

January 19th, 2016

To: University of Alberta Students' Council 2015/2016

Re: Vice President Student Life Council Report

Advocacy

The Advocacy Department and I are in the progress of drafting an alternate **Residence Association Fee Proposal** to present to Residence Services in our upcoming January Residence Advisory Committee meeting. To provide context, this has been an ongoing issue for many years, we have come to a conclusion that both the SU and Residence Services will agree on a proposal and move forward from there. To summarize some of our asks, we want the Residence Services to continue physically collecting the association fees, and forward the collected funds to the Students' Union. The biggest push back we have been receiving from Residence Services is that they feel they should be able to oversee and deny Residence Association budgets to ensure the associations are spending student money responsibly. Over the years, this has caused many conflicts including interfering with the democratic decision making process of the associations, which caused a significant impact in their operation processes. We strongly believe that elected student representatives should be able to practice decision making without the interference of the University. As mentioned previously, we are hoping to model the residence fee collection method after the Faculty Associations, where elected representatives will have to run a referendum for any major fee changes and report to the Students' Union on their financial practices to ensure accountability. We have explored the route of partnering with the Registrar Office's Finance department to facilitate the fee collection, but have been told that this will not be a possibility in the near future as there will need some major systemic reforms in order to carry this collection accurately. To date, we still feel that it makes the most sense for SU to keep associations accountable as we are the legislated body to delegate representative power to students. Once we come to an agreement with Residence Services, everything will run smoothly as we already have the infrastructure in place.

We are continuing our promotion of the **Residence Feedback Form** to different channels of communications. We have received **51 responses** from student residents about their Fall semester experience. It is great to see that the tool is being utilized by students. Our Residence Association executives directly follow up with the student residents on their concerns, and the response rate is generally within a week or even faster. If anything is immediate or pressing, they would be directed to Residence Services for further assistance.

Access and Communications

I am excited to announce that the **Peer Support Centre** will be officially promoting **Multilingual Sessions** to the campus community in early February! This winter semester will be a tiny launch, since they currently only have **5 volunteers** available to facilitate these sessions. The sessions will be offered in Mandarin, Cantonese, French, Indian, and German. If this soft launch becomes successful and highly demanded, there may be possibility of expansion in their September hiring cycle. Of course, expanding the service will involve funds. This will also be a conversation I will be having with Dean of Students' office regarding the money fundraised from the Giving Day campaign.

As I truly believe that valuable services such as the Peer Support Centre should be supported, especially now they are hoping to go multilingual!

It has been announced that **Farmer's market** will be happening **every Thursday** instead of biweekly now!

I have just recently piloted the **Health Working Group** to the campus community and have received a fair a bit of positive feedback. To date, I have received approximately 12 students expressing interest in participating in this group. The purpose of the Health Working Group, similar to the Residence Working Group launched in Fall semester, is to provide student the opportunity to have in-person meetings with the VP Student Life to discuss about issues and provide feedback on health at the U of A Campus. Aside from soliciting feedback and facilitating discussions, I also want to take this as an opportunity to update students first hand on what initiatives the SU are currently working on, and perhaps recruit them to be involved. The first meeting will be held near the end of January, we are still pending on responses regarding availabilities!

Events

Movies for Mental Health will be happening on **February 8th, 2016 at the Myer Horowitz theatre**. I am super excited to see how this plays out as many of our partners (**Human Resources Office and Dean of Students**) had spent a tremendous amount of effort trying to put this event together. The event will be open to the public and no registration will be required. It will be an exciting opportunity to discuss mental health via film, as we have never done this before on University campus.

The Gateway and the Students' Union are looking to host an **Oscar Viewing** event at the **RATT** on **February 28th**. More details will be provided later on in the month. We are hoping to whip up some themed drinks for the evening as well. So save the date and bring your friends!

No photos to share this time :(

Cheerios,

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