



**March 5, 2016 to May 16, 2016**

We are pleased to submit this update on milestones met and progress achieved on our projects and plans.

### **SU Governance**

#### **New SU Strategic Plan**

In early April, the Students' Legislative Council (SLC) approved a new strategic plan for the organization, which details the SU's vision, mission, and values. This new strategic plan, to be reviewed again in three years, is attached.

#### **Orientation and Transition – 74<sup>th</sup> Executive and SLC**

The 74<sup>th</sup> SLC will take office as of May 2, 2016. Incoming SU Executives and Faculty Representatives participate in a rigorous orientation and training program to introduce and prepare them for their new roles and student leaders and advocates. For Executives, this orientation process includes job shadowing and a retreat with the outgoing Executives, a retreat with SU staff, issue-based orientation and transition sessions, provision of transition resources, and skills-training.

Incoming SLC members receive a handbook and transition resources provided by their predecessors, participate in pre-orientation sessions, and receive orientation and training for SU and university governance processes, including Robert's Rules of Order.

### **SU Programs and Services**

#### **Teaching Excellence Awards**

The SU honoured 34 faculty members and instructors for their commitment to student success at its annual Teaching Excellence Awards ceremony on April 20, 2016. Students determine the nominees and winners; 493 students submitted nominations for this year, 2,040 students filled out teaching evaluation forms, and an SU committee selected the award recipients. Award winners received an apple award and the SU will donate \$5,000 in recognition of the winners to the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning.

#### **Beverage Management Agreement**

The university has proposed a standardized beverage management agreement for all liquor license users on campus to delegate use of its liquor license under the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Act; however, the scope of the proposed agreement goes far beyond what is required by the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (AGLC). The SU is meeting with Campus Security to identify and clarify boundaries for when each party is responsible for security matters.

## MacHall Dispute

Mediation on the MacHall ownership dispute ended on April 15, 2016. The parties were not able to reach an agreement during the mediation period. The injunction hearing that occurred on May 5, 2016 was adjourned to June 3, 2016 because not all oral arguments could be heard in the time allowed in court. The university and the SU have agreed to a temporary extension of the agreement for MacHall until oral arguments are concluded and a decision is reached by the Justice.

## SU Campus Food Bank

The SU Campus Food Bank provides emergency food hampers to current students, staff members and alumni who have graduated less than two years ago. During the 2014-2015 school year, the Campus Food Bank saw a significant increase in the number of hampers distributed, and adults and children fed. The figures from the current academic year indicate that demand continues to increase.

	September 2014 to April 2015	September 2015 to April 2016
Number of Hampers	264	311
Number of Adults Fed	375	456
Number of Children Fed	139	173
Total Fed	514	629

## SU Breakfast Program

The SU provides free breakfast to undergraduate and graduate students. Based in the Q Centre, the Breakfast Program runs on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 8:30 am to 9:45 am. So far this year, an additional 336 students have accessed the program.

	September 2014 to April 2015	September 2015 to April 2016
Number of undergraduate students fed	4,167	4,425
Number of graduate students fed	514	616
Total students fed	4,681	5,041

## Volunteer Tax Program

Every year, the Volunteer Tax Program provides free income tax return completion to current undergraduate and graduate students, staff and faculty who meet the eligibility requirements. This year, the Volunteer Tax Clinic (located in the MacEwan Student Centre) was open between February 26 and April 8. The program also expanded its services by having a presence at the Foothills Campus on February 25, where the program coordinators and volunteers collected paperwork and answered questions. The program completed approximately 890 income tax returns during the 2015-16 academic year.

## Support for Student Clubs

- There are currently 397 student organizations registered with the SU.
- There were a record number of registered club events in March (668).
- Ten students have been named recipients of the Eric Lahoda SU Memorial Scholarship, which recognizes students who have made positive, meaningful and unique contributions to student life. Each recipient receives a \$1,000 scholarship.
- The SU held its annual Club Awards banquet recognizing excellence among registered student organizations. The club of the year is the Model United Nations Team and best new club is the Women in Business club. A full list of award winners is available on the SU website: <http://suclubs.orgsync.com/awards>

## **Advocacy and Representation**

### **Board Agendas and Supporting Documents**

The SU continues to be disappointed that that open meeting materials for Board of Governors meetings are not made available to the public prior to Board meetings; only the open session agenda will be made available on the Board's website in advance of meetings. This prevents stakeholders from having a full understanding of issues being decided by the Board and creates a significant barrier for those who may wish to provide the Board with their perspective. Although stakeholders may know the list of items to be addressed, there is no mechanism for the public to gain a full understanding of issues and provide added input, either directly to the Board or through a stakeholder representative, which could be valuable context for the Board to consider in decision making. As a result, any public feedback on Board decisions can only occur after decisions have already been made. We see this as a deliberate step backwards in the university's commitment to transparency and openness in decision making.

### **CAUS Advocacy Week**

The Council of Alberta Undergraduate Students (CAUS) met with over thirty elected officials in Edmonton during its annual lobby week in the first week of April. Students had the opportunity to meet with several ministers including the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Advanced Education. Issues discussed include:

- Tuition and fees
- Campus mental health funding
- Student financial aid funding
- Data and research on post-secondary education in Alberta
- The Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP)

### **UPass Advocacy**

The SU continues to advocate that Transit Bylaw (4M81) be amended to provide recourse for students to prove that they have a valid UPass and minimize the negative impact of expensive fines.

Calgary Transit has provided a response indicating concerns about fundamental fairness in enforcement practices under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, emphasizing that there are equity issues in how Calgary Transit deals with other groups including Low Income and Senior Citizen transit pass holders. Peace Officers are encouraged to exercise discretion and a Calgary Transit internal committee will be examining enforcement practices in regard to this specific issue. There are likely still opportunities for the university, Calgary Transit and other community partners to identify solutions that will allow pass holders to prove that they have a valid pass.

## **Conclusion**

The Students' Union is proud to serve and represent undergraduate students in nearly every aspect of their experience at the University of Calgary.



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