



Adam Garcia

Vice President Education

Report

October 2012

Federation of Students
University of Waterloo

1.0 Month Summary

The end of September and beginning of October have proven to be a challenging time of year to grasp onto. The beginning of the term required a lot of organizational work in planning committee meetings, volunteer recruitment, booth days, etc.

Chris Walker and I took a number of the by-election issues discussed in my last report to a meeting the week after Council with the Kitchener-Waterloo Returning Officer and Elections Ontario head office staff to discuss initiatives to better engage students in voting and make it more accessible for them.

During the MTCU system reform discussions, universities were asked to submit a Strategic Mandate Agreement submission, outlining three key priorities for the institution. President Noble and I found out more about uWaterloo's Strategic Mandate Agreement at Senate Long-Range Planning Committee earlier in September. We were happy to hear that the Provost invited us to a special meeting to provide better input on this document. You can find information on uWaterloo's SMA here: <https://uwaterloo.ca/provost/university-waterloo-strategic-plan>.

Other discussions this past month include a meeting between Donna Ellis (Director of Centre for Teaching Excellence), Skaidra Puodziunas and I regarding OUSA's submission Educated Reform to gather feedback and consider some ideas. In this meeting we found out more about the Teaching Fellows program and were happy to hear that at least one faculty member has been identified in each Faculty. I also had a meeting with Mark Walker and Senator/MathSoc VP Academic Sean Hunt to discuss potential new timetable scheduling software and am working on planning a meeting between all Society VPs E/A and Mark Walker to discuss the software.

Finally, as outlined below, many of the commissions are looking for volunteers so if you are interested or know of anyone looking for volunteer opportunities, forward them to me!

2.0 Executive and At-Large Activities

2.1 Committees:

Education Advisory Committee

Education Advisory Committee now meetings Thursdays, 5:00-6:30P in the Feds Board Room #1 (SLC 1106).

Co-op Students' Council

Responsibilities: Forum for students to provide feedback on initiatives within co-op to CECA, and to suggest new ones.

Timeline: Twice per term

Partners: Director, Student & Faculty Relations, Co-op Student Experience Manager, Faculty Society VPs, Education Advisory Committee, interested students

Synopsis: The meetings are scheduled for October 16 5:00-7:00PM and December 4 5:00-7:00PM. CECA is concerned about the lack of co-op student representation on this Council (which is due to many Society VPs being regular students this year), so if you are interested in attending or know someone who is passionate about co-op issues please encourage them to attend and contact me for details.

2.2. Commissions:

Academic Commission

The Academic Commissioner, Maaz Yasin, has posted a couple of Deputy Commissioner positions, one on Technology and one for Co-op.

Municipal Affairs Commission

Abraham Yuen, Municipal Affairs Commissioner, put on a Community Information Fair on September 27, which was a booth fair of community resources to help students connect to the local area. Booths from Grand River Transit, Waterloo Region Police Services, Waterloo Library, City of Waterloo By-law Enforcement, City of Waterloo Recreation, Off Campus Dons, Waterloo Waste Management, and UW Wellness were all in attendance to give students information on living in the community. Abraham is also looking for a Deputy Commissioner to support his portfolio and it is posted on feds.ca

Provincial Affairs Commission

After recruitment, Skaidra Puodziunas, Provincial Affairs Commissioner, was able to create a team of volunteers consisting of two Deputy Commissioners – Mariam (Communications) and Amy (Policy & Research). Mariam, Amy, and I attended the OUSA Training Day on September 21 as they have been designated the OUSA Campus Coordinator and OUSA Campus Researcher, respectively. The day was a great networking experience for us all and a great way to share lots of information. The Provincial Affairs Commission meets Wednesdays at 11:30. Skaidra is also looking for OUSA General Assembly Delegates, if interested in representing Feds the weekend of November 2-4 or know someone who might be, please let me know (or check out feds.ca Volunteer Opportunities for information).

Federal Affairs Commission

The Federal Affairs Commissioner, Sam Estoesta, has posted two Deputy Commissioner positions – Communications and Policy & Research.

2.3 Projects:

- **Advocacy Coordinator Co-op**

Danielle assists with a number of projects as follows: planning OUSA General Assembly, November 2-4 here at uWaterloo; creation of a (tentatively named) "Student Rights Handbook" which will include information and resources for students on a number of issues that may crop up during their tenure as students such as academic appeals, landlord & tenant issues, voting, harassment in the co-op workplace, etc. I am hoping this will be a guide that students can use to a) make themselves more knowledgeable prior to issues cropping up and b) to know the resources available when issues crop up. This project is going quite well, and Danielle has done quite a lot of work and research into the project thus far. Finally, Danielle assists with media scanning and action prioritization for Feds on issues that are being discussed in the media that may relate to Waterloo students or benefit them.

I have also posted this position for Winter term, and have completed interviews for the position. I will submit rankings by the end of the week.

3.0 Internal University Activities

2.1 Committees:

Co-operative Education Council

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

Timeline: Monthly meetings; ongoing

Partners: Bruce Mitchell, Peggy Jarvie, Faye Schultz, faculty reps, student representation through faculty VP Academic/Educations

Synopsis: At the September 18 meeting of CEC, the committee discussed new reporting arrangements (Peggy Jarvie, the Executive Director of CECA now reports

directly to the Provost), CECA systems update (specifically updates on the RFP and RFI proposals for commercial software packages), and updates on the Fall 2012 co-op placements numbers (97.1% of students employed – compared to 97.4% in Fall 2011). Also discussed were international risk management, an update of the co-op review, and updated on WatPD course offerings.

