

Date: 06/16/2020

To: Students' Union Council

Re: Vice President Operations & Finance 2020/21 Report #4

Dear Council,

Good to be seeing you again! I hope you are all enjoying the recent sunshine. I went camping this weekend and it rained at least 60% of the time, but I still had a really enjoyable getaway. It's good to go climb a mountain with good friends and sleep in the fresh air. I also recently acquired a hammock, and successfully strung it up and lay down in it without falling to the ground - surprises are around every corner, no? Gardening update: my indoor basil is thriving, but my outdoor basil is unhappy; beans and peas are growing fast.

Services Updates - COVID Response

Our services have been busy creating COVID response plans, which we have been discussing lately. I am excited to share just a few of the highlights with you.

The Services Department as a whole is striving to:

1. Alleviate the burden on students by streamlining and adapting administrative processes within the department
2. Expedite the disbursement of funds to ensure that students have support to meet their needs
3. Provide as many opportunities as possible to provide for students mental, social and physical wellbeing.
4. Provide varied, accessible and flexible opportunities for students to maintain involvement with student life on campus
5. Provide support to ensure the vitality of the student group system

Sustain SU

Previously, most of the programs delivered by Sustain SU took the form of in-person delivery. They are moving towards creating various online content to assist virtual learning and involvement, and to provide additional methods of delivery for students to choose from.

Peer Support Centre

The Peer Support Centre will remain a non-judgmental support for students, by students, in a free and confidential space. They are committed to accessibility, inclusivity, and empowering and supporting students of all identities and backgrounds. Traditionally, the PSC has provided a physical space for anyone on the campus community looking for emotional support, crisis management, or resource information. Due to public health restrictions, the PSC's space is no longer open to students, however they are committed to adopting an accessible, confidential platform for students to access the support they need.

The PSC will offer support remotely over Google Hangouts (or another platform as we continue to research). Their session structure will look relatively similar, with volunteers able to support a variety of issues. They will use their platforms as a hub for wellness tips and information on accessible mental health support.

The Landing

Most of The Landing's programs and services have historically taken place in their public drop-in space. In response to COVID-19, The Landing will maintain and execute its support for gender and sexual minority students, ensuring accessibility concerns are minimized by moving services and events to an online platform. Specifically, their volunteer-led drop-in space is normally open by appointment only during the summer. To support the community through a challenging time, they have opened their weekly drop-in over the Summer, and have transitioned to a Zoom format. This format will continue into the Fall semester, along with the addition of their bi-weekly programs and online versions of major yearly events.

Noteworthy Meetings

GovCamp

I hope you all had a good time learning and having discussions at GovCamp this week! If you were not able to make it, here is a short summary of what happened. Marc Dumouchel, the SU's General Manager, gave a 'State of the Union' presentation, as well as a presentation on the effects that COVID-19 is having on the SU. In groups, we discussed the following questions:

1. What is your biggest worry for the upcoming year, and what do you think the SU should focus on in light of COVID?
2. What services or opportunities do you think students need in a virtual setting?
3. How can the Executive team best support student needs in this time?
4. What opportunities do you see in an online setting?
5. What do student groups need in order to succeed this year?

These pages cannot contain all of the interesting meetings and projects I have been engaging with. Please let me know if you want to know more!

If you have any questions about the contents of this report, or simply want to talk, please feel free to reach out! Stay safe and healthy.

Best,

Alana Krahn

University of Alberta Students' Union Vice President (Operations & Finance)