This report provides a summary of my activities from June to October 2014.

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1 Introduction
This mid-year report is meant to provide an update on my progress on my goals for the year. My previous report listed goals, which were broader and on more topics than my Performance Accountability Incentive (PAI) Goals which were passed by AMS Council in July. I will first report on the PAI goals, then on the other goals mentioned in my first ternary report. I will also report on my other activities, such as hiring, AMS and university committees that I sit on, my meetings with the Mental Health Network and the VP Academic Caucus, and any other project or non-project based work that I have done.

2 PAI Goals
I have only listed my general goals, and not the sub-goals. Please refer to my PAI goals (approved by Council in July) for the full set of sub-goals and metrics. It is probably important to note that given UBC’s recent announcement of their proposal to raise international student tuition for incoming students by 10% and Winter session housing by 20%, and given how much time I have spent on this issue in the last two weeks, it is very likely that my next few months I will be spending significant amounts of time on this issue, and therefore I will likely revise my PAI goals to reflect this change.

2.1 Aboriginal student engagement
Goal: Engage aboriginal students more closely with the VPAUA office and create groundwork for the VPAUA office to be better able to advocate for Aboriginal student issues in the future.
Since most student groups are not active over the summer, this goal is primarily meant for the Academic year. I have been speaking with a few aboriginal students and student groups on campus, and there have been some conversations about whether the Aboriginal Students Commissioner position is right as is written. It was not filled when Spencer’s contract at the end of the summer for this reason. However, I don’t see this as a setback, but rather an opportunity for us to really delve into what the relationship between the AMS and these groups and students should be. It is unclear where we will land, and therefore if every sub-goal will be completed as originally laid out, but in the end we will have really engaged aboriginal students and student groups in this conversation.

2.2 Equity/Task Force on Intersectional Gender-Based Violence and Aboriginal Stereotypes Follow-up/Orientations
Goal: Work with the university on the implementation of the Task Force on Intersectional Gender-Based Violence and Aboriginal Stereotypes’ (IGBVAS Task Force) recommendations (as they pertain to students) in a way has significant input from students and will create meaningful change.
A significant amount of work occurred on this goal over the summer. There were many, many meetings between the VP Student office, myself and Ava, and the undergraduate societies this summer around the question of orientations, and I am in the midst of writing a comprehensive report on the topic. Conversations have started with other student senators and staff from the UBC Equity Office on the topic of the proposed equity curriculum requirement, and now that we have done some background learning, it is more clear what the requirement and the process to get it might look like, and while we plan on doing significant work on this topic this year, my sub-goal was likely ambitious to the point of impossibility in its timeline, so I will likely revise it. My equity commissioner, Margareta, has begun a report on the equity-related policies, and so far, there has not been any indication of the timelines upon which they will be reviewed by the university.

2.3 WE Standings
Goal: Withdrawals under Extenuating circumstances (WEs) approved by Senate.
Lina, the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commissioner, has begun her research report on WEs, which is slightly behind schedule, but it is certainly moving. I also presented to the Ad Hoc Senate Committee on Mental Health and Wellbeing in August, and highlighted WEs as one of our priorities, and in their not-yet-circulated draft report to Senate in November, WEs have been highlighted as a priority area for the Senate Policy Committee, so that should help us in prioritizing the issue.

2.4 Acadia Park & C+CP Consultations

*Goal: Finalize a resolution for the Acadia Park discussions.*

I worked closely with C+CP over the past several months on the engagement charter (the final title was Engagement Principles and Guiding Practices). I wrote a briefing note on the topic for Unecorn, and it was passed through Unecorn and then unanimously at Council in August. I presented to the Board of Governors committee meeting on September 25, and spoke of my support, but also my concerns in regards to an enforcement mechanism, and the need to re-evaluate the land use plan. I spoke to both UBC student board members, and they are fully supportive of an enforcement mechanism, and have been working on this issue since the Board meeting. The conversation on the land use plan has not progressed.

We have continued to work closely with the active residents of Acadia Park, and at a community meeting in August there was consensus that the RHA should be the priority for the moment. We have spoken several times with SHHS in regards to this, and they have stated they are consulting residents, and there are 3 town halls scheduled for October/early November on the topic. We will continue to work with residents to ensure they feel their voices have been heard. I am also scheduled to meet with the RHA president very soon to discuss this.