Senate Undergraduate Council

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

Timeline: Monthly, ongoing

Partners: Associate VP Academic, Associate Deans of faculties, student representation through VPs Academic/Education

Synopsis: The October 9 meeting of Senate Undergraduate Council discussed edits to program requirements and courses for all Faculties except Arts. Notably, Environment edited transfer credit allowances and has made it mandatory that at least 10.0 credits be completed while registered in the Faculty to meet degree requirements and Mathematics now includes failed courses in averages.

Student Technology Advisory Committee

Responsibilities: advises UCIST on issues relating to the provision of information technology and information technology support to students.

Timeline: Ongoing

Partners: Bud Walker, representation from IST and faculty computing offices, undergraduate and graduate at-large student representatives

Synopsis: September 27 meeting we discussed the IT Strategic Plan and heard a number of project updates from various technology initiatives on campus. STAC student members also were able to meet with Natalie Cockburn prior to the meeting to discuss agenda items, and hear updates from the Student Technology Services Team.

Copyright Advisory Committee

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

Timeline: Weekly; ongoing

Partners: UW Librarian, Centre for Extended Learning, Retail Services, representatives from Faculty Association, Graduate Students' Association.

Synopsis: The Copyright Advisory Committee met on both September 17 and September 24 (which I was unable to attend). The meetings have heard updates on fair dealing policies from ACCC (Association of Canadian Community Colleges) and AUCC (Association of Universities and Colleges Canada). The committee gave feedback on an update to the Copyright FAQ section of the Library website, and discussed campus communications efforts. I am happy that the messaging for the changes is directed at faculty and staff, who are the ones often making copies of materials. Feds and GSA will also be working to ensure there are updates to students when we receive more specific & directed information.

4.0 Municipal Activities

4.1 Committees:

Town & Gown Association, 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

Timeline: Ongoing, once every other month

Partners: WULSU, Community Relations (Kaye Crawford), Councilor Henry, regional police and fire safety departments, bylaw enforcement, and permanent residents.

Synopsis: The September 25, 2012 meeting mainly discussed the Strategic Planning Retreat that is planned for November 29. This potentially overlaps with OUSA Lobby Conference, so depending on what OUSA's plans are for the 29th I may have to prioritize one over the other.

5.0 Provincial Activities

5.1 Committees:

Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) Steering Committee

The most recent Steering Committee was on September 21 (held at OUSA Training Day). On the agenda was only campus updates and the tuition framework discussion. While I cannot yet announce the outcome of the discussion I can affirm that I, as previously stated, advocated that OUSA's stance should be a funded tuition freeze – that tuition increases not be allowed, and the additional annual costs be recovered by government funding.

OUSA Home Office also came to Waterloo on September 20, to do their annual "Campus Visit." Our visit included a meeting with Rylan Kinnon (Executive Director of OUSA), President Hamdullahpur, Associate Provost Chris Read, and I to discuss the Strategic Mandate Agreement process and tuition and fees. OUSA also set up a booth for the entire day at Clubs & Services Day, met with the Office for Persons with Disabilities, met with our Provincial Affairs Commissioner, our Advocacy Coordinator, and also held a focus group for the *Hire Education* campaign.

5.2 Current/Continued Projects:

- **OUSA Fall General Assembly, University of Waterloo**

Feds is hosting the OUSA Fall General Assembly on November 2-4. Danielle Burt, Advocacy Coordinator, has been working on this and has been a great support in planning the conference. With the high turnover in OUSA Home Office this year, we are having a difficult time in receiving the support and information necessary to understand everything required of us to plan the conference and division of responsibilities, but Danielle has been fantastic in organizing thus far.

- **Student Employment Policy Paper**

Myself and Alysha Li, VP University Affairs of the USC at Western and OUSA President, took on the policy paper on Student Employment that is currently slotted to be brought forward at Spring General Assembly. I have notified a few key individuals at CECA to let them know, and all have been quite generous in offering support, resources, and research to ensure we create a high quality paper.

- **Co-op Students & Employment Standards Act**

I met Kirk Patterson at a meeting with CECA, who update me on the status of advocating for co-op students to be included within the Employment Standards Act. There seems to be significant desire on the part of Education at Work (a provincial advocacy group for co-operative education) to continue to move on this. I was asked to remain part of the process, and agreed. I have notified OUSA of this as well, and there seems to be interest from them to offer support where possible.

6.0 Federal Activities

6.1 Committees:

Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA)

The CASA National Advocacy Conference (Lobby Con) is coming up November 19-23 in Ottawa. Sam Estoesta and I will be attending the conference on behalf of Feds.

CASA Policy Committee

Responsibilities:

Timeline: 2012-2013

Partners: Representatives from Federation of Students (UWFEDS), Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (DAGS), Athabasca University Graduate Students Association (AUGSA), St. Thomas University Students' Union (STUSU), Fédération des étudiants et des étudiantes du Centre universitaire de Moncton (FÉÉCUM), McMaster Students' Union (MSU), and CASA Home Office Staff

Synopsis: As Chair of Policy Committee, I have less impact on the decisions of the committee, but work towards the organization and execution of the committee goals. The committee wishes to bring forward policy on student voting issues on campus and tri-agency funding, as well as mental health issues over the next few months. I am working with CASA Home Office research staff to gather necessary information for committee to build their policy. I am having difficulty gathering members' availability to schedule meetings and am currently "stalled" on this.

6.2 Current/Continued Projects:

- **CASA Deliverables Framework**

EAC has continued to monitor the outcomes from the Deliverables Framework. We have received a Communications Strategy and Board of Directors Action Plan and have provided feedback and asked for clarity on some sections. Please see the EAC Report for more information on this.