

October 28th, 2016
To: Students' Council
Re: Report to Students' Council

Council Report #13: Freeze! Tuition, Stay Where You Are

Hello Council,

Welcome to the special Halloween Edition of your bi-weekly council report from the Office of the Vice-President (External). This week we'll be discussing a few big bone-rattling developments in the world of external advocacy! So grab a broom and hold onto your hats, we're about to fly right into it!

Federal

CASA Conference in November (Advo Week)

Seeing as we are not scheduled to have another Students' Council Meeting until the end of November, I will give you a quick overview of the next scheduled CASA Conference. I will be travelling to Ottawa for the CASA Advocacy Week that will be taking place in November. During Advo Week I will be engaged in advocacy conversations with a number of federal MPs in Parliament. I will be sure to provide an update of the conference and advocacy work done in my next report to Council.

Meeting with Linda Duncan

Last week Jon (our Director of Research and Political Affairs) and I met with Linda Duncan the MP for the Edmonton-Stratcona riding. It was a very productive meeting during which we discussed federal student grants, the federal Repayment Assistance Program, federal student employment initiatives and research funding. The three of us had some good conversations about how these changes might be implemented and the benefits they would have for students nation wide.

Provincial

Extension of Tuition Freeze

On October 19th, the Provincial Government announced an extension to the existing tuition freeze that will last into the 2017/2018 academic year. This freeze is a very big development

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on the provincial advocacy front as it provides protection from cost increases on tuition to domestic students for another year. This is coupled by an equally large announcement that after much advocacy, the provincial government is finally starting the consultation process on a review of tuition and fees, which will also include international student tuition. Both of these have been consistent and central points of advocacy that CAUS has been working on for a long time. Though students are excited to hear that an extension to the existing freeze has been put into place, I and many others are more excited to find out what sort of changes the government proposes to make through their Review on Tuition and Fees. Though the freeze provides temporary aid to many of our students, the results of the review will help shape and determine the cost of education for many students here in Alberta. I will be sure to update council on any developments being made with regards to Tuition and Fees.

CAUS Fall Advocacy Days of Action

Similarly to the CASA conference that I will be attending before our next Council Meeting, CAUS has scheduled a couple of days of action where student leaders from across the province will meet at the Legislature and advocate directly to the Leaders and/or Ministers and Critics of our various political parties. I will be sure to update council on these meetings as apart of my next report to council.

Advocacy Meeting - Chief of Staff for Minister Deron Bilous

Last week we met with Adrienne King, Chief of Staff to the Minister Bilous of Economic Development and Trade. We had a great meeting with Adrienne about SFA, mental health, student employment and student residence. She was very interested in our points, all in all a stellar advocacy meeting.

UASU

EMP FEST

I would like to begin by thanking all the individuals who applied to sit on the committee. I am currently going through applications and will be finalizing the committee membership in the next few days. I will be sure to keep council in the loop as the initiative starts to come together.

Academic All-Canadian Breakfast

I, along with the rest of the exec, had the incredible opportunity to attend the Academic All-Canadian Breakfast which celebrated the hard work of our Varsity athletes who have an academic average over 80%. It was incredible seeing so many hard-working and determined students receiving the recognition they deserve.

*OFFICE OF THE
VICE PRESIDENT (EXTERNAL)*

That's all for this weeks episode of VP (External) reports. I hope you all have a great Halloween! Stay safe, collect candy, ???, profit. If you have any questions or comments please feel free to shoot them my way!

Happy hauntings,
Mike Sandare