



# **SU Student Services Annual Report: VS, Clubs, Events and Programs**

## **2020-2021**

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## Introduction

When news of the pandemic hit the university in March 2020, the Student Services department was impacted almost immediately. The Clubs spaces had to shut down, Wellness Wednesday events were cancelled, distribution of distress kits was postponed, and we lost a large number of student staff earlier than expected for the year. Our very new (and slim) team had to jump into action to end programming for the year and provide some closure for Teaching Excellence Awards and Club Awards among other things.

Over the course of the spring and summer, our team worked harder and more creatively than we have ever done before to find ways to provide for the needs and wants of students for 2020-2021 in a safe and distanced manner. We came up with new ideas to run the Undergraduate Research Symposium, provide wellness support over social media, make sure our Elections still ran effectively and Clubs Week turned into 50 Days of Clubs. The limited student staff we had jumped into action and we banded together to ensure that students still felt a sense of community and could connect to the Students' Union in one way or another.

The silver lining of this extremely tough year is that we were able to offer more than basic programming and services to students and we found innovative ways to increase our accessibility. Despite the pared down events and the lack of physical spaces for students, our team had a very successful year and has received positive feedback from students at every turn. There are many lessons that have been learned – some of which will help us move forward as we begin to think about reopening our spaces and welcoming students back to campus.

As we reflect on what was done and look to the future of our programming, we are very proud to share this joint report for you with highlights from Volunteer Services, the Clubs Office and our general student engagement initiatives. We hope you find this information useful and members of our team are available to take questions at any time. On behalf of Student Services, we thank you for your ongoing support of our work.

Respectfully,

Nikhath Ahmed

Manager, Student Services



# SU Volunteer Services Report

**2020-2021**





## Executive Summary

Since April 2020, the VS office has not had a VS Coordinator and there has not been the full-time support that is regularly available. All programs had been shut down in mid-March 2020, including the SU Campus Foodbank (CFB). The Manager, Student Services stepped into to oversee the work of VS in spring semester. Based on the budget, COVID restrictions, student demand and capacity of the team, a decision was made to focus on the priority areas that provide basic needs, namely: The Q Centre and the SU Campus Foodbank. One student coordinator was hired for each of the programs and they began work in late August. The other programs remained closed for the year. With the support of the Student Services team, as well as others at the SU, we were able to reopen the CFB in mid-September 2020 and the Q Centre began offering support again in early October.

The following Volunteer Services report summarizes debriefs from all major activities planned and executed during the 2020/21 academic year through the Volunteer Services office.

### SU Campus Foodbank

As the CFB was closed for many months, we have spent much of the year working on bringing the space and practices back up to standard. One coordinator was hired to run the CFB and was supported by members of the Student Services team to do physical labour-type work when needed. The space itself is closed to the public due to current restrictions and all interactions with the campus community are occurring over the phone, email or Zoom video-conferencing.

### Hamper Requests

The immediate focus in September was to reopen our services and be able to provide hampers to those in need. With limited students on campus and having been closed for many months, the uptake was slow and numbers are reflective of that. Hamper requests picked up in winter as more people had their vaccinations and learned that we were open through increased promotions and outreach.

	Fall 2020	Winter 2021
Number of Hampers	21	55
Graduate Students	11	17
Undergraduate Students	9	38
Non-Students	1	0
ESL Students	0	0
Number of Adults Fed	12	47
Number of Children Fed	21	18
<b>Total Fed</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>65</b>



Hamper services have been adapted significantly this past year. Requests are completed virtually or over the phone. Pick-ups are conducted curbside out by the north courtyard loop. Packing of hampers is done with extra cleaning measures in place and Student Services team members assist with pick ups or packing when needed, as the coordinator is only working 15 hours per week. We also switched to compostable plastic bags this year for our hampers instead of passing cloth bags back and forth. This allowed us to keep in line with restrictions while still staying firm to our sustainability goals.

## Events

The CFB generally holds a few events in the year to increase awareness about food insecurity on campus, promote healthy eating and to better support our clients. This year with limited resources we were still able to hold several events and had a very successful year. Cash donations increased significantly with the addition of a GoFundMe page and word of mouth promotion. Our final donation total for the year was over \$68,000. This year we moved the CFB donation bin to the Information Centre/Lost and Found and had a significant amount of food donations dropped off, and inquiries about larger donations prompted by seeing the bin.

### Fall Harvest Food Drive

The fall food drive was the first time we attempted a food drive of this type. This food drive replaced our annual Holiday Food drive that occurred in November. Every day during the month of October, the SU shared ideas on how to support the CFB over social media. This call to action was supported by a list of high-demand items and caught the attention of several large and small donors. Over the course of the month the CFB collected over 3000 food items and \$13,000 in cash donations.

**What worked:** A large social media campaign and the timing around Thanksgiving really helped to get attention this year. The month-long initiative meant supporters had time to spread the word to their offices, friends and family. Some chose to do mini-drives and drop off a large donation at the end of the month. We did curbside pick-ups for these, which helped to keep things distanced and simple for the donors. Support from SU staff and SLC to get the word out made a difference as well.

**Suggestions for improvement:** We carried over the idea of a reward at the end for the most creative donors from the old clubs Holiday Food Drive, however the contest part of the event was not needed as it seemed donors were happy to do the work without the reward.

### Holiday Hampers

Holiday Hampers are provided in addition to the regular hampers, in the final two to three weeks prior to closing the office for the winter break. Each hamper contains items to create a special holiday meal, along with a treat.

**What worked:** Advertising early in November helped to drive the demand. We were able to provide 14 Holiday Hampers this year. Items were easily purchased from Sysco, including the turkeys, and anything



missing was picked up by the Student Services team well in advance. Treat items, such as cookies, chocolates, etc., that were donated earlier were saved and added to these hampers to make them extra special.

**Suggestions for improvement:** As we didn't know the demand this year, we over-estimated the number of turkeys needed. We were able to give several away to staff to make sure they got eaten. In future we could order less turkeys and supplement with chicken if needed.

### Adopt-a-Family

Adopt-a-Family is a program matching donors and families with children in an anonymous manner prior to the winter holidays. Donors are given information about the children, such as ages and interests, which they use to purchase gifts. This year we were able to support 14 families.

**What worked:** Having the extra space in Hamlet made it much easier to organize all the gifts and keep on top of the deliveries. Curbside delivery worked well for this, and the Student Services team chipped in to do the drop offs. The program ran smoothly as always.

**Suggestions for improvement:** Encourage families to sign up early to avoid disappointment and remind them to keep their gift requests within a reasonable dollar amount to keep things fair for every family.

### Food for Fines

This initiative was launched by the SU President in partnership with Parking and Transportation services. During the week of March 22 to March 29, 2021, 50% of the gross revenue paid from parking tickets would be donated to the CFB. All tickets paid were included in the program, regardless of when they were first issued. This program raised over \$5600 for the CFB this year and is already being pursued for continuation next year.

**What worked:** The week chosen worked well as it was the end of the school year, and many people were trying to get rid of their fines. Social media helped push the word out and overall, the program was a huge success.

