Office of the President


Prepared by | Tanner Bokor
President
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Dear Colleagues,

As I write this report, I am concluding what has been a tumultuous, yet exciting first portion to my term as President. Over the past six months, the Society overall has continued moving forward on completion of the New SUB, welcomed Professor Arvind Gupta as the 13th President of UBC, introduced a mobile application through Oohlala, struck a tentative deal over the sale of the Whistler Lodge, and has begun grappling with the largest tuition increase UBC has seen since 2010. That is to say, on top of the everyday activities of the AMS. I can say without hesitation that there have been difficult and challenging moments for myself as President and for the AMS overall, but I continue to grow and learn as I advance in my role and tackle new issues that arise from time to time. I have certainly made my fair share of mistakes over the past weeks and months, but I continue to celebrate those mistakes and improve upon them moving forward. None the less, I am deeply appreciative and humbled by the opportunity to continue serving in the interests of UBC students, and I look forward to what the next eight months have in store for the Society.

I would also like to recognize that in-between my first and second ternary report, I am saddened to report the death of a great friend and colleague to all of us at the AMS. Michelle Macatangay, a member of the AMS Finance & Administration team, passed away suddenly in mid-October. Michelle had been with the Society for four years, and will be remembered for her spirited presence in the front office, as well as snappy comments and amusing stories. Her passing is a great loss to the Society, and to our membership, and she will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

This report encompasses most areas of my office’s activities to date, including an overview of my goals while in office. Should you have any other questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me at president@ams.ubc.ca

Respectfully submitted,

Tanner Bokor
105th President
Alma Mater Society of UBC Vancouver
1 Year Goals

As stated previously, my goals while in office are long-term in nature, and my focus will be on setting a direction for the AMS to follow post-New SUB. These goals are expansive and adaptive, which include the creation of a 15-year strategic plan for the Society, reviewing our internal structure and operations, creating a more accessible and transparent AMS, upgrading our critical infrastructure to the 21st Century, and building new methods and new outlets for meaningful student engagement outside and within the Society.

Overall, progress on my goals has been steady, with several slight pauses occurring due to other issues that have arisen, such as first-year orientations, tuition and housing increases, New SUB challenges, and personal issues that have required a change in pace. I am on track for a majority completion of most goals, with a number being delegated or being accomplished in collaboration with other members of staff and the executive. By mid-November, I should have a completed timeline for substantial completion of most goals, barring additional issues arising; that said, I will also be working closely with the Oversight Committee to monitor progress, and potentially look towards removing a goal as needed.

1.1 AMS 2030

AMS 2030 is an idea piggy backed off of a process started by my predecessor, Caroline Wong. Caroline believed that the Society lacked a vision and a general direction, and at the latter half of her term, called together a Vision Taskforce to begin the working of re-focusing the AMS towards the future. Like Caroline, I agree that a long term vision is essential for the Society's continued growth and to match the needs of our members, however, I feel that the Society also needs a review of its’ values, mission statement, and strategic framework. With this said, I asked Council in March to strike the AMS 2030 Taskforce to begin this work, and it is ongoing. The end goal is to take a document, modeled after UBC’s Place and Promise, to Council, undergraduate societies, and ultimately to students directly at referendum and ensure that it is permeated throughout the Society.

Overall, progress on AMS 2030 has been mostly internal to my office. The AMS 2030 committee has been established, and has met once over the summer. I made the decision to hold the next meeting in late October once AccessAMS could be fully drafted. Upon further discussion with the Executive Director and General Manager, as well as numerous committee members, I have also begun laying the groundwork for a governance review-program to be completed by January, 2015. With AMS 2030 focusing on the long-term direction of the Society, this new governance review process is inherently linked, meaning there may be some crossover between both programs, which will be helpful to the overall process.

I have been able to meet with a number of resources from UBC, including representatives from the VP, Students portfolio to discuss best practices around strategic-planning exercises. One important element that is being added to the proposal overall is the fractioning of multiple plans. The
challenge with a 15-year plan is that there must exist a balance between setting a mutually-agreed to long-term direction, with the need to not bind the hand of future Council’s who will adapt and change with the needs of students. As such, as part of the proposal, there will be the 15-year plan which will focus on high-level values and principles, with three 5-year plans that are medium-term achievable that relate to the long-term plan, and 15 annual action plans to be developed in collaboration between the executive and Council, much like the former Strategic Framework adopted by Council in 2005.

The AMS 2030 Committee will be convening on a more regular schedule, with public consultations hopefully underway in early November.

