

**Date:** 2022/01/21

**To:** Students' Union Council

**Re:** Vice President External 2021/22 Report #18

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**Dear Council,**

**Below is a summary of the work I have been up to since our last Council meeting.**

#### **Edmonton Student Alliance**

I have been working alongside Vice-Chair Jerilyn Kotteniski of the ESA to complete our priority document and schedule meetings with City Council members for our advocacy week in February. I am pleased to say that it has been going well. We have already had half of City Councillors respond to scheduled meetings and we are waiting patiently for more. Furthermore, we are trying to gather more information on what students' transit experience has been like since the implementation of the Bus Network Redesign. So please, if you used to come to campus earlier this fall, go fill out the perks survey and share with your friends.. It will not take you more than 2 minutes to complete.

#### **CASA**

Our Board of Directors had our first meeting of the New Year since the end of last semester. During this meeting, we affirmed the online vote to move Supercon in person among other things. We released the job description for the Executive Director last week and we are now waiting for more applications to come in. We are also in the process of hiring a new Policy Research Analyst and are continuing to plan and organize for a digital advocacy week that will be taking place in February.

I am also pleased to update that the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program (CSFAP) disability definition regulations were 'Gazetted' just before Christmas and there will be given time for consultation and input from stakeholders. As CASA has a seat on the National Advisory Committee on Student Financial Aid, our interim ED Jared Maltais will be on that committee to offer feedback. When completed the changes to these amendments would expand the eligibility of students with disabilities by recognizing persistent and prolonged disability in addition to permanent disabilities like mental illnesses. We anticipate that the amendments to the regulation will be fully complete by August 1st so that it is implemented for the next school year.

#### **CAUS**

CAUS has been in conversation with the Ministry of Advanced Education to push the government to supply more masks and testing kits to Post-Secondaries. I also asked our Chair, Rachel, to push for more mental health support and funding. During our conversation she informed me that the Chief of Staff had been in contact with the Ministry of Health about supplying masks and rapid test kits but they were waiting for a response.

The Ministry was also scheduled to make an announcement on the provincial review of Campus Sexual Violence policies on Jan 18th, at Mount Royal University, however rising cases of COVID-19 meant this announcement has had to be pushed to a later unidentified date.

We also decided to let go of our Organization Reviewer. This was due to the fact that they had committed to providing a report by December 20th, however, we did not receive one. We then pushed the deadline to Jan 1st, yet still nothing was received. This was disappointing to say the least, nevertheless, the members of CAUS still see value in an objective outsider reviewing the organization. In the interim, members have decided to use the time that would have been scheduled for our Calgary Counterparts to hold a discussion centred around reviewing and transforming CAUS.

### **Notable Meetings**

#### **CSA/ESA check in**

I met with the Chair Austin Deck and Vice Chair Rachel Timmermans (also Chair of CAUS) of the Calgary Student Alliance. I have found these meetings to be very beneficial in offering each other advice and updates on how we can improve our municipal advocacy.

#### **Senate Communications/ Alumni Council Priority Programs**

During my Senate meeting, we discussed ways we can provide Social Media training to Senate members to help bolster and share the activities and initiatives produced by the UofA. We also discussed what students would like to see in a convocation speaker, members discussed wanting to hear from students what they are interested in. I offered to connect Senate staff to come talk to CoFA and receive that feedback directly from student leaders.

During my Alumni Council Priority Programs meeting, we discussed ways the UofA could boost its fundraising efforts with Alumni and how it could improve and motivate more student volunteers for Giving Day as well as where fundraising efforts should focus on. I was pleased to hear Alumni Council members vocally support that money fundraised should be going towards student group support for events, scholarships, bursaries, research funding and more ways to improve student life.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

- Catherine Swindlehurst
- Hiring of PRA
- Alumni Council

I wish you all the best and as always, never hesitate to reach out to me for questions.

Yours Externally,



University of Alberta Students' Union Vice President External  
**Christian Fotang**