**Suggestions for improvement:** As it was an initiative of the SU President, the CFB did not have more than the basic information regarding the program. We would encourage a tighter communication plan and partnership with the CFB in the future to help with promotion and answering of questions.



## Q Centre

Many members of the campus community rely on the Q Centre's physical space to provide a safe and welcoming environment at the University of Calgary. It is a space used for networking, socializing, studying, discussions, debate and ongoing learning and personal development. Unfortunately, the pandemic restrictions did not allow for us to open the space physically this past year and this greatly affected the ability for the Q Centre to bring groups of people together. A few key supports were successfully provided throughout the year; however, we look forward to welcoming individuals back into the space soon to better facilitate that community feeling.

### Virtual Drop-In Support

A drop-in hangout and support space was opened by the Q Centre Coordinator and volunteers via Zoom video-conferencing. We began with five days a week in the fall and dropped to three days a week in the winter due to low attendance. Most days saw only one or two people stop by for short periods of time.

**What worked:** Volunteers were trained for this environment and felt comfortable and ready to handle situations. We created back-up plans for any sensitive issues that might have come up. For safety of attendees, an email was set up to send out the password when requested instead of an open Zoom link. Despite the low attendance it was important for the Q Centre to remain visible and be "available". Promotions did not lead to more attendees, but students turned to email to seek out support more often.

**Suggestions for improvement:** As many students were burned out from using online platforms for school and other commitments, it is no surprise that attendance was low. In the future if we need to run this service again, we recommend having themes or focused discussions planned, so potential participants know what to expect when arriving to the room or come because they are interested in the issue.

### 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration

In honour of the Q Centre's 10<sup>th</sup> birthday, a special lecture was planned, and video celebration released on social media. The lecture, presented by James Demers, focused on building community identity and queer spaces. The video was a collection of supporters from on and off campus congratulating the Q Centre and highlighting what the space meant to them.

**What worked:** The video was well-received, and many people responded to the invitation to participate. The lecture had about 30 attendees and it was the Q Centre's first time successfully holding a Facebook Live event.

**Suggestions for improvement:** Further promotion through SLC may have helped to spread the word farther. The timing was around the mid-term break and many people missed the video but watched it later online.



## Wellness Support

Support to those requesting it was available all year through email, which the Coordinator and volunteers responded to on a daily basis. Resources were provided on an ongoing basis, and we did ensure that partnerships with local organizations remained strong this year. In addition, the volunteers banded together to add resources to our social media and website, as well as contribute to StressLess Week with queer-focused reading lists.

**What worked:** Some of the volunteers were incredibly supportive and understanding. They did a lot of great research, which will come in handy in the coming year. Accessibility over email and Zoom worked great for many students and took away some of the stress of coming into a new space.

**Suggestions for improvement:** Getting volunteers together remotely was challenging and often responses were slow to come in. Focusing in on those who were more responsive and providing more guidelines could have helped. We will continue to find ways to keep volunteers engaged and hope we can have them back in person soon.

## Sex Week

Information included in the SU Events Report

## Condoms

Information included in the SU Events Report

## Period Products

Information included in the SU Events Report

## Looking Forward: Goals for 2021/22

### Reviving VS Programming

The Student Services team will be working over spring and summer to create plans for the future of the Volunteer Services office. We hope to be able to open more programming for the upcoming year, as we anticipate students will be returning to campus. This requires analysis of what our high-priority areas are for students and evaluation of what kind of restrictions may still be in place. We anticipate that at least half of our programming will return in fall 2021 and that we can integrate some of the additional accessibility measures that were introduced this year into future iterations of our programs.

### Hiring and Training

To work towards a full return of VS programming, hiring and training new staff will be essential. As the office has been closed for more than 15 months, there is much work to do. The focus this summer will



be on onboarding a new VS Coordinator, who can then work with the Manager, Student Services to plan for the future of VS. Some funds have been budgeted to hire student coordinators and we will be able to use that to restart some of our most popular programs. Training will be crucial, as we move into a hybrid phase of running programs and older instructions and manuals are outdated now.



# SU Clubs Report

**2020-2021**



## Executive Summary

This report details all major undertakings of Students' Union (SU) Clubs during the 2020/2021 academic year. Registered Student Organizations (SU Clubs) provide undergraduate students at the University of Calgary the opportunity to engage with their community, their school, and each other. Personal, social, and cultural development results from increased student engagement and involvement in these autonomous organizations that the SU supports through funding, services, and creative initiatives.

## By the Numbers

The data presented in this report is collected from the clubs' annual reports and the SU Clubs Survey. As of June 1, 2021, a total of 283 Annual Reports had been submitted, and 32 survey responses were received. Records of events, active clubs, funding, service requests, and more come from ClubHub (the online club management platform powered by Engage) and inform the findings in this report.

### Clubs by Category

As of June 2021, **343** clubs were considered active. A further **82** clubs did not renew their registration with the SU but remain in our records (should they decide to re-register), bringing the total number of clubs in 2020/21 to **425**. This total number of clubs represents an increase of **9.0%** from **390** in 2019/20. Out of **38** new club registration requests, **24** new clubs were registered in 2020/21 (or **63.2%**). This represents a decrease in the amount of new club registrations compared to last year (**62** out of **82** requests in 2019/20, or **75.0%**), however at the time of writing for this report the third new club registration deadline of mid-June was still upcoming, so the exact number of new club registrations received for the 2020/21 academic year has not yet been finalized. Clubs may register within one of ten categories, the distribution of which is illustrated in Figure 1.