2.5 Academic Experience Survey and Report 2014 & 2015 (and institutionalize it)

*Goal: Continue and improve the Academic Experience Survey and make the data more accessible.*

The 2014 report has not yet been released, though it is close to being released. We have hit some snags, but I think I have learned some valuable lessons from this experience about how the better implement it in the future. Focus groups have not occurred, but this was because the VPS office has been re-examining how they do student surveys (and many of their priorities line up with ours), and trying to focus them a bit more, and we felt similarly that it would be better to concentrate these on one or two issues rather than a whole slew. We have thus begun conversations about one particular issue with VPS and CTLT that we feel would benefit from additional research, and may be putting in for a TLEF to be able to examine one issue fully rather than several issues superficially.

Ben Pollard from the VP Students Office has indicated that he strongly supports the online accessibility of the data, and will be asking for the resources from PAIR to be able to build it for us, so that should be happening soon. In terms of long term sustainability, we explored several options in terms of contracting out, including extensive conversations with a local company called Vision Critical, but did not feel that any was appropriate at the time. Myself, Tanner, Bahareh and Daniel Levangie have been discussing the long term needs of our offices in terms of data, and have been exploring options of expanding capacity with additional permanent staff members. At this time that conversation has been rolled into the governance review.

3 Other Goals for the year

3.1 Housing contract

*Goal: To create structures and procedures (perhaps within the Housing Contract itself) that will better protect students’ rights in housing and better communicate to them their rights and housing procedures*
We have met with Andrew Parr and Janice Robinson once to discuss this issue, and there was general opposition. Natalya, the campus development commissioner, has been writing a report that outlines best practices, compares us to other BC Universities’ contracts and makes recommendations for areas for improvement. This report should be complete soon and we have been planning for what our actions will be once the report is published.

3.2 Tuition Consultation on New Programs

Goal: To work with the university to improve consultation processes for new program tuition.

This conversation has not yet occurred. There have only been two small tuition consultations for new programs this year so far, and the university has so far given us significantly more time for consultation.

3.3 Vantage College

Goal: To engage with Vantage College Students, and ensure the students are having an excellent academic experience

My international students’ commissioner, Ayush, and I have had several meetings with Vantage over the past few months. We have been in conversation with their around their program evaluation, and hope to be partnering with them on a few items. We will also be ensuring that Vantage students are separated out in the Academic Experience Survey in 2015 so that we can see how their experiences differ. We will also be working with them in the next few months to examine how a student association might be formed for Vantage.

3.4 Engagement with students

Goal: To better engage on academic and university issues with the VP Academics and Students at Large

Please see the sections on the VP Academic Caucus and on the Education Committee for these topics.

3.5 Exam Database

Goal: To have the Exam Database up and fully operational, used and with a full plan for its sustainability.

Daniel, my AVP, has taken the lead on this project. By September, CTLT had mostly finished the back-end database itself, and was in the process of fine-tuning the instructor and student user-interfaces, which should be finished this term. The Project Manager at CTLT has had extensive conversations with hundreds UBC faculty members in order to determine what the main points of contention are about this project. We are working on refining our communications strategies based on this feedback as well as other conversations with undergraduate society VP Academics and Associate Deans from Arts, Science, and Engineering, and we plan to reach out to departments in Arts and Science over the next several months to begin collecting content. After that, we will reach out more extensively across campus for content collection, with a tentative goal of launching the database to students in September 2015. It is also important to note that the focus of the project has shifted even more towards establishing a holistic database of assessment preparation resources for students that is integrated with all kinds of academic and study resources provided by various campus partners, as well as course-specific resources uploaded by instructors.

3.6 Midterm Evaluations of Teaching (MEoT)

Goal: To expand on the pilot in all Faculties, and work for widespread adoption in Arts.

We have continued to work on this project in partnership with CTLT, and Daniel has been taking the lead. In September, we launched a new, central website and blog about the project: http://midterm.teacheval.ubc.ca. We also held an interactive event for instructors and students about MEoTs (a recap of which is available on the website). As in past years, we are working with undergraduate society VP Academics and their dean’s offices to invite instructors to conduct MEoTs in their courses, and we are working on plans to continue to expand this project to more instructors. We will also continue to develop resources for instructors who need extra support in conducting MEoTs, which will be hosted on the website.
3.7 Policy 73 (Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities)

Goal: To incorporate mental health into Policy 73, and improve the policy overall to better work for students’ needs.

