

**To:** Augustana Students' Council  
**From:** Naomi Mahdere, Vice-President Academic  
**Date:** March 20, 2019

**Summary:**

➤ **Committees**

○ **Internal**

- APC [Chair]
- Executive [Voting Member]
- GC (Grants) [Voting Member]
- Policy Review [Chair]

○ **External**

- CLE [Voting Member]
  - SAC Sub-committee [Co-Chair]
- COFA (Advocacy) [Voting Member]
- Curriculum [Voting Member]
- EDI (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) [Advisory]
- FC (Faculty) [Voting Member]
- I-Week (Planning) [Voting Member]

➤ **Initiatives**

- Programming/ AFTER U
- Committee Proposals
  - IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility)
  - WIC (Wellness Initiatives)
  - AAC (Academic Advocacy)

➤ **Events & Advocacy Efforts**

- International Student Forum
- Humanities Café & Student Vigil

➤ **Experience / Term Review**

- Accomplishments
- Obstacles & Rationale

### Internal Committees:

- APC (~ 2 hrs/week)

This term, APC focused on completion of the VP Finance job description, councillor job description additions, editing granting policy and the sexual harassment policy, as well as detailing a wellness initiatives committee proposal. The VP Student Life job description is currently undergoing edits as will be the VPA job description in the coming weeks.

Current: VPSL job description

Upcoming: VPA job description

- Executive (~ 3 hrs/month)
- Policy Review (~ 2 hrs/month)

This term, the committee met on an individual, consultative basis to discuss policy changes and potential proposal initiatives.

- Grants (~ 2 hrs/month)

### External Committees:

- CLE (~ 3 hrs/week)

This term, I have focused my advocacy efforts in this committee towards the re-envisioning of SAC to include greater student input in both its organization and execution. In doing so, I have called for a subcommittee of CLE to be created where proposals for changes to CLE have been created. The content of these submitted ideas will most likely be implemented within the coming academic term which will hopefully lead to greater student engagement at the SAC.

I have also taken part in a minor review of technology in various buildings on campus to which classroom priorities were made for annual updates. In the following meetings we will discuss more closely SAC changes for implementation.

➤ COFA Advocacy (~ 2 hrs/month)

The campus-wide academic advising survey went out this term so, considering this to be our main focus for the year, the Advocacy Board has not been meeting as often. I am still waiting to hear back about how Augustana will receive campus-specific data and more meetings have been scheduled.

➤ Curriculum (~ 3 hrs/month)

This term, I have had the opportunity to take part in the revision of AUBIO/AUCHEM 388 (Biochemistry Lab), AUPSY 471 (Language Acquisition); the creation of AUIDS 201 (Great Problems Seminar), AUIDS 301 (Major Project), AUIDS 401 (Core Capstone); the approval of AUCSC 204 (Computing Technology in Society), AUCSC 218 (Web Design, Development and Scripting), AUPSY 407 (Selected Topics); and help develop CORE changes that will go into effect in the coming year(s).

➤ EDI (~ 2 hrs/month)

This term, I have had the opportunity to attend an EDI workshop where concerns were addressed about the strategic plan. I had three main concerns: (1) how to ensure that an unbiased view of diversity and inclusion efforts and supports are represented in a campus-specific manner on an EDI-focused website for the UofA (Goal 1.3), (2) why a top-down approach was taken rather than bottom-up, where focusing on faculty and staff who directly interact with students would be more impactful on influencing campus climate relating to EDI, and (3) that both Augustana and Campus Saint-Jean should have a seat at the table for these meetings alongside UASU NC representation since climate varies immensely from campus to campus.

- Faculty Council (~ 2 hrs/month)
- I-Week Planning (~25 hrs)

This term, in continuation of my work in the previous semesters, I worked with community partners to get student discounts for the month of February and I-Week in specific. Additionally, I took charge of the creation and execution of various programming.