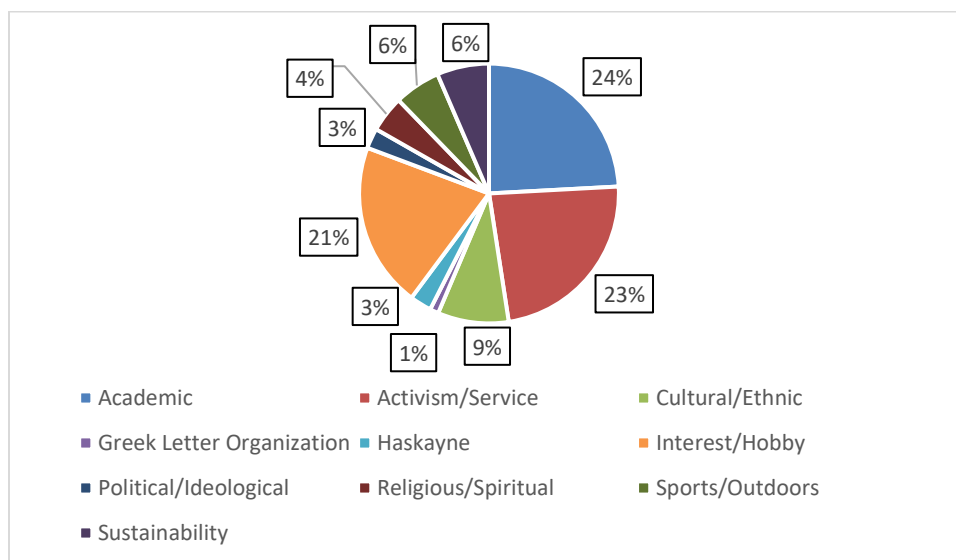


Figure 1: 2020/21 Registered SU Clubs by Category

## Membership & Fees

SU Clubs reported a total of **20,404** members in 2020/21, a **44.3%** decrease from the **36,625** memberships reported in the 2019/20 annual reports. This decrease can be partly attributed to the fact that fewer Annual Reports had been received at the time of this report's writing compared to the same point in the 2019/20 year (283 reports received in 2020/21 vs. 315 in 2019/20). Additionally, the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and shift to virtual learning may have made it difficult for clubs to recruit new members in place of those they had lost over the past year. Finally, this decrease could also be caused by clubs adopting a more accurate method of counting members. Many students are members of multiple clubs and most clubs have reported non-student members. In the 2021 SU Annual Survey, **1,086** respondents reported being members of SU registered clubs. This is a participation rate of roughly **41.8%**. An additional **248** respondents, or roughly **9.5%**, were unsure if they were members of SU registered clubs. This proportion is nearly identical to the results reported in the 2020 SU Annual Survey (**42.0%** and **9.0%** respectively). Aggregated annual report data indicates that **82.3%** of clubs (**233**) have fewer than **100** members. Membership distribution is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

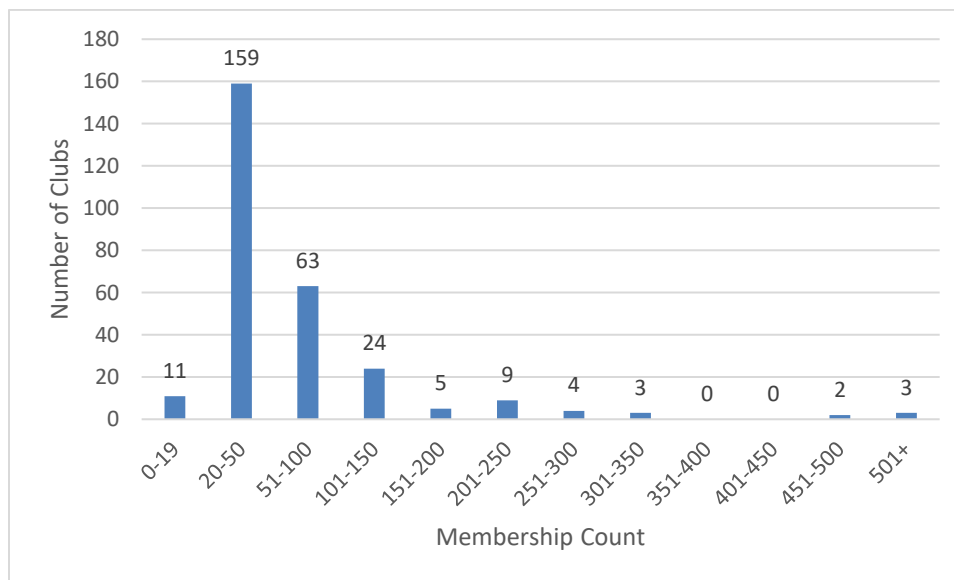


Figure 2: 2020/21 Membership Distribution

To establish an operating budget, clubs are encouraged to charge a membership fee which they determine independently. For the 2020/21 year, **18.4%** of clubs that submitted an Annual Report indicated that they collected a membership fee (**52**), while the remaining **81.6%** of clubs (**231**) did not. This was a sharp decrease from 2019/20, when **54.3%** of clubs reported collecting a membership fee.

This decrease was almost certainly because of the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting public health restrictions, as most clubs were forced to hold entirely virtual events at a much lower cost, therefore negating the need to collect a membership fee. Additionally, the difficult economic climate may also have encouraged many clubs to try to limit costs for their members as much as possible.

## Club Events

SU Clubs plan, promote, and execute events independently. Event approval is necessary to fulfill the SU’s risk management requirements. All club events are submitted and reviewed via an event request form on ClubHub. Figure 3 below indicates the frequency of SU Club events from 2016 to present.

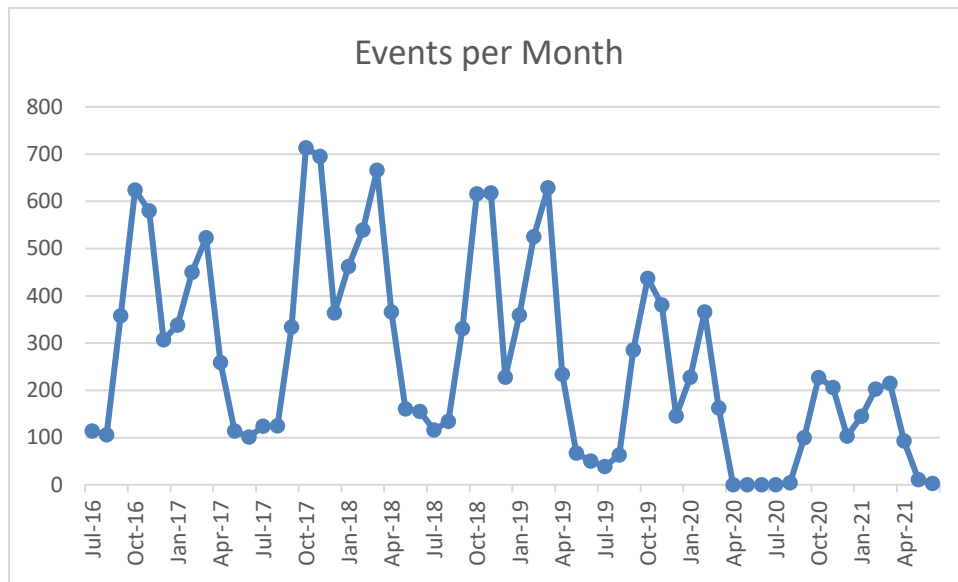


Figure 3: Club Events per Month (2016/17-2020/21)

In 2020/21, SU Clubs held **1310** (reported) events. This represents a **51.7%** decrease in events from 2019/20 (**2533** events reported). This decrease reflects the difficulties associated with holding events considering the public health restrictions in place for much of the past year. Clubs were predominantly limited to hosting virtual events for most of the year, so some clubs were unable to convert their events to a virtual format and thus remained dormant this year, while others were limited in the number of events they could hold. This was reflected in data from the annual clubs survey, which revealed that **65.6%** of respondents reported that their club was limited in some way in the amount of events they were able to host compared to their club’s normal operations. Additionally, the decline in reported events could also be attributed to the difficulty in enforcing the event submission requirements, especially when it comes to the accurate reporting of virtual events.

## SU Clubs Budget

In 2020/21, the SU provided funding for clubs in the form of Start-Up grants (**\$960.02**), Food and Beverage reimbursements (**\$14.07**), and Last-Minute Funding (**\$638.57**). Special Event Funding was not offered for the 2020/21 academic year due to the limitations on hosting large-scale events, as indicated by public health restrictions. Costs associated with general SU Clubs programming (**\$5,193.73**) included



the Criterion movie screening license, PowToon software for creating online training videos, and the annual Club Awards.

