



Winter Annual General Meeting

Vice President Student Life

Jennae Matzner

March 20th, 2019

**To: Augustana Students' Council**

**From: Jennae Matzner**

**Accomplishments:**

Something I aimed to focus on during my year as VP Student Life was finding new ways to increase club participation, both from the clubs themselves and the student body. I did this initially by focussing on Club Fair, which allows clubs to promote what they do to new and returning students. This year we tried to increase turnout by adding the popcorn machine, music, and an activity that allowed students to enter into a draw for a \$100 gift card to the bookstore. I believe that this helped increase awareness for clubs in a fun way. After some feedback from Club Executives, I think it would be essential to incorporate a 3-week Club Fair for next year to ensure clubs get the recognition they deserve at the very beginning of the year. I plan on working on this during April to pass forward to the future VPSL so incorporate into the year.

Another goal I planned to reach this year was to update the events that are in the VP Student Life's transition folder to ensure that these events are up to date. Events have things that went well or that went bad, and so I want to make sure this transition binder highlights that to ensure these events are getting better every year. I have finished the orientation activities, FCB, AGT, Formal, and Mission Impossible. More work needs to be done on this, however I plan to have this finished by the end of the year for the next VPSL.

Myself and the Activities committee have been working hard on creating a replacement event for First Year Bowling, and we have some really exciting ideas that I have brought forward to the executives. Once we decide on the event, more work will be done to ensure everything is thought of for next year. This was definitely a collaborative effort with Matthew Caffaro, Abby Lee, and Dawson Mantyka, who worked really hard on coming up with new and exciting options for next year, so I would like to highlight them as this would not have been done without them.

This year I wanted more student involvement with our main three events (First Class Bash, Formal, and Last Class Bash). A way I did this was by having the student body vote for their favourite theme out of three chosen by myself and the Activities committee. I think this has went well, and it also took away the burden of having to choose an event that I think the student body might like.

### **Events:**

- **West Edmonton Mall Trip- 5 hours:** This event allows those who cannot drive or don't have access to a vehicle can travel to Edmonton to get any shopping done. We decided

to plan one close to the holidays because people may want to get Christmas shopping done, however due to low sign up, we had to cancel the event.

- **Casino Night- 15+ hours:** This event marked the beginning of the new term, and was extremely successful. The turn out was as expected, and it was wonderful to see the students enjoy a relaxing evening with fun casino games. Prizes were auctioned off, and since this is an alcoholic event on campus, it was great to see students drink responsibly on campus with no issues or incidents happening.
- **Club Fair- 5 hours:** The second Club Fair happened on January 30th, and although it went well, there wasn't as much student turn out as compared to the one in the first semester. I believe this could be due to the time in the semester, and perhaps student knowledge of clubs already. Despite that, it went well and I was happy to see the club booths and activities.
- **Winter Formal- 20+ hours:** Winter formal is an annual event we host in February to engage students in a fun, social event. The theme was Enchanted Forest. Due to gaining experience throughout the year, I think the event went smoothly with the only incident being someone puking on the bus. It seemed that everyone enjoyed themselves, drank responsibly, and had time to relax with their friends. We didn't sell as many tickets as we had anticipated, and I also went under budget for this event.
- **Staff vs. Students- 5 hours:** This event was supposed to happen on March 15th, and it is a floor hockey tournament where the staff and students get to battle for the viking cup. All proceeds are donated to KidsSport, so the event is a fundraiser as well. Unfortunately we didn't have enough student sign ups this year, and the event was

cancelled. In the future, I would recommend that promo goes out sooner to ensure student interest.

