

September 29th, 2015

To: University of Alberta Students' Council 2015/2016

Re: Vice President Student Life Council Report

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Hello Council,

I got quite a bit of news to share in this week's report, hope you're ready for it :) Overall, it was a productive two weeks. Hope it keeps up! And tip of the day, don't forget to take breaks if you are feeling burnt out! Self care is super important when it comes to being in post-secondary.

### **Advocacy**

The conversation on **Prayer and Meditation Space** continues this week with the **Muslim Students' Association and Graduate Students' Association**. University has promised to commit **\$500,000** for the project, but we are all still trying to come up with a solution on how to raise the remaining **\$200,000**, since the entire project costs around **\$700,000**. Some productive discussions came out from our last meeting. Once we connect with all the other participating faith groups and chaplains on campus, we should be able to agree on a collective fundraising approach. The construction will still continue as we fundraise and is anticipated to begin in Winter 2016 as soon as International Centre moves out from HUB into Telus.

The Students' Union continues to support the executives from **Lister Hall Students' Association** on their transition. Since Lister Hall does not have elected student representation at the moment, I am temporarily acting as the voice for the students in Lister until we establish a new representative body for the residence.

### **Council and Governance**

The entire executive team had a meeting with the **Facilities and Operations** crew of the **University** this week. It was a quick meeting to just introduce ourselves and share our priorities with each other. The meeting went well and helped us put names to faces for who we can contact when it comes to certain issues.

### **Access and Communications**

The executive team and I have made a big decision last week regarding **Break the Record**. Unfortunately, we've all agreed that this year will not be the year to host the event. I have been in a conflicting position ever since May. In all honesty, I was super stoked when I was told that it can be a possibility to host the event this year. As promised during elections, I've done my investigation on the possibility to attempt this event, and the results are indicating that it will not be possible this year. In order to host the event successfully, we will require approximately **\$100,000** to do so. With limited support compared to the previous years, it has been difficult to reach our first goal post of **\$50,000**. We have set three monetary goal posts for ourselves until April 1st. If we hit the goal of the first goal post, we will move onto the second goal post, which unfortunately did not happen. The three stages provided us some safety to cut off the planning incase the event falls through. The first goal post was

meant for us to test the waters to see if there is still an interest out there from sponsors and the University to host the event. There is no doubt that Break the Record is an amazing community building event and a great part of our campus pride. But it is also a time where we require the most funding in order to fuel our services, and the time to focus on other areas of advocacy to provide the most supported undergraduate experience for our students. We are definitely not feeling the same levels of enthusiasm or demand for the event compared to previous years. Conversations surrounding how sustainable this event is has been brought up numerous times, and I agree that it is definitely a concern. Let's say we bring the record back this year, but another institution beats the record again. When do we stop? Perhaps this is a sign that we should let BTR become history. To wrap it up, I sincerely apologize for delivering this news, believe me, it was a difficult decision. If you would like to hear more about the rationale behind this decision, don't hesitate to ask me questions.

### **Student Groups and Associations**

I met briefly with **Monique** from **Deweys** to chat about **Diabetes Week** and how SU businesses can get involved in the event this year in November. I also got **Councillors Doan and Xu** on board to help with the event, we are super excited to hear more about it later in October! Deweys will be featuring some diabetes friendly menu items through the week of November 2nd-6th. The nutritionists from Alberta Diabetes Institute are currently working with Monique to figure out the appropriate portions for diabetic individuals. Definitely looking forward to that!

We also had dinner with the **Alberta Pharmacy Students' Association** Tuesday night and gave them a quick tour of 2-900. We had the opportunity to share with them our goals for the year, and hear about what they would like to achieve this year. It's always nice to meet enthusiastic student representatives. And I'm looking forward to their Mr. Pharmacy event this upcoming November, it's going to be fun!

### **Events**

**VP Bondarchuk and I** attended the **Sustainability Plan Open House** and provided some feedback on the 2016 Sustainability Plan. I had the opportunity to take part in the health portion of the planning last year. So excited to see it finally coming together, and there are super cool recommendations. If you want access to the document, let me know and I can send it your way!

**Counselling and Clinical Services' Open House** was also the same week! There were some interesting conversations surrounding how to get faculty members aware of student in crisis and the accessibility of mental health services. Apparently the clinic had been receiving calls from faculty members with question on how to refer students to services. I was talking to a clinical staff and asked if they track what faculty that the member is calling from. It was interesting to hear that they have not been doing so. I might start initiating some conversations around establishing a tracking method with the clinic later on in the month if possible! It will be good to know where these calls are mostly coming from so we have an idea which faculties need the support.

**VP Hanwell and I** also crashed **Students' Association of MacEwan University (SAMU)**'s Fall Festival to say hi to our counterparts. They were super busy at their tents so we didn't get to chat much. But it was a nice Friday afternoon spent with some beer and good music. We even participated in some games and won some cool prizes. GOLDEN SUNGLASSES YAS.

I was invited to provide a closing speech at the **Student Assembly for Campus Health** event, held by the **Student Health Committee** on last Friday. It was nice to see Councillor Allard and Patrick there too! We had some great discussions about campus health, mental health, and student governance. I've been involved with the Student Health Committee in the last 2 years of my undergrad degree, it felt super strange to be back this year as a speaker rather than a planner. So many emotions that evening. And I am super proud of this year's executive team for making it possible, they did a splendid job!



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Until next time!

Vivian Kwan  
Vice President Student Life 2015-2016  
(Electronically Submitted)