A total of **\$3,352.50.00** in Last-Minute Funding was requested in 2020/21 for **14** events, of which **\$1,625.00 (48.5%)** was pre-approved. This is a similar proportion of Last-Minute Funding pre-approvals as compared to the previous year (**48.5%** in 2020/21 vs. **46.1%** in 2019/20). Most of the applications that were not pre-approved were due to confusion over funding criteria. Many clubs applied for a higher amount of Last-Minute Funding than they were eligible for based on the submission criteria or applied for funding to cover the cost of items that are ineligible for Last-Minute Funding. Additionally, there was a total of **\$986.43** of unclaimed Last-Minute Funding (**60.7%** of pre-approved Last-Minute Funding). This large amount of unclaimed funding was mostly caused by clubs applying for more funding than was necessary to offset the ultimate cost of the approved expenses.

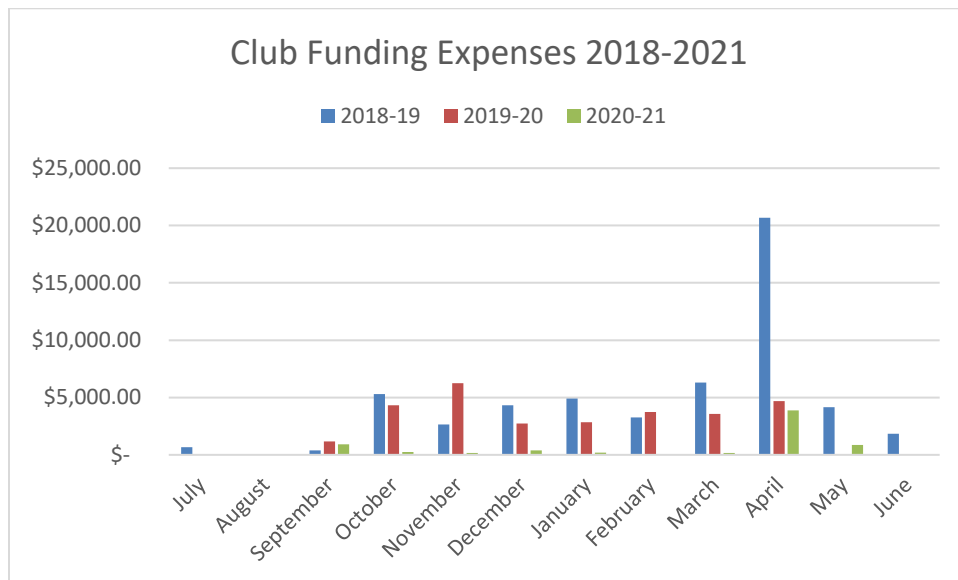


Figure 4: Club Funding and Expenses (2018 – 2021)

Figure 4 (above) indicates the month-to-month historical and projected expenses (2018 to 2021). Overall, there was a massive decrease in funding requested across all categories this year. This decrease in funding can be attributed to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated public health restrictions on club operations. As most club events hosted this past year were low-cost virtual events, very few clubs felt a need to request Last-Minute Funding or Food & Beverage Funding. Additionally, replacing the Club Awards banquet with an online video greatly reduced the amount of money allocated for general SU Clubs programming costs.

It would not be prudent to conduct any meaningful analysis by comparing the funding data from this year to that of previous years, as the circumstances of this year were so drastically different. Once public health restrictions are lifted and clubs can return to their normal programming, including more in-person events, funding data at that time should be compared with that of the 2018/19 or 2019/20





academic years. This will allow for a more meaningful analysis of the club funding data by comparing across years with similar environmental and operational conditions.

In total, SU Clubs expenses reached **\$6,806.39** of the **\$44,000.00** budgeted for 2020/21, resulting in a **\$37,193.61** surplus. This is representative of the budget decrease of **\$6,000.00** to the normal clubs budget provided in May 2020, as well as the pausing of the additional **\$10,000.00** pilot that had been introduced in the 76<sup>th</sup> term of the Students' Legislative Council. Most of this budget cut came from the cancellation of Special-Event Funding for the 2020/21 academic year.

## Clubs Committee

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The Clubs Committee is a standing committee created by the Students' Legislative Council (SLC) to oversee the clubs system, make policy suggestions, contribute to the strategic vision of the Students' Union (SU), advise the Coordinator, Student Organizations (CSO) and SU, and report to SLC on club activities.

### Members

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Spring/Summer 2020	Fall 2020	Winter 2021
<b>Assad Ali Bik, VP Student Life (Chair)</b>		
Deyana Altahsh	Fayo Abdi	Fayo Abdi
Shagufta Farheen	Jasleen Brar	Pragya Chopra
Jonah Feng	Pragya Chopra	Jonah Feng
Caitlin Hornbeck	Jonah Feng	Justin Gotta
Naomi Shaw	Justin Gotta	Jovanna Rodney
Bharat Uppal	-----	-----

Figure 5: 2020/21 Clubs Committee Members by Semester

### Major Decisions and Recommendations

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- Pre-approved Last-Minute Funding throughout the academic year.
- Selected Eric Lahoda Memorial SU Clubs Scholarship recipients.
- Selected SU Club Awards winners and honorable mentions (except sponsored awards).



## SU Clubs Events and Programs

The SU hosts multiple events to promote involvement in clubs, increase the visibility of clubs on campus, engage and educate club executives, and recognize outstanding club achievements throughout the academic year.

### Clubs Weeks

Representing the largest gatherings of SU Clubs, the Fall and Winter Clubs Weeks continue to be a primary means for clubs to recruit members and promote their activities to the campus community. This year, these events were hosted in a virtual format due to the public health restrictions in place at the time. Both Fall and Winter Clubs Weeks were sponsored by ATB Financial as in previous years.

Event Dates	Location	Participants
Sept. 14 – Nov. 30, 2020	SU and SU Clubs Instagram	195 Clubs
January 19-21, 2021	Virtual Fair on ClubHub	176 Clubs

Figure 6: 2020/21 Fall and Winter Clubs Week Attendance

In place of Fall Clubs Week, an online event called “50 Days of Clubs” was held instead. For this event, 5 clubs per day were featured on the SU Clubs and main SU Instagram stories throughout the fall semester as a way for clubs to gain exposure during the shift to virtual learning. Clubs were able to design and submit their own image for promotion, and clubs were featured on a first come, first served basis as images were received. For Winter Clubs Week, a virtual fair event was held on ClubHub over three days. For this event, clubs were able to register for the fair directly through ClubHub and were given the option to host live virtual meeting rooms during the event for interested students to stop and chat with club members. If public health restrictions continue into the following academic year, Clubs Week will most likely continue to be held in a virtual format.

### ClubHub 101 and 201

ClubHub information sessions act as the primary vehicle for communicating requirements, expectations, and privileges to Registered SU Clubs. Historically, these were mandatory in-person information sessions held in September and January. This year, ClubHub 101 was held as a series of video tutorials with an accompanying quiz to take the place of the in-person sessions.

For the 2020/21 academic year, ClubHub 201 training was also introduced in an online format. This training is a series of video sessions going into further detail on additional topics that may be of interest to clubs. As of June 1, 2021, three videos have been released as part of the ClubHub 201 series. More videos are planned for the upcoming months and into the 2021/22 academic year.