Policy 73 is up for review this year, and this past year the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commissioner wrote a report examining similar policies at similar universities in Canada and abroad, and it is in the final editing stages. The policy committee has not yet been formed, though I have been told it should be soon. The data will be ready in time to inform the committee’s work.

4 Hiring

4.1 Data Analyst

In June, we hired Elizabeth Gallipeau for an 8 week period to do much of the work for the Academic Experience Survey.

4.2 Aboriginal Students’ Commissioner

As mentioned earlier, we have not rehired for this position because I want to first make sure that this is what aboriginal students and student groups desire. Once this consultation has happened we may or may not re-hire for the position, and it may be revised somewhat.

5 Committee Updates and Work

5.1 AMS Committees

5.1.1 Education Committee
The Education Committee met several times over the summer, and has continued to meet in the fall, though due to a conflict with scheduling I have not been able to make the last 2 meetings. Much of the discussions have been around the FL forum we hope to hold, please see the minutes for more detail.

5.1.2 University and External Relations Committee
The committee met several times over the summer and frequently so far in the fall to discuss many topics. Topics from my office included the policy on Policy 69, our Tuition policy, a potential divestment policy, and others. Much of the work in the summer focused on the review of expiring policies, and the proposed tuition and housing increases will certainly be a topic discussed much this fall.

5.2 University Committees (Standing and Ad Hoc)

5.2.1 Student Evaluation of Teaching (SEoT) Implementation Committee
This committee is a UBC committee made up of university administrators and representatives from the major faculties to discuss the implementation of the SEoT. The committee met once in the summer and once in October, and many topics were discussed, such as Spring 2014’s scores, how to better communicate to students how course evaluations are used to ensure quality of teaching, and how the data is released to professors.
5.2.2 Learning Eco-System Steering Committee (Formerly Connect Steering Committee)
Daniel has been attending most of these meetings on behalf of the AMS. Up until September, this committee’s focus was on high level issues surrounding the implementation of Connect; however, it has been expanded to the Learning Eco-System Steering Committee, overseeing implementation of all facets of UBC’s learning technology eco-system (Connect, wiki, blogs, etc.). Much of this committee’s time is spent receiving updates on this implementation and advising on things like when to conduct scheduled Connect outages, and we have also discussed projects such as the new CTLT/UBC IT “Learning Technology Hub” in IKB. Daniel and I are currently among a group of testers for the new Connect mobile apps that should be rolled out to students sometime this year.

5.2.3 University Health and Safety Committee
The University Health and Safety Committee meets to discuss high level health and safety issues at UBC. Daniel has been attending these committee meetings on behalf of the AMS. In addition to the usual business of receiving monthly accident and incident reports as well as statistics on trends in these areas, the committee has been focusing on implementation numbers for UBC’s new Bullying and Harassment training as well as implementing new mechanisms for UBC workers reporting accidents. There have also been presentations on bike safety by Campus and Community Planning as well as discussions on rewording of Place and Promise to more accurately convey UBC’s commitment to a culture of safety and respect.

5.2.4 Orchard Commons Working Committee
This committee works on issues related to design and development of the new Orchard Commons. The committee did not meet during this period.

5.2.5 UBC Life Building Working Committee
I am sitting on the UBC Life Building Working Committee. This committee will make the major decisions in regards to the building architecture of the UBC Life Building (the refurbished old SUB). The committee met biweekly, and either myself or Daniel was able to attend every meeting. We also helped facilitate two focus groups with students on the plans over the summer. The meetings have stopped since September since the project has been put on hold due to the new capital projects plan UBC is making.

5.2.6 Public Realm Committee
This committee oversees the implementation of the Public Realm plan within C+CP. There have been several meetings over the summer and we have discussed mostly the plans for Achievement Square and University Square, and the consultation processes for them.

5.2.7 Bookstore Advisory Committee
The Bookstore Advisory Committee is a body made up of staff, faculty, and students that provides feedback and advice to the UBC Bookstore on its product and service offerings to the UBC community. The committee met recently and Daniel attended in my place as I was unable to attend.