1.2 Access, Engage, Ignite & Invest

What may seem like buzzwords, these four words describe the bulk of where my energies are being focused as President of the AMS. At Executive Retreat, I presented the executive three strategies (Access, Engage, and Ignite) that encompass different principles and programs to help overall bolster the work of the Society. As it would happen, the executive found many of their goals aligning directly with these principles, and are incorporating there projects within these strategies. To shy away from the buzzwords, the purpose of these now four strategies is as follows, with a brief update on their status:

**Access AMS:** To build an open AMS that is transparent and accountable to its members, with opportunities for meaningful, accessible public participation, made possible through innovation, technology and collaboration. AccessAMS has completed the drafting stage, and will be sent to the AMS 2030 Committee for first-consultation in early November.

**Engage AMS:** To build a culture of inclusiveness and ownership amongst AMS members, where there is a constant exchange of information and ideas. EngageAMS is in the process of being drafted, with expected completion by late November.

**Ignite AMS:** To build a more streamlined and integrated AMS, building formal ties to all areas of student life at UBC, fostering student involvement and participation. IgniteAMS has yet to be drafted, and will begin being drafted in December 2014.

**Invest AMS:** To build an innovative and leading-edge student society using technology to supplement current functions, engage members, and improve access, while also investing in the organization’s human capital to drive productivity, collaboration, and personal development. InvestAMS will be moving outside of my office’s jurisdiction in January 2015, where it will be sent to the Human Resources department, Operations, and to the Executive Director for a discussion around scope and impact.

In the intent was for each strategy to have a staggered implementation, and in my term, elements of each of these strategies be implemented. In retrospect, only one or two of these strategies may
actually be formally approved for implementation in time for the end of my term, which means implementation will most likely fall outside of my time as President.

1.3 Internal Review

As mentioned above, in consultation with the General Manager, Executive Director, and numerous members of committees and staff, I am continuing on with a governance review program, which is called “BuildAMS.” Modeled after the CORP review undertaken in 1994, the proposal is to create a governance steering committee responsible for managing the overall review process, and to hire an external consultant to conduct the review with the direction of the committee. A majority of the planning on this review has been undertaken by my Executive Projects Assistant – Governance, Joshua Sunga, who has developed the final proposal being taken to AMS Council on October 22nd for approval. Joshua has proposed a budget for the review of $45,000 which has been approved by the Budget Committee, and sent out a request for proposal to a number of consulting firms to conduct the review. Ultimately, in consultation with the executive, staff, and a number of Councillors, I am putting forward MNP LLP as the external consultant to conduct the review. MNP LLP is a Canadian-firm, who’s responding partner is a former student union executive. Their proposal was selected for approval for their knowledge of the student association market, direct-partner access, and overall cost-effectiveness.

The review will consist of a number of consultation sessions with staff, committee members, executives, constituencies, clubs, and students at large. This feedback will then be compiled, indexed, and the consultants will begin proposing best practices across the Society. The scope of the review includes the overall administrative structure, accountability programs and structures like PAI, the executive structure, business practices and structure, advocacy structures, and representation best practices.

This review will begin on October 23rd, and conclude with a final report being sent to Council in late January for ultimate ratification in February. From there on in, an Implementation Officer will be hired onto my staff who will be responsible for developing an implementation strategy for the recommendations approved by AMS Council.

1.4 Infrastructure Investment

In 2015, the AMS will be celebrating its’ 100th anniversary. Similarly, we will also be celebrating (hopefully) the conclusion of construction of the SUB (now Nest.) That said, some of our internal functions and systems are not serving the needs of our members or our employees in ways that make sense in 21st Century terms. The AMS should be investing in its’ own internal infrastructure, including IT systems, to ensure we have an efficient, accessible, and user-friendly experience for our clubs and overall, our members.

With this, I have been working on developing an ad-hoc technology strategy outside of InvestAMS that has and will address current deficiencies in processes, and recommend areas of investment to
help improve said processes. So far, the key software elements implemented are a new Council management software called eScribe, a new mobile application through app-maker Oohalala, and a new document management solution called Laserfiche. In consultation with the VP Admin, the executive also put forward a proposed solution for clubs management, however, Council has requested further consideration of potential tools for this purpose, and the VP Admin will be conducting a review on alternate proposals in time for a November delivery.

