



Winter AGM Report 2020
Vice President Communications
April 1st, 2020

To: Augustana Students Council

From: Rebecca Nicholson

Summary:

- Accomplishments
- Campaigns
- Committee Memberships
- Decision Processes
- Ongoing Projects
- Future Recommendations

Accomplishments

- ASA Anonymous Feedback Form
 - One of the platform points that I ran on was that I wanted to start an anonymous feedback system for the ASA. This was to give students the opportunity to approach the ASA about any feedback they may have, without having to identify themselves
 - The form is available through QR code and link that is on our Facebook page, Instagram and the website.
 - We have received some good feedback so far, and I look forward to continue using and encouraging students to make their voice heard
- The Wellness Wagon
 - The Wellness Wagon is a wellness initiative started by last year's VP Communications. It was meant to be a vessel for the spread and encouragement of student wellness throughout the entire academic year, not just during Wellness Week. This is done through giving away health and wellness resources and supplies, school supplies, and snacks and treats.
 - The aspect that I wanted to improve on this semester was utilizing the Wellness Wagon more than what had been done in the fall semester. During the beginning of the winter semester, the Wellness Wagon was

brought out of the office more, and we received very positive feedback from the initiative, so it will be continuing in the future.

- Off Campus Supper
 - One of our current Off Campus Reps, Daniela Carbajal Velez took the lead on planning and organizing the winter semesters Off Campus Supper. The dinner was held on February 13th, 2020, and we served pasta, salad and garlic bread. ASA reps did all of the cooking and prep work required to make the dinner, which helped to show off campus students that the ASA cares about them. Preparing all of the food ourselves also helped to save a bit of money.
 - Prior to the event, the ASA handed out approximately 100 tickets, many of which were given to students who do not often interact or engage with ASA events. This helped to include a wider variety of students, and thus a more diverse set of feedback.
 - Overall, the event went extremely well. We were able to prepare all of the food in time for the event start time, and we had more than enough food for students to eat as much as they wanted. We were even giving away the extra food to students, as we had made too much pasta and pasta sauce.

Campaigns

- ASA Elections
 - Awareness committee members implemented several different promotional strategies to encourage students to run, and vote.
 - We had quite a few students who were engaging with ASA reps and promotional material during the nomination period. However, the campaign period was cut short due to Covid-19 restrictions, so student engagement was low during the election period. We will be implementing similar strategies next year in hopes of increasing awareness and engagement in student governance.
- Wellness Week
 - Each Wellness Week, the ASA promotes various different health and wellness strategies to help students get that extra little bit of “wellness” during the particularly difficult parts of the academic year
 - This year is a little different due to Covid-19 restrictions, so we are hosting Virtual Wellness Week!
 - Using the pre-existing Wellness Week budget, we have given away ‘e-cards’ to students to provide a small amount of financial support. Later

in the week, we will also be releasing a survey to collect information about and for the ASA, and will be giving away one large monetary prize!

- ASA reps have also been curating health and wellness tips and strategies, which have been, and will be posted all week, and will continue to be shared after Wellness Week ends.
- The ASA is also testing the uptake and student involvement in virtual events, such as Netflix watch parties

Committee Memberships

● Internal Committees

- Augustana Students Council - Voting Member
- ASA Executive Committee - Voting Member
- Awareness Committee - Chair

● External Committees

- Committee on the Learning Environment - Voting Member
- Student Experience Advisory Committee - Voting Member
- Sexual Violence Awareness Committee (SVAC) - Chair
- Sexual Violence Prevention Working Group - Voting Member
- Student Life Awards Planning Committee - Voting Member
- Sustainability and Building / Design Committee - Voting Member

Decision Processes

Every decision that I make in my role as VP Communications is always done in the best interests of the students, based on my personal knowledge, as well as consultations with other ASA reps and students. I also consider decisions that will impact Augustana as a whole, and how students can benefit from those decisions made in the committee's that are external to the ASA. When we are exploring new initiatives, the first thing that comes to mind is whether it would be an impactful experience for the students.

Ongoing Projects

● ASA Website

- This year I made various changes to the ASA website, including adding tabs for each executive report, as well as a section for council meeting agendas and minutes to be posted under. Students now have access to all of our reports, and minutes so they know exactly what is going on. However, I believe that our website is ineffective and it has various bugs, so I am looking into solutions for this

- Despite these improvements, the ASA website is still underutilized due to the website itself. The site has not been updated and maintained thoroughly since it was created many years ago. This year I want to create and implement a plan to finally improve the website, and make it usable once again.
- “Meet the ASA” Campaign
 - This fall, I began the “Meet the ASA” campaign as a fun, personal way to meet our student representatives. We had a lot of student engagement, and it helped to establish the ASA, who we are, and what we do, from the beginning of the year.
 - In a few weeks, I will be starting our 2020-2021 “Meet the ASA” campaign, starting with all of the new executives members.
 - In the fall, I will also have promotional material similar to last year, that gives students an introduction to the reps, and offers an opportunity to learn more about the ASA.
- Virtual Office Hours
 - Once again, Covid-19 restrictions have changed the way we serve students. To ensure that we are still available to students, the ASA has recently launched “Virtual Office Hours”. Through Google Meets, students are able to directly connect and speak to an ASA rep. Currently this service is only available until the end of the semester, however, I will be looking into the feasibility of continuing “Virtual Office Hours” in the future.
- Virtual Wellness Week
 - I spoke about Wellness Week earlier in this report, so I will not add too much more here.
 - “Virtual Wellness Week” is a very new initiative, and we have very little to compare it to. I hope that the events and other materials are helping students, and encouraging health and wellness, and that students are enjoying this virtual substitution.
 - The feedback we get from this event will be useful when we plan future virtual events, and will provide much needed insight to how the ASA can continue services regardless of the conditions and situations that we are in. I look forward to continuing and planning virtual services and events this year that can occur regardless of extended periods of quarantine/online classes.

Future Recommendations

This is generally the section of the report that the current VPC leaves thoughts and recommendations on how to best represent and serve students. Since I have been

re-elected into this position for the 2020-2021 school year, I will simply be stating what I will, and hope to be working on through my second term.

Throughout this report, I have mentioned a few areas, tasks, events and campaigns that I will continue working on over the next year. I will also include a few other goals that I would like to accomplish. This includes:

- Having new and pre-existing ASA services be available online
 - Virtual Office Hours
 - Virtual Wellness Week
- Continuing making improvements to the ASA website
- Continuing creating transition documents and folders to ensure a smooth transition from year to year

Thank you for taking the time to read my report. If you have any questions, comments or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me through my email; asavpcom@ualberta.ca.

Rebecca Nicholson