#### Initiatives:

- Programming/After-U (~ 6 hrs)

##### Completed:

- (1) Researching Career Options
- (2) History & Indigenous Studies: Career & Grad Opportunities
- (3) A Financial Blueprint for the University Student P1: Basics
- (4) A Financial Blueprint for the University Student P2: Case Study

##### Upcoming:

- (1) Resume and Cover Letter Workshop
- (2) LinkedIn Workshop

- Committee Proposals (~ 8 hrs)

##### Completed / Passed:

- (1) IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility)

*The committee will exist to organize and advocate for or on behalf of improving inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility supports and efforts on campus. The existence of such a committee will provide room for group-specific representation in governance-affiliated work and greater engagement pertaining to student spaces on campus. The committee will function primarily through the collaborative efforts of students.*

(2) WIC (Wellness Initiatives Committee)

*The committee will exist to organize and advocate for or on behalf of improving wellness supports and efforts on campus. The existence of such a committee will provide room for group-specific representation in governance-affiliated work and greater engagement of students in wellness programming across campus. Additionally, moving wellness initiatives out of the VP Communications portfolio allows for greater attention to dimensions of wellness that are often overlooked--in particular: physical, intellectual, academic, financial, social, spiritual, occupational and environmental wellness. The committee will function primarily through the collaborative efforts of students.*

Current:

(1) AAC (Academic Advocacy Committee)

*The committee will exist to organize and advocate for or on behalf of improving supports for the student voice on academic matters as they relate to institutional committees of the U of A Augustana Campus.*

**Events & Advocacy Efforts:**

➤ Completed:

Humanities Café on Diversity

➤ Upcoming:

(1) Winter International Student Forum 2019

*This term, in continuation of last, I am working closely with the International Student Representative to develop a strategy for executing the forum. This goes hand-in-hand with recent job description additions to the International Student Representative portfolio in the Fall term.*

(2) Humanities Café on The Weaponization of Free Speech (tentative)

*It is my intention to co-host this session with a post-doc student to bring to discussion the philosophical boundaries of freedom of speech, censorship as it relates to anonymous platforms (e.g. chitter), and societal impacts of how we see freedom of speech in the Canadian context. The date is scheduled, however availabilities are tentative and this event may be either postponed or cancelled altogether.*

(3) Vigil to Commemorate NZ Mosque Victims

*It is my intention to plan a vigil alongside chaplaincy and the Augustana Muslim Society to not only show respect for the victims of these heinous attacks, but to also create an environment where students can stand in solidarity with their peers.*

**Experience / Term Review:**

➤ Accomplishments

So far 9 policies have gone through council as well as 2 committee proposals; 6 After-U events have been completed with 2 more to be rescheduled for the near future. 2 International Student forums have been planned in coordination with the International Student Representative and serious effort has been but towards the re-envisioning of both Councilor and VP job descriptions.

Additionally, I have spread myself fairly thin this semester for the purpose of attending, hosting, and supporting diversity-related initiatives on campus and in the community. While this effort was primarily for the benefit of students who may otherwise feel the ASA is unapproachable, participation in these groups informed the direction and methodology by which the ASA can interact in the future. This includes participation in the EDI working group under Faculty Council and the continual development of the IDEA committee framework with help from both the VP Finance and APC.

Ultimately, I feel that I have been successful in providing an avenue for students to approach the ASA by making myself more available to student groups in general, and have remained consistently vocal about representational disparity across the board--as it may relate to student academics, identities, or campus brand.

Using my knowledge of and connection to the humanities, I have created the opportunity to influence café topics so as to increase student engagement in the academic sphere, and related to emerging campus concerns.

➤ Obstacles

- Integrating schedules between executives and committee members.
- Task delegation can be difficult when initiative is not explicitly shown.
- Job description work can oftentimes be individual-oriented.
- Verbal assaults against individuals and the organization as a whole.
- Preparing adequate transition documents for the 2019/20 president.
- Having to prioritize institutional meetings over internal ones.

➤ Rationale

*While designing solutions to issues of immediate concern, we should always take into consideration, and make room to allow for, future improvements to the benefit of students at all costs.*

If you have any questions concerning this report, feel free to contact me at [asavpacd@ualberta.ca](mailto:asavpacd@ualberta.ca)