



Adam Garcia

Vice President Education

Report

April 2014

Federation of Students
University of Waterloo

1.0 Executive-Related Activities

1.1 Committees:

Education Advisory Committee

EAC has brought forward two new policies as well as a report and recommendation on our membership with the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations.

Undergraduate Student Relations Committee

Responsibilities: A forum to discuss undergraduate student issues in a broad sense at UW.

Synopsis: At the March 20 meeting the major items were a discussion of the increase to tuition fees which will be the maximum allowed by the current provincial tuition policy (3% average across all programs) and a discussion of the Ring Road Safety Group, where Dan Anderson provided an update of where the working group is at with the implementation of a plan to enhance pedestrian safety on the east side of Ring Road.

1.2 Commissions:

To get in contact with either of the staff:

Andrew Clubine, Municipal Affairs Commissioner, municipal@feds.ca

Maaz Yasin, Academic Affairs Commissioner, academic@feds.ca

2.0 University-Related Activities

2.1 Committees:

Co-operative Education Council

Responsibilities: A forum to review and advice on Co-op at UW

Synopsis: The March 25 meeting was canceled due to a lack of items. Next meeting is April 22.

Senate Undergraduate Council

Responsibilities: To consider questions involving academic quality and undergraduate studies and provide recommendations to go forward to Senate

Synopsis: I was unable to attend the March 4 meeting as I was at the University Tenure & Promotions Committee.

English Language Proficiency Working Group

Responsibilities: Advises the Provost and his Special Advisor on English Language Competency on strategies to implement the recommendations of the Stubleby Report on English Language Proficiency.

Synopsis: This committee has not met since my last report and no future meetings have been scheduled.

Provost's Advisory Committee on Scheduling

Responsibilities: Advises the Provost and the Registrar's Office on systems and business practices related to implementation of a new course timetabling software

Synopsis: This committee has not met since our last Council meeting and no future meetings have been scheduled.

Copyright Advisory Committee

Responsibilities: Advises the Provost and Library to promote and ensure copyright compliance within the university

Synopsis: This committee has not met since our last Council meeting and no future meetings have been scheduled.

University Tenure & Promotions Committee

Responsibilities: Reviews faculty tenure and promotions applications and recommends granting tenure and promotion to the President.

Synopsis: This committee met on March 4 is one of the most high profile committees that the Federation of Students sits on. I cannot announce the results as all decisions are confidential due to University Policy.

3.0 External Activities

3.1 Municipal/Regional-level

Town & Gown Steering Committee, City of Waterloo

Responsibilities: Bring together a smaller group of municipal stakeholders to assist with direction-setting for the broader Town & Gown Committee.

Synopsis: This committee has not met since our last Council meeting, and no future meeting has been scheduled.

Town & Gown Committee, City of Waterloo

Responsibilities: Represent UW students to all of the stakeholders involved in the Town & Gown Association, bring forward student concerns, and identify opportunities for integration in the community

Synopsis: At the March 25 meeting we heard final reports from the two working groups on Student Housing and Return to Campus. The Student Housing Working Group has given Town & Gown a great amount of information for which to move forward on, and the Return to Campus Working Group has led to the creation of a new campus-specific working group at Waterloo with Feds representation. At this committee we also received the final IBM report which has many recommendations for how the cities, universities, and other stakeholders can work together more collaboratively to solve complex issues such as student housing in Northdale.

3.2 Provincial-level

Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA)

Responsibilities: Represent UW students to the provincial government through an alliance of like-minded undergraduate student associations. For more information on OUSA visit: www.ousa.ca.

Synopsis: OUSA Spring General Assembly at Queen's has come and gone (my 6th and final GA!). Feds against had a strong delegation to evaluate and approve policy papers on system vision, Aboriginal students, and international students. As well, there was an update to the online learning policy paper and a new set of by-laws were up for approval. All of the papers and by-laws were approved at the plenary. Some of the hot topics in the discussions:

System Vision: Limiting faculty compensation increases as this is one of the biggest cost-drivers in the system; whether to limit growth to merit-based scholarships as these do not promote access

International Students: Tuition regulation; provision of needs-based assistance for international students; whether to include international students in OHIP as opposed to UHIP

Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) Steering Committee

Responsibilities: Represent UW undergraduate students to OUSA and serve the OUSA Steering Committee as Secretary of the Corporation.

Synopsis: At the March 10 meeting we approved the selection of the honoured alumni that will be presented with this honour at the Partners in Higher Education Dinner, Steering Committee approved the by-law changes for the members to approve at the General Assembly, discussed the policy library structure and decided to recommend to the delegates to extend the expiration date of our policy papers to four years, and

decided to recommend to the delegates to review our Student Mobility, Accountability and Student Health policy papers at the Fall 2014 General Assembly.

At the March 29 meeting at Spring General Assembly we discussed a preliminary provincial elections strategy as we can anticipate a Spring election in May or June, discussed an OUSA response to the federal Fair Elections Act, discussed our continued relationship with CASA, and discussed whether OUSA would like to pursue some level of federal advocacy on behalf of our members given general consensus on dissatisfaction with CASA. Final Steering Committee of the year will be April 22.

3.3 Federal-level

Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA)

Responsibilities: Represent UW students to the federal government through an alliance of like-minded undergraduate, graduate, college, and polytechnic student associations from across Canada. For more information on CASA visit: www.casa-acae.com.

Synopsis: The CASA Annual General Meeting was held March 14-16 in Charlottetown, PEI. The majority of the conference is addressed in the report from the Education Advisory Committee.