Session	Training available	Location	Completed
FALL ClubHub 101	September 8-25, 2020	ClubHub	320 Clubs
WINTER ClubHub 101	January 6-22, 2021	ClubHub	14 Clubs

Figure 7: 2020/21 ClubHub 101 Completion

### Club Awards Banquet - Cancelled

This year would have marked the **11<sup>th</sup>** annual Club Awards Banquet, but unfortunately the event was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In lieu of the Club Awards Banquet, a Club Awards Celebration Video was released on ClubHub in early April to celebrate the winners. This video included a short tribute to each Club Award winner, as well as the 10 recipients of the Eric Lahoda Memorial SU Clubs Scholarship. As of June 1, 2021, the video had been viewed 269 times, and it will be made available to view throughout the summer.

For the 2021/22 academic year, if the event returns to an in-person format suggestions from previous Club Awards Banquets should be considered. Specifically, in 2019, the Awards Banquet was shifted from a formal banquet to reception style. After the event, the new style was applauded, but it was suggested to change the name of the event to reflect its reception style format and to place a focus on marketing future banquets. These are changes that can be carried over for the 2021/22 school year. Further, after the 2019 banquet, the 76<sup>th</sup> Clubs Committee suggested planning the event so that all clubs are celebrated and not only those who received awards. The goal of this change is to increase attendance, as all clubs will feel recognized. This is another factor that should be considered when planning future banquets.

The SU and contributing campus sponsors (UCalgary Alumni Association, UCalgary Leadership and Student Engagement Office, and UCalgary Office of Sustainability) recognized Club success in **15** categories, and also recognized an Honourable Mention for each award. This year, a new award was introduced: The EDI Award. This award is designed to honour clubs who have made a measurable difference in the areas of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion through their work on campus. A total of **646** individual Club Awards nominations were submitted in 2020/21, (compared to **378** in 2019/20), showing an increase of **70.9%** from 2019/20. One explanation for this increase could be that, due to the shift to online learning this year, students felt a stronger pull to nominate clubs that continued to remain active in such challenging circumstances. Additionally, Club Awards nominations were heavily promoted on ClubHub, as well as the SU Clubs and general SU social media accounts. This promotion of Club Awards should continue in future years to continue the increase in Club Awards nominations.

Award Name <sup>1</sup>	Winner	Honorable Mention
Advocacy Award	Man-Up for Mental Health	Women in Science and Engineering
Future Alumni Network's SU Club Award for Alumni Engagement*	Haskayne Consulting Club	Kinesiology Students' Society
Best New Club	American Sign Language Club	ACT YYC
Campus Pride Award*	Students Against Domestic Abuse Association	Business Pride Club
Club of the Year	Schulich Ignite	BackUp YYC
Collaboration Award	Global Development Society	Mental Health Awareness
Community Service Award	Birthday Wishes	Senior Wellness Association
EDI Award	Business Pride Club	Queers on Campus
First Year Engagement Award	Physics and Astronomy Students' Association	Mentoring in New Dimensions
Innovation Award	Autism Awareness Club	Information Security Club
Leadership Award	The Mustard Seed, U of C	The Haskayne Report
L.O.V.E. Award	Mental Health Awareness	UNICEF on Campus
Quality of Education Award	Information Security Club	Health Sciences Students' Association
Student Life Award	Nigerian Students' Association	Persian Gulf Club
Sustainability Award	Emulating Nature in Innovations	Eco Club

Figure 8: 2020/21 SU Club Award Winners and Honorable Mentions

The **Eric Lahoda Memorial SU Clubs Scholarship** recognizes **10** outstanding club members annually for their contributions to student life on campus. A total of **72** applications were submitted, which represented an increase of **41.18%** from the **51** applications submitted in 2019/20. Similar to the Club Awards nominations, this increase in applications could be due to a larger number of students taking on club leadership roles due to the flexibility offered with online learning. As well, the Eric Lahoda scholarships were heavily advertised on ClubHub, and both the SU Clubs and main SU social media.

2020/21 Eric Lahoda Memorial SU Clubs Scholarship Recipients	
Alex Roberts	Haiqua Javed
Bethany Chan	Moiz Hafeez
Camilla Abdrazakov	Regina Lozano
Chaten Jessel	Safwan Jamal
Chinwe (Candy) Nwigwe	Shaelene Standing

Figure 9: 2020/21 Eric Lahoda Memorial SU Clubs Scholarship Recipients

<sup>1</sup> Winners and honorable mentions of awards marked with an asterisk were decided by award sponsors.

This scholarship is made possible by a SU Quality Money grant through 2026.

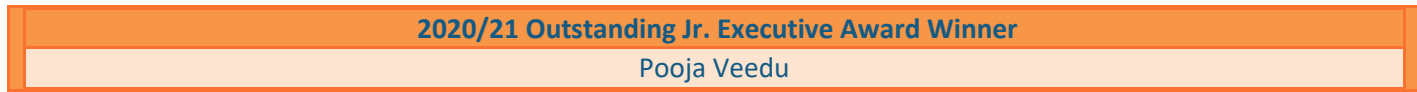


Figure 10: 2020/21 Outstanding Jr. Executive Award Recipient

As part of the Jr. Executive initiative to encourage and celebrate the longevity of clubs, the **Outstanding Jr. Executive Award** was created in 2018/2019 to continue to promote and reward the exemplary performance of Jr. Executives. In the award's first year, a Registered Student Organization (the UC Baking Club) sponsored a second award for **\$250** so two winners were awarded. However, this sponsorship was only for the 2018/19 and 2019/20 academic years, so from the 2020/21 year onward only one winner will be selected.

## Projects

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The following projects were undertaken in 2020/21 to ensure the continuity of clubs' administrative affairs and to maintain engagement despite the public health restrictions in place. Further, some initiatives were designed to improve efficiency of Clubs Office operations moving forward even after a return to in-person learning.

### Clubs Office operations switched to virtual format

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In 2020/21, a shift to in-person learning coupled with public health restrictions meant many Clubs Office procedures and events were unable to go ahead as usual and thus had to be switched to a virtual format. This was an ongoing project throughout the year, as public health restrictions were constantly changing, and plans had to be adjusted accordingly. Some examples of projects and events that were moved to a virtual format include:

- The annual ClubHub 101 in-person training sessions were replaced with a series of online videos and accompanying quiz; each club was required to have two executives complete the training and accompanying quiz to consider this requirement complete. More information can be found in the "ClubHub 101 and 201" section of this report. The online videos will most likely be utilized going forward in place of the in-person sessions.
- A series of additional training videos, entitled ClubHub 201, were also introduced. These videos go into greater detail on specific topics of relevance for clubs, such as the waiver administration process, or steps to completing an Annual Report. These videos are not mandatory viewing for each club but will remain available and accessible on ClubHub. Further videos on additional topics will be introduced in the 2021/22 academic year.
- A new insurance payment process was introduced. Rather than dropping off cash at the Clubs Office, clubs were able to pay their insurance over the phone using a credit card. This will continue to remain a payment option for clubs moving forward.

