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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

**STUDENTS' UNION**

OFFICE OF THE  
VICE PRESIDENT (EXTERNAL)

June 23rd, 2016

To: Students' Council

Re: Report to Students' Council

### **Council Report #7: Policy & Strategy (the summer shakedown)**

Hello Council,

Welcome back to Council Reports from the Office of the Vice-President (External). So begins our final summer month! It's surprising just how fast August has come around, but it's exciting nonetheless to watch as university life becomes more and more lively by the day! It has been an interesting past couple of weeks, and I am excited to share them with you. So heeeeerrrrreeeee's the summer shakedown!

#### UASU

##### Art Committee

As I am sure a few of you already know, I have recently been appointed to chair the UASU Art Committee! For awhile now, the Students' Union has been looking to create a committee that would focus on improving the Students' Union Building by doing things such as the acquisition of art. This committee will focus on ways to improve student experience and interaction with SUB through art. There will be three student at large positions open for application. Applications for student at large positions will open in the next few weeks, so if you're interested (or know anyone who might be) tell your friends, and keep your eyes peeled!

##### GovWeek

As I'm sure we all know, registration for GovWeek events ended Friday August 5th. I am excited to announce that the Office of the Vice-President (External) is working in partnership with the Political Science Undergraduate Association (PSUA) to host an event on September 22nd from 6-11pm. For the past few weeks we have been working on a live music mixer event that will be bringing together students, as well as members of government. The goal of the event is to host a relaxed environment where students can get to know members of government, and vice-versa, over live music, food and beverages! The event will be taking place on the SUB Patio/Atrium, and will be open to all students. I will be sure to continually update council with developments on the event as the weeks go on. Be sure to come check out GovWeek, and especially the Student-Government mixer event!

#### CAUS

##### Meeting with MLA Wes Taylor

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On August 3rd, I had the wonderful opportunity to meet with Wildrose MLA Wes Taylor. I am excited to report that we had some very good conversations on student issues such as Student Employment, Mental Health, Student Financial Aid, as well as Student Residence. I am happy to note that he was very receptive to our advocacy points and showed a keen interest in issues centering around Student Residence. He was open to learning more about the student perspective on these issues, as well as what policy solutions we may have.

### CASA

#### Policy and Strategy Conference

Much of my time over the past week was spent in Winnipeg for CASA's Policy and Strategy (PoliStrat) conference. I am happy to report that the PoliStrat conference was very productive and has helped the organization finalize its goals for the year. The most notable aspects of the conference were setting priority themes for the year, the National Advocacy Team, and the Trades and Tech Committee.

The main reason for setting priority themes for the upcoming year is to focus our advocacy and policy priorities, as well as to set direction on building our advocacy document. I am excited to announce that our themes fall into four categories, which align well with our Executive goals for the year. The four themes are: Economic Barriers to PSE, Student Employment, Research and Innovation, as well as Student Wellness. These four themes work to build direction and focus, for any further questions on the specifics of these themes please feel free to come and talk to me!

During the conference the National Advocacy Team (NAT), had the opportunity to sit down and strategize face to face for the first time in a few months. We were able to have some strong conversations about advocacy and present our direction to the membership for a vote. As productive as it was, there were some minor speed bumps the NAT had to overcome, the biggest being the prospect of a campaign. There are a few of you who may remember me saying that NAT was planning a Sexual Violence campaign that we were hoping to roll out some time this year, unfortunately that is not going to be the case. The NAT planned and prepared a campaign to propose to the general membership, and unfortunately the membership voted not to have a campaign this year. This was not for a lack of interest, as this is a major issue shared by most student associations, the reason for this is because for many SA's the timing did not line up. There are many institutions who are having major Sexual Violence campaigns in the fall term, and a CASA campaign would have happened in the Winter, which many argued would not be effective. However, on a brighter note, the NAT has developed an advocacy strategy for the year. We will be focusing on coordinating local lobby efforts, by keeping member SA's accountable through contact and support in order to ensure SA's are meeting with their local MPs. In addition, we are planning to have an advocacy webinar for our members at large! The goal behind this is to help students better understand advocacy and the role played by student advocates. So keep your eyes peeled because there very well might be an advocacy webinar at an SU near you!

The Trades and Tech (T&T) committee also had the opportunity to meet face to face and strategize for the first time in awhile. We spent much of our time discussing which

policies we felt needed review and deciding a course of action. I am excited to have been billed as one of the committee members in charge of looking at our Youth Employment Policies, specifically reviewing policies pertaining to funding for co-ops and internships. I'll be spending the next few weeks hunting for more information on funding models for these programs, information on student employment on campus. T&T will be collecting the information found and using it to inform the creation/revision of our policies on Youth/Student Employment.

I am happy to say that it has been a very productive past couple of weeks, and great time to be another year older (yay me!). If there is anything that you find interesting and want to learn more of, I'll be changing my office hours for the next week to "by appointment" as opposed to Friday at 11am (seeing as I'll be away with the rest of the exec at SUDS!). So if you're ever a little curious please feel free to shoot me a message at anytime and we can set up a meeting. I hope you get out there and enjoy your last few weeks of summer, the fall semester is coming up fast so be sure to get all your summer shakin' out while you can!

Remember to Never Say Never,  
Mike Sandare