

Date: 11/17/20

To: Students' Union Council

Re: Vice President External 2020/21 Report 11/17/20

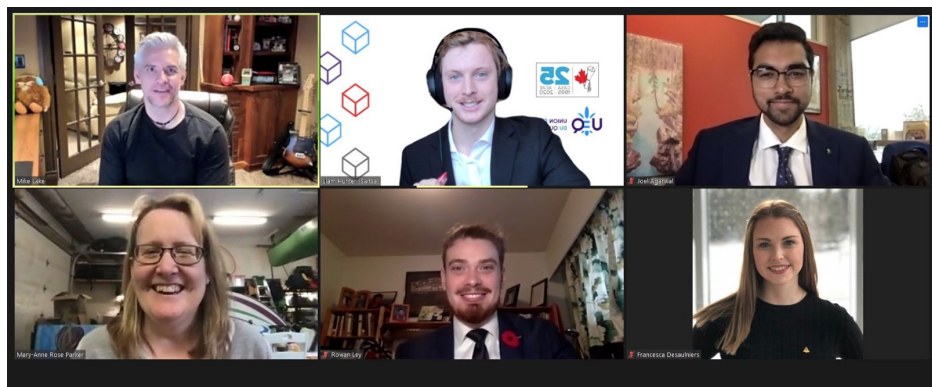
Hello Council,

I hope you all enjoyed your reading week and your midterms have gone well. I'm mostly sad because this is the end of my road biking season, and with gyms closed, it's harder to stay motivated to keep fit. But, with the announcement of the Pfizer vaccine last week, there seems to be some hope we might be on campus in person next fall! Let's all keep our fingers crossed and hope all our favourite in-person activities can return next year.

MP Advocacy Meetings

President Agarwal and I have been participating in the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations digital advocacy month. You can check out #digitalstudentsonthehill to see some of our work on Twitter. I've met with MPs Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre), Mike Lake (Edmonton Wetaskiwin), Greg Fergus (Hull-Aylmer), and Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre). We also have a full slate next week!

Our advocacy priorities at CASA for the year include expanding the Apprenticeship Incentive Grant so that apprentices can get funding to buy tools in the first year of their program, maintaining \$83 million in one-time pandemic mental health funding benefitting Indigenous students, including co-ops and work-integrated learning automatically in international students' study permits, and expanding research



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granting agency funding to provide a higher ratio of student research grants.

Alberta 2030 Engagement

The Alberta 2030 post-secondary review is continuing (and arousing some controversy). We expect to get the recommendations in mid-December. President Agarwal and I, as well as ASC VP External Beth Blanchette and ISA President Chanpreet Singh, participated in student roundtable discussions last week. We continue to work to influence the direction of the review to be as student-friendly as possible. I have also been continuing to participate in Guiding Coalition meetings.

I mentioned that the review was stirring a bit of controversy. Check out these two blog posts by Alex Usher. Mr. Usher is the most notable Canadian post-secondary commentator and consultant. While I'm not qualified to confirm what he says, his perspective on the review and its cost is interesting.

<https://higherstrategy.com/how-the-alberta-pse-re-think-going-part-1/>

<https://higherstrategy.com/how-the-alberta-pse-re-think-going-part-2/>

Provincial Action on Campus Sexual Violence

I have been working quite hard in the last few weeks to push sexual violence action to the top of the agenda in the Advanced Education department. I sent a letter and met in late October with the Department's stakeholder relations team, and did my best to explain why urgent action was required this year. We set up a follow-up meeting with myself and the chairs of the other two major provincial student groups to discuss further, and we were able to get a plan created for the process in the next months. We divided up our proposals into two categories-- things we can deal with now, and things that require more careful research and development. We expect in the next few weeks to see a list of short-term policy measures they can implement this year, and a long-term plan for more complex aspects like training and consent culture. I'll be able to give more specifics once the announcement is made, but this is very exciting and is a big step forward on sexual violence advocacy.

Have a great week!



University of Alberta Students' Union Vice President External
Rowan Ley