



September 16th, 2016
To: Students' Council
Re: Report to Students' Council

Council Report #10: Festivals and all the Fun Things

Hello Council,

I hope you've been enjoying WOW and other such fun things during your first few weeks back to uni! It's been busy for us as well! So with out further ado, heeeeeerrrrreeeee's the VPX Report

Federal

National Advocacy Team – Advocacy Webinar

On the federal front, the national advocacy team has given the go ahead for CASA staff, and student NAT Board Member Tristan Bray, to make an online webinar focused around advocacy how-to. The webinar has been developed to help inform students, especially members of council, how advocacy works and best case practices when doing it. We hope that the webinar will help encourage students to advocate in spheres that matter to them, as well as remove the veil of mystery around how advocacy works.

Provincial

Ministerial Meetings

In the past couple weeks I have had the privilege of meeting, and advocating to, two very important Ministers to students. The first, Minister Brian Mason of Infrastructure and Transportation met with us on Friday the 9th. With Minister Mason, a former VP External here at UASU, we focused our conversation around issues such as Tenant Rights for students in residence, Student Employment, and Deferred Maintenance. However, we were also able to have an in depth conversation on Mental Health Funding as well as touching on Student Financial Aid.

The second, Minister Marlin Schmidt of Advanced Education, met with us on the 14th. We had a very robust conversation on Student Financial Aid, Mental Health, and Tenant Rights. We also spoke about the Deferred Maintenance needs at the UofA, as well as Student Employment and the \$15 Minimum Wage. With regards to Minimum Wage, I let him know that we have yet to hear the opinion of council and how this issue affects students.

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GovWeek

There are two very big events in GovWeek that have to do with provincial advocacy.

- 1) **Monday 19th at 1PM: Minister Schmidt in SUB Alumni Room:** The first is an event I have been working hard to coordinate and pull together. The Minister of Advanced Education will be coming to the SUB Alumni room at 1pm on the 19th to speak about the student impact through participation in the community. He will likely speak to student involvement in advocacy, and the changes we as students have made. He will also be having a Q&A Session so come check that out!
- 2) **Friday 23rd from 3-7:30pm: Celebration of Governance After Party:** The second event is one that our friends at the PSUA and I have been working hard to make happen. The Celebration of Governance After Party (CGAP) is an event focused on bringing students and politicians together in a casual setting that allows for open conversation. CGAP is a live music mixer (with food, beer, and non-alcoholic drinks) where students have the chance to meet local elected representatives. We should have members from all three levels of government coming by, as well as MLA Edmonton-Center David Sheperd playing live music with his band. I encourage all of you politically inclined folk to come out and meet members of government, have a conversation and see what happens next! (18+ please bring your gov't ID).

UASU**WOW**

The Week of Welcome was absolutely incredible! I spent much of my time talking to clubs and learning what they have planned for the year. I also had a chance to check out a few of the incredible WOW events put on by our staff here at the SU. I am proud to say that every student I spoke to during WOW was absolutely loving what the SU had done, and I believe a HUGE thanks is in order for all of our paid and volunteer, student and non-student staff who worked tirelessly day in and day out to pull together and incredible Week of Welcome this year.

Podcast

I had the incredible opportunity to sit down with Chancellor Doug Stollery and ask about his time as a former student here at the UofA, the role of the Senate and Chancellor, as well as how the Senate can better connect with students and how students can better connect with the Senate. Be sure to check out the shiny new Voice of the Union podcast coming straight to your ears every council Tuesday starting, well this Tuesday!

Senate Orientation

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Myself, Councillor Jason Wang and former VP OPS-FI Cody Bodnarchuk had our Orientation to Senate meeting on the 8th. It offered us a chance to get to better know what our roles as Senators entail, as well as the opportunity to get to know the other Senators.

Employment Festival (EMP FEST)

The Employment Festival is an initiative I have been working on since May as away to try and remedy the issue of Student Employment here on campus. The Employment Festival will be a week long festival in the second week of February which will bring together sessions, events, speakers and workshops from different student groups, university bodies and external partners focused around student employment. I envision EMP FEST to target three demographics of students, those early in their degree, those in the middle of their degree, and those at the end of their degree. For those early in, EMP FEST hopes to help students find focus and help set the direction of their career path, as well as showcase the diversity of their degree in multiple career fields. For those in the middle of their degree, we hope to help these students build skills that will help them in employment (ie technical skills, resume building, networking, public speaking, etc.). And for those late in their degree we hope to connect them to professionals that might help them as they begin to start their career. EMP FEST has gained quite a bit of traction already, over the past few months I have spoken to the UofA departments of Alumni Relations, CAPS, and University of Alberta International. As well as external organizations such as Startup Edmonton and EPCOR, in addition to a number of faculty associations and clubs here on campus as well. In the next few weeks I will be putting together an advisory committee made up of students, university folk, and external partners so keep your eyes peeled for more information on that! Please feel free to ask me if you have any questions!

Welp, that's all for today folks I hope you enjoyed it!

May the force be with you,
Mike Sandare