4.0 Meetings with Decision-makers

4.1 University-level:

Chris Read, Associate Provost, Students & Pam Charbonneau, Director, SSO

- Natasha and I met with Chris and Pam prior to a meeting for the Student Services Advisory Committee to discuss the SSO's budget and a pending decision's impact on the budget.

Peggy Jarvie, Director, CECA

- Peggy and I touched base to discuss several things, but primarily to discuss the co-op fee and future discussions on regulation of the co-op fee and the CECA budget/

Rob Esselment, Senior Director, Government Relations

- Monthly meeting with Rob. No major items to report.

Geoff McBoyle, Chris Read, Faculty Association, Staff Association, Grad Students' Association

- All of these stakeholders were brought together by Chris Read to discuss shared issues with recreational facilities on campus and to discuss shared funding models.

Rocco Fondacaro, Director, Student & Faculty Relations, CECA

- Monthly meeting with Rocco. No major items to report.

Rocco Fondacaro & Stephane Hamade

- Rocco and Peggy invited Stephane and I to a lunch as a transition opportunity. Peggy was unable to make it in the end, but it was a good discussion with Rocco about Stephane's priorities for the year.

Chris Read, Mario Coniglio, Beth Jewkes, Robbie Henderson, Coleen Even

- Further discussions towards a new fee agreement. This meeting was mostly follow-up questions from the university administration to clarify the students' latest submission.

4.2 Municipal/Regional-level:

City of Waterloo Elections Staff

- Andres and I attended a meeting initiated by the City of Waterloo Clerks Office to begin planning for the 2014 municipal election.

4.3 Provincial-level:

No meetings to report.

4.4 Federal-level:

No meetings to report.

4.5 Other:

No meetings to report.

5.0 Upcoming Activities

This is a list of scheduled, upcoming activities/meetings before the next Council meeting, that will have me out of office:

- OUSA Executive & Executive Director Retreat, April 9 & 10
- OUSA Steering Committee, April 22
- Feds Executive Transition, April 26-29

6.0 End of Year Status of Projects

A list of action items and projects that have been actively worked on this year in the VP Education portfolio and their status:

Sign a new ancillary fee agreement with the University of Waterloo.

Status: Incomplete

Recommendation: As this is a significant project and is one of the most foundational items related to Feds' relationship with the University this will be a significant project to transition to the next Executive team. I hope the incoming Executive will continue to work on this project.

Utilize part-time staff positions to support academic and municipal advocacy efforts.

Status: Complete

Recommendation: Continue with the Academic Affairs Commissioner and Municipal Affairs Commissioner roles; focus on expanding municipal advocacy and lobbying on an ongoing basis through the Commissioner; hire a Co-op Affairs Commissioner to support co-op issues that are separate from the academic issues all students face.

Run Academic Advocacy Week.

Status: Complete

Recommendation: Continue to run Academic Advocacy Week; utilize Education Advisory Committee to determine advocacy priorities for the week; promote early to gather more student interest; hold more meetings.

Run Local Advocacy Week.

Status: Complete

Recommendation: Continue to run Local Advocacy Week in partnership with WLUSU; utilize Education Advisory Committee to determine advocacy priorities; promote early in November to gather more student interest; better coordination between WLUSU and Feds is required to increase the number of meetings through earlier planning.

Run awareness campaign on course and instructor fees.

Status: Ongoing

Recommendation: Continue to run the awareness campaign; recommendation that a full-time staff member (e.g. Research & Policy Officer) be responsible for monitoring the account as the VPED and a part-time staff member still led to slow response time.

Expand the Feds Teaching Awards program.

Status: Complete; three award winners selected and all attended awards ceremony at Feds Leadership Banquet

Recommendation: Continue to run the Feds Teaching Awards program; accept nominations year-round as faculty are teaching all three terms; promote the program through Daily Bulletin to demonstrate student interest in quality teaching.

Determine federal advocacy strategy for Feds.

Status: Incomplete

Recommendation: Pending the outcome of the CASA membership vote a working group should be struck to determine the best course of action for Feds both short-term and long-term regarding advocacy priorities and strategies for influence.

Continue issue-based advocacy.

Course and instructor fees: Early in Spring 2013 term the University released new guidelines for course and instructor fees. Due to provincial advocacy student associations can now form agreements with institutions on some online software fees.

Recommendation: Continue "Report that Fee" campaign; work with institution to develop agreement on online software fees.

Course and instructor evaluations: In March 2014 a Course Evaluations Task Force was created, chaired by Dr. Mark Seasons, with the goal to develop a single course instrument. Faculty of Science is developing a tool that allows all course evaluations to be filled out online and results displayed publicly.

Recommendation: Establish strong presence on Task Force. Work with Faculty Societies to ensure that course evaluation results are public to all students (ESS, ASU, AHSUM, in particular).

CECA Systems Strategy: WaterlooWorks will be piloted in Architecture over the Spring 2014 term, with full launch for Winter 2015. Significant business decisions being developed regarding salary disclosure, rankings and offers, and number of job applications.

Recommendation: Continue to monitor the systems strategy, continue advocacy on salary disclosure, and the ability of students to opt-out of interviews and have some ability to opt out of job offers/matches under reasonable circumstances.

Off-campus housing quality: Significant data collection conducted through Town & Gown.

Recommendation: Run similar survey in Spring 2014 and Fall 2015 terms to expand the survey responses and solidify the information; advocate for a student housing plan to be developed by the City of Waterloo