



**Fall Annual General Meeting**

**Vice President Academic**

**Robel Ng'ong'a**

**23rd November 2020**

**To: Augustana Students' Council:**

**From: Robel Ng'ong'a**

### **Summary**

Greetings! First and foremost, I would like to thank you all, once again, for entrusting me to be your Vice President Academic for the year 2020/21. This year has been one that will be remembered for decades for the majority of us and it is no different for the ASA and specifically for the role of the VP Academic. Over the fall semester, I have worked on several programs, initiatives and processes that have been aimed at improving and enhancing the academic experience and journey for the great students of the Augustana campus community. Some of these projects have been completed while others are close to completion or still in the works. I will delve deeper into these projects later in the report, however, I am delighted with the progress the organisation and the VP Academic have made throughout the semester.

### **Events:**

- Student Town Halls/ Spilling the Tea on Virtual Learning

During the semester, my focus has been on implementing projects, as shall be discussed later in the report, over events due to the barriers and challenges revolving around virtual events.

### **Campaigns**

No campaigns have been done this year.

### **Committee Membership:**

- Agenda and Priorities Committee - Chair
- Augustana Student Council - Voting Member
- Council of Faculty Associations (COFA) Advocacy Board - Voting Member
- Curriculum Committee - Voting Member
- Executive Council -Voting Member
- International Students Council - Voting Member
- International Student Experience Committee - Voting Member
- Research Committee - Voting Member
- Residence Appeals Committee - Voting Member

### **Agenda and Priorities Committee: (Weekly Meeting, 1 hour long).**

The APC Committee is the committee that oversees aspects relating to the governance, and operations of the organization. I am the chair of this committee for the 2020/21 academic year. The committee began meeting after the Fall By-election. Throughout the semester, the committee has rigorously revised and updated policies that govern the association. We intend to thoroughly look at policies and bylaws to ensure they are up to date, facilitate the smooth operation of the organization and in case of need for update, we ensure to be proactive in our policy updates to cement the longevity of the policies. In addition to this, the committee has also been working on a potential restructure of the committee to ensure it meets the students' needs holistically from an academic perspective.

### **Meeting Attendance:**

I have attended all the meetings listed below:

- Agenda and Priorities Committee - Weekly, 1 hour
- Augustana Student Council - Weekly, Between 1- 2 hours.
- COFA Advocacy Board - 1 meeting this semester, 1 hour.
- Curriculum Committee - Bi-weekly, 1 hour.
- Executive Council - Weekly, 1 ½ hours.
- International Students Council - Monthly, 2 hours
- Research Committee - 1 meeting this semester, 1 ½ hours.

### **Rationale for Decision Making Process:**

In terms of decision making, I have always put the students I serve first. I always seek to make decisions that will without a doubt, bring positive changes or improvements for students. Since taking office in May, we have been faced with several circumstances and situations that called for critical thinking, evaluation and decision making from various parties within the campus and institution at large. I have always advocated for decision making focused on students' needs and wants, emphasizing that students are the backbone of our great institution.

### **Projects:**

Over the duration i have spent in office, i have undertaken/initiated the following projects:

- **ASA Fall 2020 Survey: Completed**

One of my goals this year is to develop academic programming that is student centered and focused. This was the inspiration behind the ASA Fall 2020 survey. The intention was to collect information that would assist in the creation of programs that Augustana students need and want during this academic year. The survey focused on demographics, the After U program, Academics, Student life and the ASA Pantry.

The survey provided us with vital information that informed the restructure of several programs such as the ASA After U program.

- **ASA After U Revamp: Completed**

The ASA After U program was one aimed at providing students with skills needed to excel post university. The program had been experiencing low event turnout for the last few years. In light of this, I looked into reasons why it was no longer a student favorite and asked students what they would like to see the program offer through the survey. The responses guided the first session which was recorded during the first half of the month of October. The delivery of the program was also altered to make it modern and student friendly. The first session will be available in the form of a podcast that enables students to listen to industry professionals at their own comfort, convenience and timings.

- **ASA Tutoring Program: In progress.**

One of the new initiatives I developed this semester was the ASA Tutoring Program. This program will be one that connects students to peer tutors from within the campus to help with academic challenges. This program will help enhance the campus community vision as it promotes peer support and the value of growing together. The program is in the later stages of development with all the administrative framework in place. Currently, the program is recruiting tutors to join and would like to encourage you to join if interested. The

application form can be accessed using the link: <https://forms.gle/Ndg3rXMgZFij5v26>

**Obstacles Encountered:**

The year has been a unique one as stated earlier on in the report. Echoing the sentiments brought out by my colleagues, this year has presented us with an array of unique challenges. One main challenge or obstacle I faced was not being able to interact with my constituents in person. I do believe this is a vital part of advocacy however I am pleased with the progress we have made via the means and resources available.

**Organizational Goals- Completed/Ongoing:**

One of the main goals the ASA had coming into this year was to foster the sense of community within our campus virtually. It was a goal that we knew would require immense effort to accomplish but nonetheless we have been able to make remarkable strides within this aspect. Through individual initiatives such as the tutoring program or student lounges, to organizational ones such as the tea spilling sessions, we have been able to move closer to the goal of fostering a strong sense of community within which I am immensely proud of.

**Future Recommendations:**

The year to date has been one of the most exciting as it has kept all of council on their toes. I would encourage everyone to keep up the spirit, hold in tight and finish the last half of the semester with a bang. Remember, it is always ten times better doing it with a smile on your face!