- Forms that previously had to be picked up in person from the Clubs Office, such as bank letters or event waivers, are now available to clubs over email. Additionally, clubs that required waivers for any of their events were able to scan the completed waivers and email copies to the Clubs Office, in place of dropping off the original copies in-person. This specific process was a bit unwieldy, but clubs will most likely continue to have more options for returning completed waivers to the Clubs Office moving forward.
- Both Fall and Winter Clubs Week were switched to virtual formats. More information can be found in the “Clubs Weeks” sections of the report. The Clubs Week format for the 2021/22 academic year had yet to be determined at the time of completing this report.
- The Club Awards banquet was replaced with a video tribute. More information can be found in the “Club Awards Banquet” section of this report. The format for the 2021/22 Club Awards Banquet had yet to be determined at the time of completing this report.

## Social Media

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Prior to the 2019/2020 school year, the SU Clubs program had established and enhanced a social media presence on **Instagram** and **Facebook**, providing opportunities for club executives to integrate these external platforms with our existing digital infrastructure. Currently, **@SUUofC Clubs** on Instagram has **1,796** followers. This is a **145.01%** increase compared to the end of the 2019/20 academic year (**722** followers). This increase is most likely a result of the 50 Days of Clubs event, which was held entirely on the SU Clubs Instagram. The increased number of followers could also be a result of more SU-registered clubs and club members following the account to stay connected for news and updates throughout the year. The mandate of this Instagram account is to focus on highly visual updates and to promote and share club content.

Throughout this year, the CSO and ASO worked to consistently post to **Instagram** and **Facebook** to mention deadlines and events occurring through the Clubs Office, as well as increase club awareness and virtual engagement. This year **24** posts were made to **Instagram**, which is a **53.8%** decrease from the **52** Instagram posts in the 2019/20 academic year. This decrease could be due to a lack of events requiring promotion compared to the 2019/20 year, or a less robust social media strategy. To further encourage club engagement on social media, the Clubs Office has launched a “Tag Us” campaign for the upcoming summer months, asking that clubs tag **@SUUofC Clubs** in their event posts so that the events could be featured on the SU Clubs Instagram. This campaign will hopefully increase engagement between individual clubs and the SU Clubs Instagram, while also providing a broader platform for clubs to promote their events in the upcoming year.

As of June 1, 2021, **Facebook.com/SUUofC Clubs** has **706** followers, which is a **3.52%** increase from the page’s **682** followers on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. The page has **636** likes, which is a **4.61%** increase from the **608** likes in 2018/19. We hope to continue to use Facebook as an information generating device, while growing Instagram as an engagement device. In the future, an emphasis could be placed on offering unique content between the two social media platforms. We hope to continue to develop social media strategies to grow the capacity and reach of both accounts.

## Jr Executive Program

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The **Jr Executive Program** was established in 2015/16 aimed at recruiting engaged students, facilitating club executive transition, and raising awareness of services offered to clubs by the SU. This year, **83** clubs officially participated in the program, which is less than in 2019/2020 (**111**). This decrease can be partially attributed to the lower number of students participating in clubs overall compared to previous years, considering the challenges brought about by virtual learning. As well, a lack of resources may have prevented some clubs from implementing the Jr. Executive Program within their club. For example, according to the SU Clubs Survey only **13.33%** of respondents that reported participating in the Jr. Executive Program found the Step-by-Step Guide offered by the Clubs Office helpful in setting up the program. In the future, the CSO and ASO will continue to work on offering improved resources so a larger number of clubs are more comfortable setting up a Jr. Executive Program. Further, the CSO could work on more in-depth tracking of participants in the program to ensure a more accurate reporting of the level of participation.

## Looking Forward: Goals for 2021/22

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The upcoming academic year will continue to present challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the University of Calgary has yet to announce the exact course delivery method for the Fall and Winter semesters, it is expected that the campus will gradually re-open throughout the 2021/22 year. This means that several changes will be necessary for club activities to ensure we can offer a rewarding and involved student experience, while still following any remaining public health measures.

Below are several issues to navigate:

- **Clubs Spaces:** Both the Clubs East and West spaces have been closed for the past year. A plan will need to be made regarding when to open the spaces and how to do so safely, while ensuring that all guidelines around sanitization and physical distancing are being followed.
- **Club Lockers:** All club lockers were emptied at the end of the 2019/20 academic year, and clubs made appointments to retrieve their items throughout the summer and fall of 2020. Any remaining items were disposed of at the end of 2020. Lockers are currently unavailable to clubs, but a plan will need to be made for how to safely allow clubs access to these spaces once again.
- **Clubs Week:** This past year, both Fall and Winter Clubs Week were held in a virtual format. The planning for the upcoming Fall Clubs Week is still in progress and will be dependent on the public health restrictions in place at the time of the event. If an in-person event is not possible, most likely a virtual event will be held again over Instagram featuring clubs by various themes or categories. Planning for Winter Clubs Week will occur towards the end of 2021.
- **ClubHub 201:** ClubHub 201 was introduced in the 2020/21 academic year as an additional resource for clubs and club executives. More videos will be added to the series during the upcoming academic year. Possible topics to be covered in the videos could include a guide to hosting effective online events, advanced features available on ClubHub, or club longevity and executive transitions.

- **Club Events:** With the current restrictions on gatherings, club events have been forced to shift to predominantly virtual formats over the past year. As public health restrictions are lifted, a plan will need to be created for determining which format of events can be approved based on the restrictions in place at the time. Additionally, the Clubs Office will need to coordinate with both MCEC and the University of Calgary's space booking department to determine which spaces will be available for clubs to book as the campus starts to reopen.
- **Office Hours:** Over the past year, most club communication with the CSO has been through email or infrequently scheduled Zoom meetings. Office hours will be re-introduced for the Fall semester, with a determination yet to be made on the format they will take (in-person in the Clubs Office or virtually over Zoom).

Ongoing goals include increasing awareness of SU Clubs events and resources, establishing expectations between the CSO and Clubs, and diversifying the role of the Clubs Committee in the promotion and strategic vision for club's management.

- **Instagram** and **Facebook** marketing strategies will continue to be developed to ensure that each platform is used more effectively, engaging clubs and transmitting information effectively.
- The **Jr Executive Program** promotion will be reviewed and updated for effectiveness.
- The **Club Awards Banquet** will be reviewed to ensure the event is accessible and reflects the ongoing needs of registered organizations. Club Awards, Outstanding Jr Executive Award and Eric Lahoda Memorial Scholarship marketing will be reviewed for effectiveness.
- **Clubs Committee** member roles and expectations will be discussed with the 79<sup>th</sup> SLC to improve quality of student engagement and feedback.





# SU Programs and Events Report **2020-2021**

## Executive Summary

This report summarizes debriefs from all major events and programs the Students' Union (SU) planned and executed during the 2020/21 academic year. These initiatives positively impacted thousands of undergraduate students at all Calgary campuses. They also served to enhance relationships with faculty, staff, graduate students, and members of the greater campus community, including valuable partnerships forged with university officials and offices. Student life at the University of Calgary changed dramatically due to shift to online programming but the SU worked hard to fulfil our mandate by continuously adapting our events and programs to meet the ever-changing needs and expectations of students.

