1. **WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT?**

The VP Academic & University Affairs (VP AUA) office will be releasing monthly 'newsletters' to EduCom, UNECORN, the Student Senate Caucus, the VP Academic Caucus, Vancouver Student Board Reps, and VP AUA Staff Members 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.

Additionally, now that we have a full team in the VP AUA Office, we can list them all. They are:

- AVP Academic & University Affairs - Daniel Munro (avpacademic@ams.ubc.ca)
- Equity Commissioner - Emmet Lee (equitycomm@ams.ubc.ca)
- Campus Development Commissioner - Emily Rennalls (cdcomm@ams.ubc.ca)
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Commissioner - Lina Castro (mhwcomm@ams.ubc.ca)
- Aboriginal Students' Commissioner - Salia Joseph (aboriginalcom@ams.ubc.ca)
- International Students' Commissioner - Saxon Coop (internationalsc@ams.ubc.ca)
- Academic Affairs Commissioner - Dario Garousian (academicaffairs@ams.ubc.ca)

2. **SEPTEMBER IN REVIEW**

1. **OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OERs)**

   - **Student Campaign**

     The #textbookbrokeBC campaign was hugely successful, with 35,000 views on the Facebook photos posted on the AMS Facebook page, 800 bookmarks given out, and many tweets and instagrams. The goal of the campaign is to raise awareness about Open Textbooks and Open Educational Resources, and the VPAUA office set up outside of the UBC Bookstore to speak to students and take their picture with the #textbookbrokeBC. This is the first step in a campaign that will involve a mid-semester “How To Talk to Your Professor About Open” and “How Did You Use Your Textbook?” This part of the campaign will be run again in January, this time in partnership with UBC Students’ Union of the Okanagan.

   - **Staff/Faculty Piece**

     The VP AUA Office has been working on integrating in language about the creation and adoption of Open Educational Resources into the Senior Appointments Committee guidelines, to have OERs be a part of the tenure process for faculty. This has been met with encouragement from both the SAC committee chair and the Faculty Association,
and so we believe there will be some great headway there in the coming months.

We are also continuing to work with the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT) on professional development for Faculty and Staff, and will be involved in more presentations surrounding student involvement and engagement in the classroom when OERs are used.

• Open Education Conference 2015

Daniel Munro, AVP Academic & University Affairs, the VP University Affairs from the Simon Fraser Students’ Society, a UBC faculty member and myself will be presenting on a panel at the Open Education Conference in November 2015 on, “Faculty and Student Collaboration for OER and Open Textbook Advocacy.”

2. **Exam Database & Mid Course Feedback**

• Exam Prep Database

The Exam Prep Database is now fully active and the VP AUA Office is working to get content added to the database. Efforts to do so this month have consisted of a presentation to the UBC Vancouver Senate on the database, after which President Martha Piper supported the database, as well as groups meetings with the Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Land and Food Systems, and individual meetings with Faculty members carried out by the AMS Academic Affairs Commissioner.

• Mid Course Feedback

With the Academic Affairs Commissioner hired and working now, he has been meeting with faculty members about mid course feedback, to promote it and hopefully see more uptake this semester.

3. **Engagement & Tuition Consultations**

• Engagement Recommendations & Themes

As previously mentioned, the VP AUA Office did a study of students, both involved and not in the AMS, about their outlook and needs for meaningful engagement. From these conversations, an overview of the qualitative findings for themes was carried out, and recommendations were created for both the AMS and the UBC Administration. This report will be sent out to the VP Students’ Office, Provost’s Office, and Campus & Community Planning to ensure better engagement of students in all consultation processes held. This report will be posted to the following webpage upon completion: http://www.ams.ubc.ca/leadership/executive/key-projects/student-engagement/.

• International Tuition Consultation Plan

The UBC Administration announced to student leaders in May this year that the universi-
ty and Board of Governors were considering raising international tuition once again, though this time more drastically and over three years. As such, the VP AUA Office has been working all summer to ensure that a proper process is laid out for student leaders and students at large to be engaging with the consultation on international tuition increases. The International Tuition Formal Consultation will be taking place from October 15th to November 16th. All the information you will need throughout the consultation can be found here: [http://www.ams.ubc.ca/leadership/executive/key-projects/tuition-consultation/](http://www.ams.ubc.ca/leadership/executive/key-projects/tuition-consultation/).

- **Policy 71 Consultation & Best Practices**

  Policy 71 is UBC’s policy on ‘Consultation with Students about Tuition and Mandatory Fees,’ which was updated last academic year and currently is up for consultation with the university community. The VP AUA sits on the policy committee and will be looking over the consultation feedback and making necessary changes before the policy goes back to the Board of Governors for approval in December. This policy was updated in part with the AMS, and so the AMS is happy with it in its current form, and will ensure that appropriate changes are made to the draft to fit the needs of students. This will be ongoing from September to November.

