

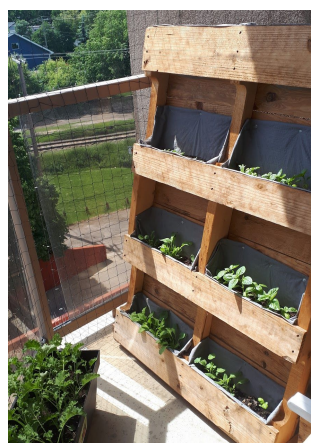
Date: 06/30/2020

To: Students' Union Council

Re: Vice President Operations & Finance 2020/21 Report #5

Dear Council,

Hello again, everyone! Humour me, if you wish. If you are reading this, send me a WhatsApp message of your favourite houseplant - it would bring me great joy to see what green friends you are surrounding yourself with these days. For my contribution to this game, here are pictures of my little balcony garden. The wooden planter boxes I made out of pallets! I have got peas, beans, carrots, basil, and wildflowers - all thriving.



Services Update

UPass

There are three time frames of the UPass that we have been sorting out: Summer (July and August), Fall, and the next four-year contract. I am happy to say that we are arriving at solutions, but am regretful that no solution will work for everyone, at least for the Summer. For July and August, Edmonton Transit Service (ETS) will be extending eligibility for the [Ride Transit Program](#) to students. The program serves low-income riders through a provincial government subsidy. For students who meet the low-income threshold, these passes will provide an affordable alternative to the Youth Pass or the Adult Pass.

For the Fall semester, we are in conversations with ETS and the other transit authorities, working hard to sort out a feasible solution for students. We have several goals, the first of which is to ensure that all students do not have to pay for the UPass. The University has no way of knowing for all students whether they are living within the Edmonton region, and most students will not be asked to attend in-person course components. Therefore it would be very unfair to charge the UPass as normal. Our second goal is to secure affordable transit for those students who need it. Students on experiential learning terms, practicums, and who have

in-person course components should be given an affordable option. I am happy to say that I and the team as well as other Students' Associations are actively working with ETS on a solution. It is too early to give more specific details than that, but hopefully by next Council meeting I will have an update.

The four-year contract negotiations will begin in July, with most of the activity happening in August. We are currently at the stage of deciding ground rules and negotiation goals.

COVID Response Update

The Student's Union Building remains the only building on campus open to the general public. As a result of meetings with the University, we are asking that all visitors wear masks in common areas. We have put up signage to inform visitors that they must wear a mask, and that if they do not have one, they can purchase one at SUBmart.

Noteworthy Meetings

Mandatory Non-Instructional Fee Oversight Committee

Affordability is a top priority that we have been focusing on. We have been advocating for better value during the COVID online experience, as well as affordability where possible. Mandatory non-instructional fees (MNIFs) are some of the expenses incurred by students. See a list of them [here](#). The fees add value to student life and academic success in various ways. We have been looking at fees to see which continue to provide value to students during COVID, in light of the key issue of affordability. During this committee meeting, we confirmed that for the Fall semester, the Athletics & Recreation fee will be charged at 70% of its current rate, and that the Physical Activity & Wellness Centre fee will be suspended (though this will not impact access to the PAW Centre). That will create savings of approximately \$54.06 for students.

Website Task Force

Apparently the creators were aware of the acronym when they formed this group. This is our internal team for the UASU website redesign. We are focusing on accessibility of information and a much more user-friendly experience. The team is hoping to launch the website sometime before the start of the Winter 2021 semester.

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)