### Events vs. Programs

Collectively known as "SU Initiatives," this report differentiates between events and programs. Events are considered one-off occurrences or collections of occurrences that fall within a specific time-period. Programs are consistent, repeating, or regularly recurring occurrences.

### By the Numbers

The following table outlines the number of campus community members impacted (or attendees) each program or event held by the SU in the past three years. Trends and explanations for significant variations will be discussed in the following sections.

Initiative	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Orientation Days	2,060	2,470	2,143
Deans Dinner	43	43	Cancelled
Undergraduate Research Symposium (URS)	350	400	3,471 views
StressLess Week	947	1,516	400 views
Calgary Leaders Dinner	72	48	45
Icebox*	60	492	Cancelled
Wellness Wednesday**	250	449	163
Bermuda Shorts Day	2,643	Cancelled	Cancelled
Fitness in the Space	1,580	1,115	120
Teaching Excellence Awards	3,404	3,343	3,836
Pet Therapy	1,445	1,392	Cancelled
Sex Week	401	400	359
DeStress Packs	1,500	1,500	Cancelled
Condoms***	4,600		281
Period Products****	13,274		114

\*Frostbite became Icebox

\*\* SU Socials became Wellness Wednesday

\*\*\* Did not track in 2019/20

## Events

The SU holds events to enhance student life by providing opportunities to socialize, celebrate, and address mental health and wellness. Events can also provide information, opportunities for networking, or a platform for advocacy. Our goal is to host a variety of events each year to appeal to a wide cross section of undergraduate students, while supporting the mission, vision, and values of the SU.

### Orientation Days

The SU participates in new student orientation in September to engage incoming students and increase awareness of our purpose, programs, and services. This year the Orientation was held virtually, through online platforms that had images and live chats along with faculty sessions. Due to this it was harder to engage with students directly because they would often prioritise faculty sessions over the extracurricular sessions, which is why having faculty representatives involved in the Faculty Sessions was a key strategy to continue awareness of the SU. Overall, the social media following we gained was very similar to previous years with in-person programming which showed that the programming that we were still able to offer was impactful to students.

We were able to participate in Campus Expo, this provided students the opportunity to have a live chat with a faculty representative to learn more about the Students' Union and the different programming that we offer including volunteer and club opportunities, we also have executives sit on the LSE core session panel, and host an elective session which discussed the resources that the SU offers that will help to improve student life on campus.

**What worked:** Executives did participate in LSE's core sessions, which should continue. The SU should also continue to participate in Campus Expo as this was our main way of promoting the SU services.

**Suggestions for improvement:** The elective session was not valuable online due to the lack to promotion from LSE, I would suggest bringing them back when we are in-person, but it does not work online. It would be beneficial to further the relationship with LSE to make sure that faculty reps are included in faculty sessions earlier in the year.

### Deans Dinner

Deans Dinner is an annual SU event in the VP Academic's portfolio that brings together Deans, SU Faculty Representatives and university administration in a casual dinner setting to get to know each other. This year Deans Dinner was cancelled and replaced with individual letters to Deans from the Vice President Academic on behalf of the Faculty Representatives. These letters sent out in November, were the first opportunity that faculty representatives had to be formally introduced to their Deans. By having the formal introduction, it helped many Faculty Representatives start working on projects from their platform goals.

**What worked:** As we could not host an in-person event Faculty Representatives and Deans appreciated having the formal letter to start contact between them.



**Suggestions for improvement:** If the letters continue it would be better to send them out earlier in the year to allow more time for Faculty Representatives to work on their goals with their faculties.

## Undergraduate Research Symposium

Entering its eleventh year, the Undergraduate Research Symposium (URS) is the SU's premiere opportunity for undergraduate students to showcase their research alongside their peers. URS changed significantly this year, moving online and being hosted through YouTube and Instagram. Being online allowed us to highlight the research that students have been doing during the pandemic. It also gave students with difficult schedules an opportunity to participate where they might not have been able to previously. Having the online format allowed us to turn URS into a weeklong event called 'Research Week' that we were able to promote on social media. We were also able to have judging the week before it opened to the public which allowed the working group to pick the award recipients at the start of the week and promote the winners videos, an opportunity that we don't typically get with in-person programming.

This year the URS was able to raise \$23,000 from 17 donors. We also received 95 applications and accepted 48 participants. In total we had over 3,400 interactions over YouTube and Instagram. The online element worked really well to increase accessibility, moving forward in future years it would be beneficial to have an in-person and online element to be as broad reaching as possible.

**What worked:** Close and consistent communication with donors, judges, and participants to help provide guidance due to the changes that were made. Judges were able to review their videos at any time which made it more accessible for them to review. Making this event as accessible as possible is something that would be great to continue moving forward when we begin to move back in-person.

**Suggestions for improvement:** Contact the judges earlier to hold the time in their calendar and follow up to try and limit judges dropping out. Potentially trying to include faculty reps to bring back workshops this year, as this is something that was cut from the event due to staffing restrictions.

## StressLess Week

Held on the last week of the semester StressLess Week is intended to address students' stress levels just before finals, with everything being online it was important for us to show students that the SU was still mindful of the stress that students experience while being online. For this week we hosted yoga videos, created DIY videos for a homemade beauty face mask, no bake dessert, gratitude jars and movie night inspiration. These short videos also had an interactive element through the Instagram stories which allowed us to gauge how many students were actively engaging with the videos.

There were initially plans to distribute de-stress kits but due to the restrictions we were unable to hand these out, we will be handing these out in the Fall of 2021 if restrictions allow. Having the online

experience made it more accessible and would be beneficial to continue when in-person programming continues.

StressLess activities are planned and executed by the Program and Events Assistants (PEAs) with the support of Student Services staff. They continue to evolve this programming, with many of the activities being offered later in portfolio-specific executive events.

**What worked:** As it was online having the videos being follow along or instructional helped to engage students. As well having polls through Instagram stories helped to see how many students were actively engaging. Additionally having activities that students could participate in with very limited

**Suggestions for improvement:** Opportunity to build both in-person and online content when we are able to resume in person events.

### Calgary Leaders' Dinner

The ninth annual Calgary Leaders' Dinner wasn't able to be held in its usual format due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, the event was re-branded as the Calgary Leaders' Dialogue and was held on January 14, 2021. This event falls within the Vice President External portfolio. The CLD is an opportunity for SLC members to meet and network with Calgary's federal, provincial, and municipal leaders. The re-formatted CLD drew attendance from eighteen elected officials and was well attended by the SU executive and SLC members. Ward 7 City Councillor Druh Farrell provided the keynote address on leadership and collaboration.

**What worked:** The adjusted format worked well with politicians being assigned breakout rooms with executives and SLC members. This allowed limited networking opportunities for SLC. SLC was divided into rooms prior to, and met with their teams to research their politicians and to assign speaking roles. The VP External assigned SLC "leads" for each breakout room team, to be responsible for leading the room and reaching out for help if necessary. This was successful because it gave more responsibility to faculty representatives and allowed them to practice speaking and guiding a conversation.

