1. **What is this Document?**

The VP Academic & University Affairs office will be releasing monthly ‘newsletters’ to EduCom, UNECORN, the Student Senate Caucus and the VP Academic Caucus, in order to ensure clarity about the work being done, as well as to find opportunities for work between these groups and the Academic & University Affairs office. Some initiatives will not have bearing on these different groups, but many issues and projects do align with these groups.

2. **August in Review**

1. **Open Educational Resources (OERs)**

   - **Campaign**
     
     The #textbookbrokeBC campaign aims to raise awareness about Open Educational Resources, and Open Textbooks. This campaign will be running throughout AMS First Week and we will have a table outside the bookstore to engage students in conversations surrounding open access/education, handing out bookmarks, and letting them know about the amazing things that the Bookstore is already doing to save them money. The follow up to this first piece of the campaign will be resources surrounding “how to speak to your professor about adopting OERs” and surveying students about their use of the textbooks that they bought.

   - **Staff/Faculty Piece**
     
     We have been working with the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT) around engaging staff and faculty in the dialogue of open. In the last week of August, Daniel (AVP Academic) and myself presented in the CTLT Summer Institute alongside staff and faculty about engaging students in the classroom with the use of OERs, and will be presenting at the Open Education Conference in November with a faculty member from UBC and the SFSS VP University Affairs. Additionally, we have been speaking with the faculty association about OERs, and will be working to hopefully integrate the creation of open resources into the list of potential criteria for tenure.

   - **Open UBC/SFU**
     
     Open UBC has been around for a few years, celebrating Open Week. This year UBC’s group and SFU’s have decided to work together, and we will be working with them to create some programming alongside their own, and to ensure that students are participating in their programming.

2. **UBC Leadership Transition**

   - **Responses/Press Releases & Media**
With the resignation of Dr. Gupta and the aftermath of this transition, I have been working extensively on responding to media, writing press releases, and working on the strategic decisions the AMS is making regarding our stance on the issue. I will be continuing to work on this file, and work towards the long-term strategy that we have created to work with the interim President, Dr. Piper and the Board of Governors.

3. **Engagement & Tuition Consultation**

   - Engagement Recommendations and Themes

   Now that we have collected students’ opinions and thoughts on engagement, we have started looking through and combing out themes from the qualitative data, to figure out the most effective ways to work with and consult students. There will be more information to come in the next few weeks, when recommendations will be made for engagement of students, to be sent out to the UBC administration and across the AMS.

   - Re-working Tuition Consultation Pieces

   When we had put together pieces surrounding tuition consultation, specifically the templates for faculties and undergraduate societies to be using, we had done so thinking that consultations would be done faculty/program specifically. The Provost’s office has decided that unlike past tuition revenues that were split between the faculties and central administration, the new money coming in from international students tuition will be divided in a different way (not entirely clear yet what that means), which means that the tuition consultation this year will look different than planned for. I have started working on, and will continue to work on updating the consultation plan to ensure that the AMS and student leaders are ready to engage with the university in a meaningful way.

4. **Campus Development**

   - Library Garden

   I am currently working with Campus & Community Planning on the Library Garden project, which is the space between Irving K. Barber Library and Koerner Library. This unit is working to update the space and make it more user friendly, especially with the Indian Residential School Centre for Dialogue that will be coming into that space.

   - Fencing on UBlvd

   My office has been engaged in the conceptions of the art pieces/fencing that will go along University Boulevard and Westbrook Mall, covering the GSAB area (the building that was recently torn down). This is being put up because this lot will be empty for many years, and the Board of Governors requested that it be covered.
5. **Campus Safety**

- **Safer Party Plan**

  The Safer Party Plan is in its last stages, and it will be launched to specific groups to pilot in the first few weeks of classes. This plan aims to have party planners make considerations for the safety of their guests, but is also being implemented to start a dialogue surrounding personal safety and partying on campus.

6. **Sexual Assault & Respectful Environment Policy**

- **Sexual Assault Prevention Team**

  This team works on educational outreach, campaigns and preventative measures, bringing together different units from around both the UBC Vancouver and Okanagan campus, to ensure that our efforts are working together. I sit on this team, with the Sexual Assault Support Centre, and Daniel Levangie (AMS Executive Director). One of the biggest projects being worked on is a Consent Campaign out of Access & Diversity, as well as increased workshops and focuses for the SASC (Healthy Masculinities, Healthy Relationships…).

- **Respectful Environment Policy & Sexual Assault Policy Integration**

  At the beginning of the summer, the AMS sought to create an internal sexual assault policy, hoping to precipitate a larger conversation on campus surrounding sexualized violence. The focus has now shifted to create an external/university-facing sexual assault policy, and integrate the language of anti-violence in the Respectful Environment Policy, as well as a specific procedure for sexual assault. This approach will ensure that we continue to ask the university for a more robust procedure surrounding sexual assault response and prevention, while ensuring that our employees and members are held to the same standard.