5.2.8 RCMP Community Police Advisory Committee
This committee is hosted by the RCMP University Detachment with representatives from the AMS, Metro Van Parks Board, Campus Security, UNA, UEL and the VP Students Office. I was unable to attend the only meeting that has been held recently, but Daniel Levangie attended in my place.

5.2.9 Scholarly Communications Steering Committee
The Scholarly Communications Steering Committee met has not met in person during this time.

5.2.10 UTown@UBC
The UTown@UBC Committee brings together stakeholders from all areas of the University, both academic and nonacademic, to discuss issues that relate to the campus as a community and town. The committee
met once and discussed projects in development, the C+CP Engagement Principles, the Zero Waste Plan and the 2013 Transportation Status Report.

5.2.11 Flexible Learning Strategy Network
The Flexible Learning Strategy Network meets to discuss high-level strategy for UBC relating to flexible learning. The network has not met during this time.

5.2.12 Orientations Steering Committee
The committee met on May 5th, July 10th, and August 12th. I was able to attend the first two but not the second due to being sick. There were many other meetings in regards to Orientations, but those are discussed elsewhere in the report, and will be discussed in great detail in my report on Orientations. At these meetings we discussed the major things being implemented this year: the event guidelines, the name change away from Frosh, the BRIC training, the Student Leader Commitment Statement, changes to Imagine Day (eg Away from Faculty cheers to a UBC cheer), and there was discussion of paying Squad leaders though there were many concerns expressed with this and it was sent back for further review.

5.2.13 Learning Technologies Advisory Committee – Pedagogical Working Group (LTAC-PWG)
This committee meets to discuss broad issues surrounding learning technologies at UBC. The committee did not meet over the summer.

5.2.14 Clicker Review Committee
This is a committee that was struck up after a conversation at LTAC-PWG and will be examining whether UBC should continue using iClickers as the main clicker technology or move to a mobile version, and whether UBC should continue to have one, main supported clicker technology at all. The committee finished up their work by the beginning of June and made a recommendation supporting continuing with iClickers while supporting other technologies.

5.2.15 Campus Safety Working Group
I am now one of the AMS Representatives to the Campus Safety Working Group. We have met twice during this time, but have unfortunately missed both meetings, the first because I was on vacation in June, and the second because it conflicted with my new course schedule in September.

5.2.16 Ombuds Advisory Committee
I was appointed by Council to this committee recently, but was not able to attend the first meeting, which was only a few days after Council's appointment, due to a scheduling conflict.

5.2.17 Ad Hoc Transformational Wellbeing Change @ UBC
This is a new committee that started at the beginning of the summer and have been able to make most of the meetings. They have been discussing a university wide initiative on improving overall wellbeing on campus and the meetings have focused on goals, scope, and strategy.

5.2.18 Property and Planning Committee
This committee reviews major planning projects the university is proposing. They met in August and discussed the Tall Wood Building, the SALA building, the new Sports Medicine building and changes to the development handbook.

5.2.19 Informal Learning Spaces Committee
This is a committee that meets once a year to adjudicate a fund that provides money for the creation of informal learning spaces on campus. The committee reviewed several proposals in late spring electronically.
6  UBC Mental Health Network
I have attended all the MHN meetings that have happened during this time, including an Orientation session in September. The Network has continued to discuss its internal structure and what better structure it might create to ensure sustainability. The new Chair of the Network is Mona Maleki, and we meet regularly to discuss issues and collaboration.

7  VP Academic Caucus
The VP Academic Caucus is made up of all the VP Academics, and occasionally the VP Externals, of all the undergraduate and graduate student societies. The Caucus met in May, July and September. Monthly meetings have been scheduled for the rest of the fall. We have discussed topics concerning the VPAs in their own Faculties, Mid-term Evaluations of Teaching, the Exam Database, and other topics that arose. The session in July was a longer session that focused on skills building and "how to lobby".

8  Portfolio Projects and Initiatives

8.1  FL Assessment
The Flexible Learning Assessment Project has been a joint project between the VPA office and the VP Students office. The goal of the project is to provide assessment of Flexible Learning classes. The project manager is creating a 'toolkit' of a survey and focus group framework that can be easily used by professors to assess their own classes. Daniel helped with the hiring of the research assistants in June, and we have continued to aid them in consulting with students on the pilot survey and focus groups.