**What needs improvement:** There were some technical glitches with breakout room assignments. Hopefully we can return to an in-person CLD for 2022 to give SLC members and SU staff more opportunity to network and build relationships with politicians.

## Programs

Many SU events evolve into permanent programs. These regularly recurring initiatives address important ongoing issues on campus, from teaching standards to mental health and sexual wellness, all of which reflect the SU's strategic plan in a number of ways.

### Fitness in the Space

This year "Fitness in the Space" went through some major changes. Due to programming being moved online we were able to continue offering Yoga videos at least once a month. By hosting videos online students were able to do the classes whenever worked best for them during the day. Having them online still provided students who could not access other exercise courses an opportunity to have free health resources.

These videos lasted 30 minutes and allowed students to fit them into their schedule during the school day as a way to take a mental break throughout the day.

**What worked:** Having them consistently every month allowed students to know when to expect a new yoga video and at a length that easily fit into difficult course schedules.

**Suggestions for improvement:** If we have to continue online it could be worth expanding the programming to include additional workout courses to add variety.

### Teaching Excellence Awards

Over the fall and winter semesters the SU received 1356 online nominations from students in praise of their favourite instructors and teaching assistants. This was an all-time record for the program and the committee was inspired to see that in such a difficult year for both teaching and learning, instructors at the University of Calgary were going above and beyond to ensure that students had the best possible academic experience – and our students definitely noticed.

Based on these nominations, the committee shortlisted 127 instructors (including Teaching Assistants) over the two semesters. Normally these instructors would receive class visits from the committee to facilitate the completion of a student survey, however due to the pandemic, this was not possible. Shortlisted instructors were notified of their nomination and sent an online survey link with a message from the committee to forward to their students. In addition, the committee members conducted over two dozen "virtual visits" to classes where the instructor made a special request for a verbal announcement. Through the online survey and virtual visits, we connected with close to 2,500 students to collect more detailed comments about each shortlisted nominee and share information about the SU TEA program.

The TEA committee chose 40 winners this year, which included two Hall of Fame awards. The TEA Gala was cancelled due to Covid restrictions; however the winners were celebrated virtually with a video created by the committee.

**What worked:** The online survey made organizing class visits much easier, as it did not require the administrative burden of matching teachers to available committee members. It also saved a lot of paper and reduced errors in the program because there was less danger of class visits being missed. The new process also made the survey more accessible to students to complete on their own time and give them time to think about what they wanted to write.

**Suggestions for improvement:** With limited staff to conduct the administrative task of writing briefing notes and preparing for the committee meeting, it is crucial that all steps are followed for maximum efficiency. Next year it is suggested that a review of steps be given verbally to PEAs to reduce errors and allow for more uniformity in the way the notes are created. There is also room to better engage with the committee virtually, as reducing class visits meant little interaction with them this year.

## Wellness Wednesdays

For the second year of Wellness Wednesdays we were able to move the programming online. We included Fitness in the Space as part of our Wellness Wednesday events and were able to offer these monthly. The wellness events focused on gratitude and physical wellness that could be done quickly and with limited materials. We also included an interactive element on our Instagram stories so if students didn't want to participate in the activity they could get involved or see other students' responses.

By hosting online, it allowed us to continue Wellness Wednesdays and show students that the SU is still providing them with fun activities when restrictions are still in place. This is important for our goal of Quality of Student Life when we are unable to provide a lot of our regular programming that achieves this goal.

**What worked:** Making them quick activities that students could participate in worked well for the online format, additionally having the story elements to include everything together.

**Suggestions for improvement:** Depending on the restrictions it would be good to have both in-person and online elements to continue even if we are back in person to allow the event to be more accessible for students who are unable to visit the event in person.

## Sex Week

Held annually, Sex Week includes programming focused on sexual and gender wellness, health, and education. The SU Q Centre collaborates with the Wellness Centre, Women's Resource Centre, Queer UofC, and a variety of community organizations to offer engaging workshops and activities to students that allowed them to express and explore their identities in a safe, supportive, and educational environment. Moving online this year the SU hosted Trans 101 as a live event and an alphabet soup video series on Instagram, as well in collaboration with the other organisers we hosted the Carnival through Instagram stories where we tagged the resources.

**What Worked:** Overall there was good for the live session. Trans 101 was requested from previous attendees and was once again well received. Having Alphabet Soup as a video series made it more



accessible and it is something that can be carried over as an additional form of promotion in future years. Campus Carnival provided a low-commitment place for students to learn more about community organizations even when they are remote.

**Suggestions or Improvement:** It might be useful to include a member of the marketing team on the committee because they request a lot of marketing information that would be beneficial coming directly from them.

## Condoms

In support of student health and sexual wellness, the SU provides free condoms for students. Items available include lubricated male condoms (the most requested product), female condoms, and dental dams along with information on how to use all these items. They can be picked up from the information centre during operational hours.

**What worked:** Making sure they were still accessible even when the office was closed. The Information/Centre Lost and Found was a good central location and the small bags made them discreet, even though they were in a more public area.

**Suggestions for improvement:** Alternate, more accessible locations (including washrooms) should be explored; however, issues with bulk theft of condom dispensers may be an issue.

## Period Products

The SU provides free period products (pads and tampons) to help offset the high cost of these necessary items for undergraduate students. Products are purchased from Costco (the most cost-effective source) three times per year by the VPSL and Coordinator, Student Services. They are available at the Info Centre, because of covid and the goal to limit the touch this year the period products have been pre-packaged so that they are safer for people to pick up.

**What worked:** Having them in packages for easy access and to stop touch contact worked well and allowed us to still be able to provide these resources through the restrictions.

**Suggestions for improvement:** Alternate, more accessible locations (including washrooms) will be explored with a new Quality Money project.

## Looking Forward: Goals for 2021/22

Overall, this year has been extremely difficult due to the changing restrictions and having to adapt all of our programming online. With the increased optimism going into the next academic year our programming will see another big shift, trying to make sure that our programming reflects the needs of current students after the pandemic.





## **Involving Elected Officials**

The Student Services team will work closely with both the Communications Department and Elected Officials to promote SU events more strategically and dynamically. Faculty Representatives will be encouraged to bring at least five students from their faculties to each SU event. Additionally, if Faculty Reps intend on holding out-of-office hours, they will be advised to hold them right before SU initiatives and invite students to attend. During SLC orientations, the importance of promoting SU events will be emphasized to all elected officials.

## **Event Scheduling and Focused Promotion**

The timing of events will be carefully coordinated to ensure that we are reaching the maximum number of students (i.e., taking breaks, exam periods, and other academic requirements into consideration) and not overlapping with other initiatives. This will allow for more focused promotional strategies, including a “what’s going on in the SU this month” feature so that students can come to know what to expect from the SU at various times of the year.

## **Meeting Students’ Needs and Expectations**

The goal of every SU initiative is to meet (and exceed) students’ needs and expectations. Anticipating these needs is always a challenge especially after the pandemic; however, with the assistance of our Program and Events Assistants, input from elected officials, and results from the annual SU survey, we will continue to adapt programs and events to find the next “big thing” on campus.