### 1.5 Student Engagement & Support

On increasing student engagement, much of the focus on this file has been split in the short-term between implementing the 2014 communications strategy and imagining EngageAMS. Earlier in the year, the Society implemented the new Oohalala mobile app, which has reached roughly 4,000 downloads and several hundred active users per day, which has helped with centralizing club and resource information for students, as well as developing new methods to inform students on varying issues through the system's e-message service. That said, there is much still to be done on the physical engagement. The VP Administration has begun creating a Cross-Campus Partner function each month with groups like the Residence Hall Association, Greek Life, Rec, and the various constituencies in play, which is something which I believe strongly should be formalized and entrenched as a regular function for the AMS, and actually modify this grouping to ultimately be the Community Advisory Panel that had been recommended in previous motions and review conducted by Council. Beyond that, I am also working with the Executive Director and the Communications Manager to create more intimate opportunities to connect with students, such as early morning breakfasts with members of the executive, digital town-halls, physical town halls, potluck dinner events, and more. A more solidified strategy and engagement plan will be developed over the coming months, with aim of being delivered to Council by March.

### 1.6 Equity Services Review

This is an issue very near and dear to my heart. After an incident that occurred at this years' Block Party with an attendee committing an act of cultural appropriation, the Society announced a review of Equity Services and programs to ensure that we are adequately serving the needs of our members and subsidiary organizations.

This goal has been moving forward slowly, thanks to the resources of the VP Academic’s portfolio and the AMS Equity Commissioner. To date, and in consultation with HR, the Executive Director, SASC, and the VP Academic, we are nearing in finalizing a proposal for the creation of a new AMS Equity Office that will be modeled after the SASC’s operations, predominantly focusing in on proactive outreach and education to both internal AMS groups and the external community.

Beyond this, work is continuing on creating a community standards policy that will help guide and inform students on equity and diversity issues, as well as set expectations for all AMS events and functions. Much of this process will be included in imagining AMS 2030, and in certain elements of
the governance review, to ensure equity, inclusion, and diversity are the cornerstone of the future direction for the AMS.

1.7 Vancouver-Okanagan Partnership

When UBC-O was founded, the UBC - Students Union Okanagan was created to serve as the official voice of students at UBC-O. Over the years, the AMS has had sparse relations with the SUO, which is a missed opportunity and disservice to students at both campuses. Both campuses represent UBC students overall, all students societies’ at UBC, including the GSS, should be working together to advance the interests of students.

Our conversations with the SUO have been positive, and for the first time in our history, the SUO, GSS, and AMS held their first executive and Council retreat together in Kelowna, which was extremely successful and beneficial. I have had the opportunity to meet with the SUO on five occasions this year at varying conferences and casual meetings to discuss topics like financial best practices, academic and university issues, external partnerships, and cross-campus collaboration. I am currently working with the University & Government Relations Advisor and the Executive Director to develop a framework agreement that would enshrine future partnerships and exchanges aimed at improving cross-campus relations in perpetuity. My goal is to propose this framework agreement to the SUO and GSS in mid-November, and as there has been consensus that such an agreement would be beneficial to all parties, I suspect this goal should move forward on schedule with a positive overall result.

2 Committees

Day-to-day in my office encompasses so many different facets and duties, and while some are so miniscule that they need not be mentioned here, it is important to mention my participation with a few committees that I have been sitting as a member of.

2.1 Legislative Procedures Committee

As an ex-officio member, I have been attending a few meetings to discuss code changes ranging from the new constituency creation procedure and student at large recruitment procedure, to assisting in the internal policy review process. To date, a number of key discussions have occurred at LPC around more-macro issues, such as the future of BAGB, future composition of Council, and more. I’ll be working closely with LPC throughout the governance review process to ensure the views of the committee members are taken into account and that they are actively involved in the process.

2.2 Budget Committee
I have a fairly limited role here, but I have attended a number of meetings on varying budget proposals, and ultimately passage of the final budget. As challenges have arisen related to the opening date of the New SUB, I will be working with members of staff and members on the Budget Committee to re-forecast our revenue projections and determine the possible financial position of the AMS come end of fiscal, in anticipation of potential budget amendments that may arise throughout the year that may need to be re-evaluated.

2.3 Executive Committee

As the chair of the Executive Committee, I’ve been working with the other members of the Executive to chart our year goals and look at the macro day-to-day of the Society. We have been meeting on a semi-regular schedule due to class obligations, but currently, meetings are held on Fridays from 10AM-12PM. To date, attendance has been high at Executive Committee, with a number of large items continuing to be discussed at length at each meeting, such as the New SUB and student fee collection.

2.4 Extraordinary Hiring Committee

I had the opportunity as a member of Extraordinary Hiring to interview candidates for the Elections Administrator position, and ultimately, the committee recommended Andrew Lavers as the EA for the year. Unfortunately, due to delays in process, the committee is backlogged with the hiring of the Elections Committee, but that process is underway and expected to be completed before early November.