8.2  Divestment
We have continued to work with UBCC350 to write an AMS policy that will direct our advocacy to the University on Divestment, as well as to help UBCC350 to create a divestment proposal that can be submitted to the Board of Governors. The new AMS policy will be discussed at the University and External Relations Committee soon. UBC's Responsible Investment Policy mandates that divestment proposals need to be submitted to the Board with evidence of support from 2 of the following: students, faculty, alumni, and staff. Thus, we have also reached out to the Faculty Association for support, and they will likely conduct their own referendum on this issue sometime during this academic year. My AVP, Daniel, has taken the lead on this project.

8.3  Services Review Follow Up
This is mostly complete. Conversations with the University in regards to AMS Tutoring finished off successfully this summer. Another small update is that Student Housing and Hospitality Services has significantly updated their website on off campus housing resources and is publicizing it widely.

9  Other Non-Project Based Work

9.1  Tuition Policy
Working closely with the AMS University and Government Relations Advisor, we have drafted a new policy on tuition to replace our expired Policy 2011-07. This new policy incorporates a reaction to the 2014 referendum urging the AMS to advocate for lower tuition, and attempts to strike a balance between urging UBC to do what is in its power to make tuition affordable while recognizing government-imposed restraints to this endeavour and the need for provincial-level advocacy about core funding to UBC. The policy and an accompanying report
was discussed at the University and External Relations Committee recently, and sent to Council, but given the recent announcement of UBC’s proposal on tuition, it was sent back for more thought.

9.2 AMS Policy on UBC’s Policy 69
The AMS’s external policy on UBC’s Policy 69 on Student Safety Abroad expired over the summer. Because of some vagueness in the expired AMS policy, we have conducted our own review of Policy 69, including consultation with Go Global about the context in which Policy 69 was created. An updated external policy about the AMS’s position on Policy 69 will be discussed at both the University and External Relations Committee and Education Committee soon. My AVP, Daniel, took the lead on this project.

9.3 Policy 34
I sat on a review committee for a new Board of Governors Policy on Appointments of Administrative Vice-Presidents, and raised concerns in regards to how students were chosen for these committees. The committee was not in agreement with me, and so I worked with Tanner to create a statement from the AMS for the official consultation period. We have been told that our concerns were heard and there will be further thought, though the process was put on hold due to the hiring of the VP Finance of the university, which would have fallen under this new policy.

9.4 Relationship with Musqueam
Spencer, my aboriginal students commissioner over the summer, and I worked on writing a letter to send to the Musqueam in order to work towards a better, lasting relationship with the Musqueam band. We worked with Linc Kesler on this issue, and have not yet heard back.

9.5 UBC’s new President
We met with Arvind for the first time in May, and have spoken to him on occasion at events. We have not yet scheduled a regular meeting time to discuss issues at length, but have been told this should be occurring soon.

9.6 SUDS
I attended the student union development summit organized by the VP External’s Office in August. It was great fun and I made many great connections with VP Academics from across the country. We now share a facebook group and have been sharing ideas and advice on many topics.

9.7 Musqueam Acknowledgement
One area identified by Spencer, the aboriginal students commissioner, was the lack of acknowledgement of the colonial history of the land we live, study and work on. In August Spencer made a presentation to Council, helping us to explore the terms typically used in Acknowledgement, such as “unceded”, “traditional”, etc, and to give us some history of who the Musqueam are. He also offered a campus tour of the aboriginal history on campus for Councilors and staff. The next Council meeting, Council asked LPC to codify acknowledgment into our regular agenda, and that new code was recently passed at Council.

9.8 University Search Committees
I am currently sitting on the search committee for the Associate Vice-President Equity and Inclusion, but due to the confidential nature of this, I cannot say more.
10 Staff Portfolio Updates
Though I have included this in a section in the past, the majority of my staff members' work has been discussed in other sections of this report, and therefore I will not duplicate it here – only work not mentioned elsewhere is mentioned here.

10.1 Daniel – AVP Academic and University Affairs
One item Daniel took on was sitting on a hiring committee for a new Associate Registrar.

10.2 Staff meetings
Over the summer staff meetings were sporadic, but have now found a time to meet every 3 weeks with all the staff in my office.

Respectfully submitted October 20th, 2014.

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