

November 28, 2013

To: Students' Council

Re: Report to Council (for December 3rd meeting)

Introduction

Hello Council,

This report will be fairly brief, given that I've spent a good portion of my time since our last Council meeting in Ottawa. I will provide an update on CASA's advocacy week, as well as the meetings I've taken since coming back home.

Advocacy Week in Ottawa:

CASA's annual lobby week in Ottawa was, in short, a great success on all fronts. Between all 24 member schools of the organization, we managed to meet with over 120 government representatives in the span of four days. The majority of the representatives we met with were MP's, however some of them were also Senators and representatives from other groups (government and NGO's) who have a stake in post secondary. For example, I had the opportunity to meet with representatives from the Canada Student Loans Program, and other representatives met with the head of the Assembly of First Nations.

As a whole, it seemed there was a great deal of interest in the priorities CASA brought to the table. It seemed MP's (especially government MP's) were impressed with our asks surrounding improving Canada's student loan system. While the largest concern we heard was that there currently isn't money available for expanding the CSLP in the manner which we've been advocating for, we are hopeful these changes will be brought to the government table next fiscal year.

Other issues that we highlighted with MP's included removing the 2% cap on PSSP funding (which is funding for FMNI students to attend post secondary), as well as increasing funding towards Canada Student Grants Program and increasing awareness around mental health issues on our campus. I am incredibly happy that CASA brought the issue of mental table onto the federal governments table, and hopefully continuous advocacy in this area will achieve government reform.

Advocacy in Edmonton:

Since returning I have mainly spent my time catching up on emails, reports, policies, and other areas that require my attention. I have however also had the opportunity to meet with a couple MLA's since I returned home.

The first was PC MLA Donna Kennedy-Glans, who has always been a delight to meet with. She was very receptive to our concerns around tuition regulation, and ensured us that she would share these feelings with the Minister. I also had the chance to meet with Joe Anglin, who is a Wildrose MLA. He was very receptive to concerns surrounding rural student bursaries, as well as the upcoming review of the Post Secondary Learning Act. He was very open to the kind of student friendly regulations we've been lobbying on since the beginning of the year.

Next week I will have the opportunity to meet with Minister Horne, the Minister of Health. I will be focusing a large part of the meeting on mental health funding, as well as going over the rest of the CAUS priorities. I will update Council on this particular meeting in my oral report.

That's all I have to report right now. Please ask questions if you have any and best of luck on all your finals.

Thank you for your time,



Adam Woods

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