

Date: April 9, 2018
To: Students' Council
Re: Report to Students' Council

Hi Council,

Foremost, my apologies again for being on the Late Additions. My week last week was 24/7 and again I wouldn't have been able to do this report justice if I did it on Wednesday.

I've said this a lot, but last week was by far the most intense of my time here at the UASU. The amount of work that myself and student leaders put in over the past few weeks is astounding. A special thanks to staff, in particular Jon Mastel the Director of Political Research and Affairs, for work in ensuring that we were able to make such a impact at the provincial level last week. I would also like to highlight that our incoming, Adam Brown, was very much thrown into the fire and did a fantastic job representing the UASU in meetings at the highest levels. Their support and support from across the province was unreal and I am thrilled for the next steps.

Finally, this will be my last report as VP External. I believe strongly that it will show that myself, and the entire executive, are primed to finish out the year strong. I am thankful to have been able to work with all of you over the years and am excited to continue in a new role. For anyone who has known me over the years, the immortal words of Drake "started at the bottom and now we're here" really does apply.

Council of Alberta University Students



CAUS Mixer 2018

The Council of Alberta University Students had a fantastic Advocacy Week. You can find more on the hashtag #advoweeek and @CAUS on almost all social media platforms. Some of the highlights:

- CAUS facetime with Premier Notley in a public forum. This is extremely substantial, as we know that our counterparts in other organizations have not been able to do so, including

University presidents. The Premiers time is incredibly valuable and we are thankful to have anytime with her at all, especially over budget week.

- Meetings with 12 members of Cabinet, including Minister of Finance Joe Cici and Minister of Minister of Advanced Education Minister Marlin Schmidt. All members of cabinet have been supportive of different aspects of platform.
- 27 meetings with 42 members of the Legislative Assembly. Highlights include caucus meetings with the United Conservative Party, Alberta Party, and Liberal Party. All have been supportive of some aspect of our advocacy work and we are thrilled to work with some amazing partners.
- All incomings and outgoings from all CAUS institutions in attendance. Often some folks are not capable of attending so this was a great start for the incoming CAUS delegates.

The week was a remarkable success. If you also account that CAUS currently has no staff support (normally would have 2 full time staff), this was an amazing week.

As well, the subject of the UASU protests was a consistent theme of the week. CAUS as an organization will be making a statement in support of the #notpublicgood efforts and all of our provincial partners will comment as well. We received unprecedented support from the Minister Schmidt himself, in the form of public statements supporting students calls to curtail the budgeting practices at the University of Alberta and across the province. We also received new information, that we can expect multiple announcements over the summer on the post-secondary file, and legislation in the near future. It remains important that pressure continues to build on this government to hold to these timelines, as uncertainty in the Funding Frameworks and Tuition reviews are leading factors in the University of Alberta's budgeting practices. Specifically, support for regulating international student tuition is at a critical stage, as we must ensure that public opinion appears to support some baseline predictability for these students.

In the News/To Note/Protest

'U of A! Not OK!': Students, faculty and staff protest University of Alberta fee increases

'If you're an international student living in Lister, odds are you're going to rethink coming back next year'

Travis McEwan · CBC News · Posted: Apr 06, 2018 7:12 PM MT | Last Updated: April 6



CBC Coverage

There has been widespread coverage of Friday's protest here at the University of Alberta. I won't flag all of it, however, I do want to highlight a few things for council to be aware of and to approach critically.

Foremost is statements like the following, made by President Turpin and some senior administration;

"Our international fees are among the lowest in Canada. Our residence fees are very, very affordable in comparison to our comparative set of universities. The fees that are being charged at the University of Alberta are well below the national average."

According to Statistics Canada data, international students in an arts and humanities program at the undergraduate level faced fees of \$20,395 this year at the University of Alberta and \$18,338 at the University of Calgary." - [CBC Edmonton](#)

The University of Alberta is making a concentrated effort to create two narratives, in particular around the fees and tuition of international students;

(1) is that international tuition at the UofA is competitive in terms of cost, which the above information outright disproves. In fact, institutions across the province, notably the University of Calgary have lower tuition and fees for international students. In addition, the University of Calgary has made prudent financial decisions which have allowed for it freeze international student tuition inline with the domestic student tuition freeze. The only comparable institution in the province has been capable of freezing and addressing costs, however, the University of Alberta senior administration has not.

(2) is that international students "must pay the full cost of their education and cannot be subsidized by public dollars". As far as I can ascertain, this is nowhere within policy or writing, as well, the university has never produced a number as to the cost of educating a international student and refuses to do so. All together this argument I believe to be a fabrication to build support for charging international students a higher cost. I believe the university sees an opportunity to play to stereotypes and miss-information within the general public and I am disappointed to see the university engage in this line of reasoning. For more information, please see the [Council of Alberta University Students International Student Affordability, Employment, and Housing in Alberta: Preventing Student Exploitation in Post-Secondary Education](#).

"Without stable and viable public funding institutions will argue that it is reasonable for universities in Alberta to increase costs to students to make up for revenue shortfalls. International students exist within an unregulated policy area that turns them into a much-needed revenue generation tool. Without regulation, these short-sighted tuition increases may price out students, create an over-reliance on international tuition, and ultimately allows for an unsustainable funding model for public universities."

Council should also be aware the the Ministry of Advanced Education has not accepted the University of Alberta's budget and does not intend to do so for some time. This means that the University of Alberta Board of Governors is completely within their right to call a meeting of the board to review the budget. It also means that the Ministry still is within its right to reject, or send back, the budget for further review. Continued pressure from students and stakeholders is critical to ensure that this happens, and I urge council to remain active on this file.

To Note:

- Myself, Jon, and incoming VP EX Adam Brown are preparing for changeover at both the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations and Council of Alberta University Students. Without getting too far ahead of ourselves as an organization, we hope to take leadership roles in these associations this year.
- Last Clash Bash is this Friday, I hope to come later in the night, but encourage all councillors to check out programming
- Fine Arts Building is having a roundtable on Wednesday to discuss security issues in the building. I would push all representatives this may affect to attend.
- I was extremely awkward in the presence of the Premier had have not felt that way since I first met Minister Schidt and the beginning of the year. Wild times.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Reed Larsen', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Reed Larsen