

**Date:** 09/22/20

**To:** Students' Union Council

**Re:** Vice President External 2020/21 Report 09/22/20

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Dear Council,

I hope you have all been getting accustomed to your online classes and still finding ways to enjoy community and student life online. I have been having a pretty good time in my history course this semester, and am grateful for all the effort many of our instructors have put into adapting their materials for our new environment. It has also been a productive few weeks at work, and I am glad to be taking a vacation soon-- I will be away from September 26th to October 4th. In that time please contact President Agarwal if you have urgent questions about external advocacy.

### **University VP External Relations Search Committee**

To reduce executive compensation, the University has consolidated the executive positions of VP Advancement (which managed fundraising) and VP University Relations into one position, called the VP External Relations (VPER). The VPER will handle all government and community relations, branding and marketing, and overseeing fundraising. As you might remember, I was appointed by Council to be our representative on this search committee. The committee has now met twice and will continue to meet throughout September and October as we choose our candidate. You can check out the job posting here:

<https://www.eluta.ca/spl/vice-president-external-relations-9ed7c67acba21ea8d70fca2089b7d4c5>

### **Annual Advocacy Tour Planning**

As the Legislature and House of Commons are finally on recess for a few weeks, Robbie Nelson, our External Advocacy Advisor, and I have been planning a series of meetings with as many local MLAs and MPs as possible in the next month. To start, next week, we are meeting with MLAs Thomas Dang (Edmonton-South), Rakhi Pancholi (Edmonton-Whitemud) and Jon Carson (Edmonton-West Henday). We plan to discuss the CAUS priorities for the year, including improving student financial aid and granting, an effective student role in governance, sustainable funding for institutions, sexual violence prevention and response, and rationalized mental health funding. We are continuing to schedule meetings with MLAs and MPs from all parties from across metro Edmonton.

### **Alberta 2030 Review: What's Happening?**

As you will remember from my presentation in August on the Alberta 2030 post-secondary review, the Alberta government is currently doing a review of the whole Alberta post-secondary system-- including how funding is allocated, what programs institutions offer, how institutions are governed, etc. The review is now about half complete. I have so far gone to three meetings of the Guiding Coalition, the discussion panel of 17 stakeholders that advises the consultants. The Minister has said that there will be 6-8 town halls in the next two months along with opening surveys for public engagement. Of course when that happens, we will make sure you know and do everything we can to get students out to those events in numbers.

**Alberta Student Umbrella Groups Agreement**

I have signed an agreement as CAUS Chair with the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (abGPAC) and the Alberta Students' Executive Council (ASEC), which represent graduate students and colleges and polytechnics respectively. The agreement commits to holding regular update meetings and sharing information about our projects and proposals. This is a very big improvement in our relationship with other student groups around the province, which is a big deal-- at the end of the day we share most of the same concerns and being divided has not served us well in the past.

**Ministerial Response to Campus Sexual Violence**

Last week I organized a meeting between staff from the Minister's office and the umbrella group chairs to discuss ways the Minister could respond to campus sexual violence on campus while we are waiting on a window for legislation. Particularly, we are asking for the recommendations of the CAUS white paper on campus sexual violence(<https://www.caus.net/s/CAUS-Sexual-Violence-on-Campus-2020-v3-PRINT-no-crops.pdf>) that do not require new funding to be implemented by order of the Minister.

Enjoy your September as the air starts to get chilly and the river valley looks at its most beautiful-- this is always my favourite season and I hope you all have a good fall.

Sincerely,



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