6. **Academic Experience Survey**

- **AES 2015 Data Intersections**

  The VP Academic & University Affairs Office now has access to the AES 2015 portal, which allows us to do further analysis into intersections in data, the responses of specific populations, and anything else we would like to know that is not already included in the report. We have already begun to look into this data and will continue to do so to gain insights into further recommendations and actions for this year.

- **Working with UBC**

  The VP Students’ Office at UBC runs lifetime surveys of students (New to UBC, Undergraduate Experience Survey, Residence Surveys, Graduation Surveys, Alumni Surveys…). As a result of the large amount of data they collect, and the positive relationship we now have with the unit, we will be working with them to ensure that there is not signif-
significant overlap in questions and to discover questions that potentially the institution cannot ask, but the AMS can. Planning for AES 2016 will start in mid-September, so more information on this soon.

7. ABORIGINAL STUDENT GROUPS

• Preliminary Meeting

There are many indigenous and aboriginal groups on campus, but many have not been coordinated in any way for some time. We will be working to have a preliminary meeting of these groups, and have the Aboriginal Students’ Commissioner act as a primary liaison between them, to allow for programming collaboration, and proper representation of Aboriginal students.

• Other Plans

The Aboriginal Students’ Commissioner has been working on a few projects, including the Musqueam Weaving in the Nest, bringing Musqueam in to the Opening Ceremonies of the Nest, liaising with the First Nations House of Learning, and representing the AMS to Aboriginal groups.

8. INTERNAL EQUITY

• Positive Space

The Equity Commissioner has been working with Positive Space UBC to facilitate training for AMS Staff members. Positive Space is a training that discusses gender, sex, and orientation, hoping to create a larger dialogue and understanding around the LGBTQ2+ community. They held two training sessions for the end of August, and there will be another in September. We are hoping to partner more broadly to ensure that any students interested in going through the training, both involved in the AMS and not, can do so.

• Equity Roundtable

The AMS is currently planning to hold an Equity Roundtable with those discussing equity around campus coming together. This will both be used to inform the equity-centred activities of the AMS, and to ensure that all campus stakeholders are aware of the work that is being done by others.

9. MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

• Wellbeing Steering Committee

I sit on the Wellbeing Steering Committee (including both UBC Vancouver and Okanagan), which has been tasked to push wellbeing as a priority of the institution, achieving that with the commitment from the UBC Executive to place wellbeing as a foundation for
the upcoming strategic plan. Though this planning will be on hold, the committee is now working on next steps for the Wellbeing Initiative, figuring out what more has to be done in terms of breaking down silos and continuing the dialogue surrounding wellbeing at UBC.

- **Academic Policy**

For quite some time, the AMS Mental Health & Wellbeing Commissioner has been working on recommendations to align academic policies and wellbeing. These include a fall reading break, withdrawal procedures, attendance policies, and syllabi. We recently met with key stakeholders from across campus, including Senate, to discuss next steps for these recommendations and actions, and will be continuing.

- **First Week inserts and Thrive**

The VP Academic & University Affairs Office is working with AMS Events on two projects. The first are is a Mental Health & Wellbeing resource postcard that will be inserted into every First Week pack. The second is that we will be working to create more AMS programming for Thrive Week (more information to come on that soon).

10. **UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH**

- **Integrating Groups on Campus**

We have been working to coordinate with student groups, the Centre for Student Involvement and Careers, and the Provost’s Office to bring together the many efforts towards undergraduate research, hoping to ensure that they all are communicating and are working together to send students to the right research involvement. These conversations will continue, and work to set a foundation for the online interactive research platform.

11. **VANTAGE COLLEGE REPRESENTATION**

- **Integration into Undergraduate Societies**

As we have been speaking about for many months, we have finally been successful in integrating Vantage College students into the Arts, Science, and Engineering undergraduate societies. These students will be paying fees for these societies and have their own representative(s) on the councils or first year committees of these societies. Additionally, students leaving Vantage College and entering into their second year will be in touch with the Arts and Science Undergraduate Societies, and be invited to their orientations.

- **Supporting Vantage Student Representatives**

With new Vantage College first year representatives on the Arts, Science, and Engineering Undergraduate Societies, the International Students’ Commissioner will be working
to support these representatives, provide them with resources and professional development, and facilitate real representation of this specific population of students.

12. **OTHER**

- Student Union Development Summit (SUDS)

  SUDS was an amazing weekend where we met and worked with peers from other student societies across the country, and the US. Most closely to my portfolio were sessions on the Principles of Engagement, Student Society Assessment, and Open Educational Resources. We have also sent all our #textbookbrokeBC materials to all student societies who had attended the conference, for their ease and use.

3. **WHAT’S COMING UP?**

- A full team of seven staff (Associate VP, Equity Commissioner, Mental Health & Wellbeing Commissioner, Campus Development Commissioner, Aboriginal Students’ Commissioner, International Students’ Commissioner, and Academic Affairs Commissioner)
- Exam Prep Database
- Student Engagement in University Financing Recommendations
- Online Undergraduate Research Platform
- Interactive Student-Friendly Campus Map (Through the AMS App)
- Academic Experience Survey 2016
- And much more…