### **Committee Memberships:**

- **Internal Committees:**

- Activities Committee - Chair (1.5 hours a week)
- ASA Executive Council - Voting Member (2 hours a week)
- ASA Student Council - Voting Member (1-2 hours a week)

- **External Committees:**

- Student Activities Coordinating Committee (SACC) - Chair (2 hours a month)
- Club Budget Committee - Chair (8+ hours an academic year)
- Student Engagement Working Group - Voting Member (1 hour meetings as scheduled)
- Student Life Awards Planning Committee - Voting Member (5+ hours as of yet)
- Personal Identity Subgroup Committee - Voting Member (3 hours)
- Substance Use Framework Recommendation Committee - Voting Member (5+ hours)
- Orientation Planning Working Group - Working group member (2+ hours as of yet)
- Advisory Working Group - Voting Member (5+ hours as of yet)
- Betty Ostenrud Award Selection Committee - Chair (2 hours)

### **Decision Process:**

Throughout my decision making process when I am doing events, I often turn to activities committee for their feedback and input to ensure I am not the sole decision maker in these events. I also consider what the students want and prefer, and so I often try to get feedback from students to hear their thoughts about what they want at events and what could improve. For committees and other commitments, I make decisions based on what students at Augustana would value and what would benefit them, as my role on the ASA is to ensure that the student body is being heard and recognized.

### **Ongoing Projects:**

- **VP Student Life Transition Binder Update:** I've been working on the binder update throughout the year to ensure better transition of my predecessor. I have been updating events, including recommendations and some helpful tips. I will also be updating First Year Bowling and changing it to an event that is better suited for first years, on and off campus.
- **Replacement Event for FYB:** As mentioned before, we have planned to scrap first year bowling and instead create an entirely new event that will better include off campus first years. The Activities committee has been working hard on this throughout the year, and we have three potential ideas that I have brought forward to the Executives. After discussion, one will be chosen and hopefully will be incorporated for next year!
- **3-Week Club Fair:** This was suggested by club executives, and I hope next year we can incorporate it into the busy three week schedule. It will either look like an evening event with clubs, a typical club fair we have each semester, or potentially a part of orientation.

- **Last Class Bash:** The last large scale event I am planning right now is LCB. The theme has been decided as a decades party, which was voted on by the students! This event is similar to First Class Bash, but it's in place to celebrate the end of the academic year. This year we could not have it in the Taproom, so it will be at the Norsemen Banquet Hall, much like FCB and Formal. This will be April 12th!
- **Year End BBQ:** The purpose of this event is so again celebrate the end of the academic year. Each year we hope to have it outside, but that will depend on the weather. The ASA works with the cafeteria staff to feed Augustana students a good classic BBQ meal. This is on April 16th!

**Successes:**

I consider each event that I've put on so far a great success- at each event, I've gotten to watch the student body enjoy themselves and have fun, which was a large reason of why I wanted to run for this position. It is a wonderful feeling to watch others enjoy something you put on for that exact reason.

Further, one thing I've been most proud of is allowing my committee (Activites) work on a valuable addition to the VPSL portfolio (replacement First Year Bowling event). I believe it is extremely important to get new, fresh ideas from council, as it is a group effort and I don't think it is essential for the VPSL to make all decisions for events.

My most favourite and successful event was Winter Formal this semester. I felt at ease and comfortable throughout the night, and I believe this comes with experience as the VPSL. Working in this position has allowed for so much personal growth within myself. I started out

rather shy and anxious about the events I would put on. It was vital for me to please everyone and I doubted myself and my abilities often. But this semester I've grown a new confidence in my abilities as the VPSL. I am extremely thankful for this position and for the student body who believed in me when they elected me.

**Obstacles Encountered:**

I've encountered some obstacles regarding engagement- not every student will show up for an event, which is a reality we all face on the ASA. I'm working on ways to potentially increase engagement specifically in Clubs, and hope to improve future events and promotion for events to ensure we get off campus students to our events as well.

Each event had small hiccups, but that is expected. Some major ones have been not promoting events soon enough and having to cancel them (WEM Trip and Staff vs. Students), and ordering too much or too little for an event (too little food for Formal, too much alcohol for Casino Night).

On a personal note, as a student leader it is always difficult balancing your leadership position and school. I had to drop a class to maintain a work/life balance, and at some points it has been increasingly challenging to stay on top of everything.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email me at [asavpstu@ualberta.ca](mailto:asavpstu@ualberta.ca).

Cheers,

Jennae Matzner