

**Date:** 05/27/20**To:** Students' Union Council**Re:** Vice President External 2020/21 Report 06/02/20

Hello Council,

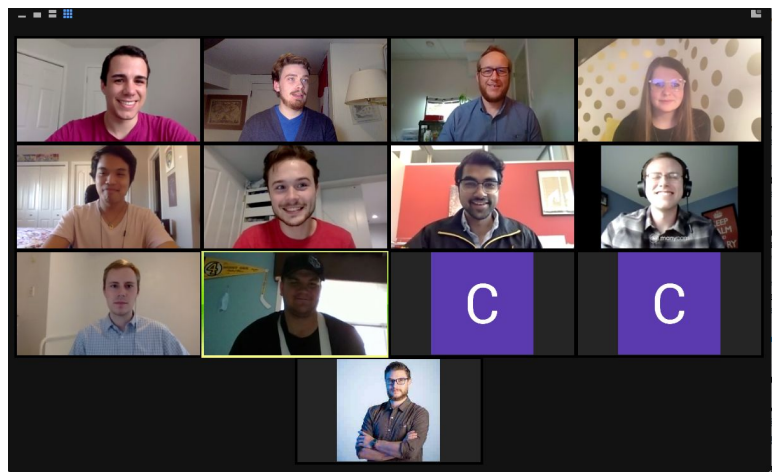
It has been a busy two weeks, but they have also been very interesting and productive. Now that our very time-consuming immediate introductory conference cycle is over, I will be able to transition my attention away from conferences and towards moving ahead with the projects promised in my platform. Stay tuned to several exciting new council reports over the next month, and follow UASU Executive on Facebook and @uasupresident or @rowanley on Twitter for updates in real time.

### **CAUS Chair**

I met twice with our external government relations firm, Alberta Counsel (ABC) to discuss our ongoing contract with them. By going through our government relations plan line by line and identifying items that were redundant or not useful, and through negotiations with our contact at ABC, I was able to secure a reduction of almost 50% in the monthly fee for the contract without losing, in my view, any significant value to students. This represents a very large change in CAUS's financial position, reducing the projected deficit from \$43,000 to a generous estimate of \$1,600.

I chaired the CAUS priorities meeting on the 22nd, where we unanimously agreed on four public priorities for the year. They are making quality education affordable, protecting students from the recession, promoting safe and healthy campuses (focusing on preventing campus sexual violence and creating a per-student mental health grant), and stopping the addition of more

restrictive red tape on universities. I also participated in a meeting with the Chairs and Executive Directors of the Alberta Students' Executive Council (ASEC) and the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (abGPAC). We discussed numerous opportunities for collaboration and coordinating our messages in the coming year, and our response to COVID-19.



I also worked with our Vice-Chair Marley Gillies and Executive Director Jon Mastel to organize internal reporting, accountability, and communication mechanisms. I will be starting numerous new CAUS projects in the next two weeks.

### **CASA Foundations**

Myself and President Agarwal spent three days at the virtual Foundations conference of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA). Foundations is mostly a series of seminars meant to help us get to know the federal advocacy landscape and learn more about CASA. We also participated in priority identification sessions, where we discuss what matters to students at our home associations. I used the opportunity to raise the more Alberta-specific concerns, like continuing student employment aid measures after the economy reopens and rural internet infrastructure.

I was elected to CASA's National Advocacy Committee, which organizes and runs campaigns like last year's very successful Get Out the Vote campaign, and the previous year's student mental health campaign. We also elected the new Chair and Board of CASA-- next year's chair will be Bryn Chastelain from Nova Scotia, though this is the first year in some time with no Alberta representation on the Board.

### **Campus Saint-Jean**

Myself and the rest of the executives attended a virtual citizens' meeting organized by the Association Franco-Albertain de l'Alberta (AFCA) to discuss the impact of provincial cuts on CSJ. Our staff and I are working on a series of plans for how we can assist the AFCA in reducing damage to Campus Saint-Jean (CSJ). We are in the process of arranging a meeting between our UASU External Advocacy team and the AFCA senior leadership to discuss ways to work in a complementary way. In our advocacy on CSJ issues, we will be guided by the CSJ political policy, which I would highly recommend every councillor read.

Sincerely,



University of Alberta Students' Union Vice President External  
**Rowan Ley**