

Date: 28/09/2018

To: Students' Union Council

Re: Report to Students' Council

Hey Council!

Welcome to my report. I hope you've all had a great week. It's certainly been exciting for me, and I have some things I'm thrilled to report on.

1. Mental Health Strategic Plan

Work continues on developing a strategic plan specifically aimed at promoting better mental health outcomes for students. We originally tried hosting focus groups to collect opinions from students, but upon further consideration, we are now looking at putting 'virtual polling stations' around campus encouraging students to fill out a survey asking them about their perceptions of mental health supports and quality of care on campus. Stay tuned! We should have some more updates coming in the next few months.

2. Equity Diversity and Inclusion & Truth and Reconciliation Commission Policies

Policy work continues. With these policies, we feel like it's particularly important to ensure we are doing enough background research and consulting with as many groups as possible before we bring them to council. Because the existing gender policy doesn't focus on other groups who face oppression, we are looking for more supportive facts and resolutions that focus on supporting other groups such as people with disability and people of colour. Similarly, the existing TRC policy focuses primarily on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We are looking to other supportive documents such as the Aboriginal Students Success Survey and For The Public Good to help inform our policy work. The Department of Research and Advocacy has been invaluable in helping move this along, and a special shout out to Councillors Mogale and Belcourt for all of the work they are putting in to help move things along smoothly. Stay tuned for updates from Councillor Raitz for more details.

3. U-Pass

Two U-Pass meetings were held since the last council meeting. Specific highlights include the anticipated rollout of smart fare by the end of 2019. Smart fare would allow students to tap for access to transit stations, eliminating the need for U-Pass sticker pickup, and lowering the cost for students to replace a lost transit pass to around \$8.00. Unfortunately, the City of Edmonton has been slow to provide any

substantive updates about where this project is asked. University Administration and the Students' Union will continue to request progress updates and information surrounding the Smart Fare program. If you'd like to research more about the proposed Smart Fare program, check out Vix Technology.

4. Greek Life

The Department of Research and Advocacy created a survey that hopes to identify opportunities to broaden the working relationship between Greek Communities and the Students' Union. I am looking forward to presenting the survey to their membership in the coming weeks.

5. Cannabis

At General Faculties Council this week, legalization of cannabis was a big topic of discussion. Moving forward, University and Students' Union stakeholders need to act swiftly to ensure that the on-campus rules are laid out clearly for students. It is important that significant attention is paid to ensuring awareness of designated cannabis smoking zones on campus and in the greater community. The Students' Union is currently advocating for a cannabis smoking zone outside of the Students' Union Building, somewhere around the Industrial Design studio and the Agriculture and Forestry Centre. We will have more updates by the next council meeting.

6. CFSS Working Group

At the CFSS meeting this week, we received a presentation from UAPS identifying opportunities to expand their organization to better address on-campus crime and safety concerns. In particular, they are looking at addressing the issues surrounding HUB mall and the Health Sciences areas on campus. Both of these areas make up a statistically significant proportion of the calls UAPS received. I was impressed at UAPS idea to put a greater focus on community-based policing. The UAPS staff were asked to go back and identify alternatives to their proposed plan before any decision is made. As for the CFSS report, we're looking at the ways in which we can better communicate safety messaging and education to the campus community.

7. Residence Advisory Committee

At this week's RAC meeting, Ancillary Services identified their proposed budget plan for Residence Rates in 2019/20. Meal plan rates are proposed to go up by the Consumer Price Index, or around 2%. Rent rates, on the other hand, are expected to rise by 5% compounded each year for 3 years. While this offers a predictable model for students living in residence, we are concerned that these price increases will continue driving the cost of living on campus up disproportionately to the market rate.

Moreover, despite the fact that there are more beds in residence, as well as a significant jump in application numbers, the amount of students living in residence actually decreased by 50 students this year. It is unclear at this time as to why exactly the students who were offered spaces in residence elected not to move in to university residence. I will meet with our Director of Research and Advocacy and General Manager to ensure we can be a strong advocate for a budget plan that works for students.

8. Closing

I had a really fun time presenting at the Canadian Student Leadership Conference this week. The U of A is hosting nearly 1000 students from around the country to teach them leadership skills. One of the speakers is Chris Hadfield! The ARRC Town Hall was an incredible experience, and it was awesome to see how many people showed up to share their thoughts and spend some time with Cheryl, the Knowledge Keeper for the day's event. Thanks for reading, this was a long one!

Until next time,



Andre Bourgeois
VP Student Life