many students will be there and I can warn the committee chairs accordingly.

SU 101: A Presentation on SU Governance and Operations

This is a presentation that I will be giving in conjunction with Becky from Discover Governance and will be directed at students and university staff members. It will be all about how the SU makes decisions and implements them. Should be a good time. It is on January 30th at 3pm in SUB 0-55. Notice that this is cleverly positioned on the same day as the job shadow so that people who come to the job shadow automatically get to come to SU 101.

Exciting things are happening on the Academic Materials front!

As I've already spoken about with you, the Ualberta Libraries is pitching in a substantial amount of funding towards having textbooks readily available in the libraries. The SU exec have pledged \$4000 of our discretionary funds towards textbooks that might otherwise be left out of running with the formula of (most students) x (most expensive textbooks). Deciding which books is really just a matter of making the list up based on which departments are getting left out and then checking those with the relevant FA/CA/DA. There are a lot of excel spreadsheets involved, I know this would excite some people, but I am not one of those people.

In any case, I will be getting that done soon. Maybe today after I'm done this. We shall see.

Other news for academic materials is in the realm of access codes. This is very exciting news for students as professors will now be obligated to provide a cost-free option when assigning online homework for a portion of the grade. This makes paying twice for assessment and grading (once through tuition, once through the code) up to the student now. This new policy will be taking effect on January 1st. There are also some publishing companies that have stepped up and agreed to offer



their online product for free in certain computer labs. Overall, this is quite a large victory in terms of academic materials, since access codes represent such a large cost to students and eliminate the possibility of using used books or selling books used.

I really do have to say a big thank you to the members of the Provost's office that have been working on this project. A few months ago when this issue came across their desks, they worked really quickly to come up with a solution, and I sincerely appreciate that. There's also a significant amount of work that has gone on behind the scenes in terms of the logistical aspects of implementation that I think a lot of people won't realize, and the fine members of the Provost's office have been champs about it.

I've just looked through my meeting notes and calendar and those things appear to be the biggest things that have happened in the last couple weeks. There are always a number of smaller things that I do during the days. For example, I was a student rep of the search committee for the new GFC Secretary, which involved doing interviews that took quite a bit of time. We had a mid-year management meeting with all out senior managers, which was a full day thing. We had an exec retreat, which was also a full day thing. I've made more progress with the online petitions system, and gotten the advertising for the new and improved Used Book Registry ready to go. I've answered many emails. Just wrapped up a bunch of loose ends before the holidays.

Anyways, I hope all of you feel ready for the next semester!

See you Tuesday!

Kathryn