

July 21st, 2011

To: Students' Council

Re: Report to Council

Meeting with Doug Horner

Doug Horner is a candidate in the Progressive Conservative (PC) Leadership race. He was the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology (AET), until he resigned to run for leadership in February of 2011. The Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) had a meeting with Doug last Wednesday July 13th, where Rory and I attended. Doug is familiar with our group as we worked together many times when he was the Minister of AET. There were three main topics to be discussed at this meeting:

Increase Alberta Post Secondary Participation Rate:

Doug agreed with our vision, however his approach is different. He believes that the solution lies in inspiring youth in K-12 to attend PSE. He stated that students with parents who didn't attend Post Secondary Institutions (PSIs) were less likely to attend PSIs themselves. Doug also thinks reducing the costs through e-textbooks and other initiatives. He expressed interest in other initiatives such as scholarships and debt relief.

Doug stated that he believed Alberta should be investing more in PSE.

Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs):

As the Minister of AET, Doug is not only knowledgeable in specific issues such as MNIFs, but was also a key stakeholder in our conversations on MNIFs last year. I asked him why every time we were close to get a solution last year, the government followed closely by inaction. He explained how rushing through government policies is dangerous, as it might completely stop any progress for years. Doug understands the need for the regulation, however he argued that the regulation must satisfy both the Student Associations, and the Institutions.

Changes to the Election Act:

Doug was asked if he were to become the next premier, would he allow students to choose their ordinary residence before the next election. He said he has always been supporting CAUS' propositions to the Election Act, and would do the necessary changes.

Readings Readings Readings for CASA

I will be gone from Sunday July 24th to 29th for Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA, federal lobby group) for the annual Policy and Strategy Conference. This is where CASA decides on its lobbying and research priorities for the year. Most of the last two weeks have been spent on CASA pre-Policy and Strategy Readings. I have spent time reading: PSE reports on Federal issues, CASA policies/Bylaws/Operating Procedures, Book Importation Regulation, Canada Student Loan Program, Canada Student Grant Program, International Student Visas/Work Permits. I am preparing to sell my own goals for federal lobbying to the 26 member organizations of CASA.

Cheers,
Farid

"ABC, A: Always, B: Be, C: Closing. Always Be Closing. ALWAYS BE CLOSING!" Alec Baldwin