

May 17th, 2016

To: Students' Council

Re: Council Report 1

Student's Council Report #1: The Dawn of the 2016-17

Hello Council,

It was the beginning of May when it first appeared: a new executive, a new council, the start of a brand new year. Excitement abound, as word spread around about those representing their peers. This is a good year ahead knowing everyday I'll get out of bed, ready to advocate for students of all years. Dear council, you're great. Please don't hesitate, if you have anything to ask me this year!

-Mike Sandare

Hey all!

I thought I'd start us off with a little poem to begin the year right! I would like to start off my first official report to council by saying how excited I am to be working with all of you this year! I look forward to getting to know each and everyone one of you as the year goes on. As I mentioned in the poem above, I will be here for you if you ever have any questions. I (and the rest of the exec) will always be there for you if you need any help during the year, so please don't hesitate to ask!

These past few weeks have been pretty jam packed. Thankfully, I am confident in saying that I, along with the rest of the team, have really settled in and are ready to start the year strong! In this report I will be covering all the big things that have happened in the past couple weeks.

Transition// Exec Retreat

I had an absolutely amazing time while we were away at our Exec Retreat, which went from April 27th until May 3rd. It was an incredible opportunity for us to learn more about each of the different portfolios, as well as Council as a whole. Not only did the retreat provide the new Executive Committee with an opportunity to learn more about the ways in which our portfolios will interact, as well as a chance to come together and bond, it provided us access to knowledge and insight from the outgoing Executive. Throughout the process I was able to learn more about our roles as well as refine my vision for the upcoming year. It was an experience I will never forget!

Local Advocacy: Edmonton Student Alliance (ESA)

I've got some exciting news when it comes down to the local advocacy front! On May 11th I was elected to become the new Chair of the Edmonton Student Alliance! Alongside Katie Spencer (the VP X of NAIT and our new Vice-Chair) I look forward to advocating as a part of an organization that is made up of all the post-secondary institutions in the city of Edmonton, bringing together the voices of roughly ~96,000 students city wide. As an organization that is only two years old, I am excited to help grow the ESA into a voice that can truly empower students within the city of Edmonton.

During the meeting we had the opportunity to discuss municipal advocacy priorities with President Krispin of Concordia University of Edmonton. We learned more about the advocacy being done by the Presidents as well as Provosts of the Post-Secondary Education (PSE) Institutions in Edmonton, the most interesting being their push to brand Edmonton as a Post-Secondary city.

In addition, we are preparing for our inaugural meeting, during which we will decide the advocacy priorities of the group over the course of the year.

Provincial Advocacy: Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) Changeover

Over the course of this weekend (May 13th to 16th) Fahim, Jon (our DRPA) and I will be heading to Canmore in order to take part in our provincial advocacy group's (CAUS) changeover. At changeover we will be discussing and setting the provincial advocacy priorities for the next year, as well as electing a new Chair and Vice-Chair for our organization. I am looking forward to providing Council with more information during our meeting on the 17th!

Federal Advocacy: Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) Conference

Over the past couple weeks I have been preparing for the our federal advocacy organization's (CASA) conference in Ottawa. From May 20th to 29th Fahim, Jon and I will be leaving to Ottawa in order to engage with our SU counterparts from across the country. At this conference we will be learning more about the federal government's impact on PSE, in addition we will be discussing goals and establishing leadership for the next year. I will be sure to let all of you know how it goes in my next report!

UASU-Centric Items: Office Hours, Letters for Fort Mac and a new Chancellor-Elect for the UA Senate

Office Hours:

As a way to ensure that the Executive is more accessible to students on campus, all of the Execs have opened up office hours to all students! I personally think that this would be a great way for the Executives to engage in meaningful discussion with students. I have opened up my office from **11am to 12pm every Friday**, so please feel free to pop by! I'm open to discuss whatever is on your mind. Be it council/exec related questions, personal conversations, casual conversations, or even just where the best donair in the city is located, I plan on leaving this time slot free to discuss anything with anyone!

Letters to Fort Mac

As I am sure we all know, a fire has devastated one of our neighboring communities here in Alberta. The unfortunate truth is that this travesty has shattered the livelihood of many Albertans, leaving thousands without homes. As a show of respect and solidarity to those who have been affected by the Fort Mac fire, we have sent out letter addressed to the two MLA's who represent Fort-McMurray, MLA Brian Jean (who unfortunately lost his family and childhood homes) as well as MLA Tany Yao. In addition, we have sent out a letters to the MP who represents Fort McMurray, the Hon. David Yurdiga as well the president of the Keyano College Student Association. We hope that these letters provide help provide solace to those who have been affected by the fire. With these letters we would like our fellow people, students, and Albertans to know that in times of crisis, they are not alone.

Chancellor-Elect for the UA Senate

Just a quick announcement to let everyone know that the Chancellor-Elect for the University of Alberta Senate is Doug Stollery. I have heard that he is a wonderful man and very student friendly! I am looking forward to working with him on the Senate throughout this next year!

So that just about covers the first two weeks in office! I believe it has been a great start, and am only looking forward to the rest of the year. I look forward to keeping you all updated on my progress as Students' Union Vice-President (External) throughout the next year!

Until next time!

Best regards,
Mike Sandare