2.5 University Neighbourhoods Association

As the AMS’s director the University Neighbourhoods Association, I have been attending regular monthly meetings, and occasional committee meetings related to the needs of the residents’ of UBC. These meetings have provided an interesting prospective on issues ranging from land-use to community services, and I am continuing to work towards building a greater degree of cooperation between the AMS and the UNA.

The board recently held it’s board elections, which has brought in a slight modification to the membership of the board, which presents a great opportunity to work with a number of new faces on issues of mutual interest. I am also working with the UNA on reviewing their electoral procedures, and overall governance structure to look for ways to better and more constructively channel the concerns of local residents.

2.6 New SUB Committee

I also serve as a member of the New SUB Committee, which has been meeting regularly, and is chaired by the VP Admin. The committee has had their work cut out for them as of late, discussing the project’s overall financial position, building opening schedule, and discussing the renovations of
the basement section of the existing SUB for future student use. I can’t exactly say the news has all been positive in the past few months, but the committee’s excitement and insight on how to keep moving the project forward has been invaluable. I anticipate that I will be meeting more regularly with the committee as we near a term two opening for the first half of the project.

3 Student Staff

Over the summer, I had increased my staff from one position to three, with two Executive Projects Assistants hired to take on larger projects of my office. I’ve split the role of the Executive Projects Assistant into two positions: one to focus on governance and policy issues, the other to focus on event planning and student engagement. For the governance role, I have hired Joshua Sunga to lead the governance review program and assist with AMS 2030. For the event and engagement role, I have hired Jae Lumba to assist with coordinating a potential Special General Meeting in February, as well as a number of ad hoc projects that have arisen as of late. Saarah Ghazi continues to serve as the Assistant to President, and should be especially noted for her dedication and persistence in putting up with me. Overall, my office has been functioning efficiently, and I anticipate hiring another Implementation Officer to assist once the governance review is completed on short-term contract sometime in mid-February, pending Council’s approval.

4 Miscellaneous

4.1 Meetings

I spend much of my time in meetings. That includes meetings with staff, executives, university officials, and the like. A full calendar of my meetings is available upon requests for those interested. As it stands, I currently have standing meetings with each executive, the Executive Director, General Manager, Communications Manager, and then the AVP C+CP, VP Students, President.

I have also taken to scheduling meetings with each member of Council to discuss their goals for the year, feedback for the executives, and ideas on how to better support Council. These meetings have been extremely insightful for me, and I am looking forward to scheduling a second round in term two.

4.2 UBC Presidential Transition

Earlier in my term, it was announced that Dr. Arvind Gupta will be taking the reigns as the 13th President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of British Columbia. The AMS released a statement congratulating Dr. Gupta on the date of his announcement, and also thanked Professor Dr. Steven Toope for his dedication and service to the university. I had sent a private letter to Dr. Gupta congratulating him again and expressing our interest for a meeting. I have had the chance to speak with Professor Gupta on numerous occasions, including at a reception in Kelowna in September, at
the annual Student Union Development Summit in August, at his installation ceremony in early September, and at a special dinner held at Norman Mackenzie House with the UBC-SUO and Professor Gupta’s family. We also managed to play a round of pool, with an inconclusive result as to who actually won. I also had the “cool” experience of completing an ice bucket challenge at the Imagine Day pep rally with Professor Gupta, which will certainly be a challenge to top for future AMS Presidents.

On a serious note, Professor Gupta’s style and impact is being felt across the university, with a shift of structure to a strong-Provost system, increased community partnerships, and a recently announced proposal to increase international tuition and winter-term housing fees. I intend to meet with Professor Gupta as often as able to discuss these changes in direction for UBC and understand his overall vision for the university moving forward.

**4.3 Media**

In my role as Spokesman for the AMS, I have done a number of live radio broadcasts, TV interviews, and newspaper articles with student and professional media on varying topics such as the New SUB, tuition fees, cars driving off stairs on campus, and I have also had a reporter shadow a working day for the intent of writing a feature story on the AMS. A summary of each media statement is available by contacting our Communications Manager.

**4.4 Hours**

In this term, I have asked all executives, and ultimately all members of staff to start banking their hours electronically through our electronic payroll system. A summary of these hours are available upon request by contacting the payroll department. My hours have been consistently tracking at 90 hours per week, including weekends, to complete the tasks of the office. I will be traveling to Montreal in November, as well as to Washington, DC in December for a conference. Next year, I will be traveling to Ottawa, Toronto, and possibly to London, England for a number of conferences and lobbying opportunities. Due to the timing around opening of the New SUB, I will also be spending my holidays in Canada, and will be working through the holiday season as necessary.