- **Tuition Consultation (MGEM)**

  The Masters in Geomatics and Environmental Management is a new program being introduced in Forestry, and along with the FUS and ISA, the AMS was consulted on the tuition, with a submission going to the Board of Governors for their December meeting. Though there were not any very large concerns, the main two was that there was not yet a solid plan in place for financial assistance for students in the program, and that there is no clear ratio for domestic/international students, or a planned account for diversity in the program. If you would like to see the tuition submission, please email Jenna at vpacademic@ams.ubc.ca!

4. **Campus Development**

   - **Library Garden**

     The Library Garden is the space between Irving K. Barber Library and Koerner Library, and Campus & Community Planning is currently planning to revamp the space in preparation for the Indian Residential School Dialogue Centre that will be placed in that compound. The official consultation period for the space has opened, and the AMS will be participating in it. More information can be found here: [http://planning.ubc.ca/vancouver/projects-consultations/consultations-engagement/library-garden-design-process/public-consultation-process/](http://planning.ubc.ca/vancouver/projects-consultations/consultations-engagement/library-garden-design-process/public-consultation-process).

   - **Climate Action Plan 2020**

     The Climate Action Plan for 2020 is currently under consultation, and the AMS has been
involved in providing feedback to C&CP. If you would like to participate, you can find more information here: http://planning.ubc.ca/vancouver/projects-consultations/consultations-engagement/climate-action-plan-2020/public-consultation-submit-your-ideas.

5. **CAMPUS SAFETY**

- **Sexual Assault Prevention Team (SAPT) & Consent Campaign**

  Along with the AMS Sexual Assault Support Centre (SASC), the VP AUA has been sitting on the UBC Sexual Assault Prevention Team, which seeks to coordinate educational and outreach activities on campus. Each of the stakeholders in the group has been involved in their own campaigns and work, and came together to create the Consent Campaign that was launched by UBC, and was showcased on campus from September 11th-18th. More information on the campaign can be found here: http://students.ubc.ca/livewell/topics/sexual-assault/consent.

- **Safety Steering Committee & Campus Safety Working Group**

  To address new concerns and ensure there is a larger vision surrounding campus safety and security, the university has restructured its approach to making large decisions surrounding this topic and created a Safety Steering Committee, which the VP AUA will be sitting on, along with a Working Group, which the AVP AUA will sit on.

6. **RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT POLICY**

- **Respectful Environment Policy**

  The VP AUA Office is still working on revamping the processes for the Respectful Environment Policy, in the hope to have the policy finished by the end of the month to send to AMS Council. The main changes are putting the policy into the new Policy on Policies format, included language about violence, and ensuring there are clear and separate processes for AMS Staff, AMS members, and sexualized violence.

- **Sexual Assault External Policy**

  The VP AUA is also working on an external policy on Sexual Assault, with the support and knowledge of the AMS SASC, to encourage further action in regards to sexual assault and sexualized violence by the university, and the province. This is an ongoing project, which should be finished by the end of November.

6. **ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE SURVEY**

- **AES 2015 Data Intersections**

  AES 2015 data is still being explored to look for new findings that can inform decisions
made by the AMS. Examples of this include discrimination and equity, student financial aid needs, AMS specific questions, and housing questions.

• AES 2016

Work has already started on the AES 2016, with a strategic outlook done, the deletion of questions that will not be needed, and the beginning of re-writing questions. Staff within the AMS will be asked to weigh in throughout October and a consultation of all major stakeholders (essentially all those who received this newsletter) will be done in November. All questions should be complete by beginning/middle of December to allow time for Insights West to weigh in on questions and survey composition, with time to make changes as needed.

7. ABORIGINAL STUDENT GROUPS

• Preliminary Aboriginal Student Group Meeting

Aboriginal students and the groups that represent them at UBC will be invited to a meeting on October 7th in the AMS Student Nest to start a conversation around collaboration and the year ahead. This will be a springboard for many conversations surrounding the collaboration of these groups in the future.

• Musqueam Weaving Project

The AMS Aboriginal Students’ Commissioner is currently working on solidifying funding for the rest of the weaving project, which will commence once all funding has been collected. This weaving will be an acknowledgment of the territory that the AMS Student Nest is built upon, and serve as a permanent reminder of the importance of the Musqueam Community to UBC.

8. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

• CSI&C Partnership

The AMS has partnered with the Centre for Student Involvement & Careers (CSI&C) to provide professional development for both AMS Staff and Club Executives. The former will happen once a semester, catered to the needs of student staff within the AMS. The latter will be run out of the Clubs Resources & Sustainability Centre, to provide club executives a well rounded experience, and reflection on their positions.

9. MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

• Wellbeing Steering Committee
The Wellbeing Steering Committee, which the VP AUA sits on, is currently preparing how the dialogue surrounding wellbeing will be carried on with President Martha Piper, and is planning next steps into carrying on the conversation surrounding wellbeing at the university as a whole. The direction of the committee has changed since the acceptance of wellbeing as the foundation of strategic planning at the UBC executive going forward.

- **Academic Policy**

Big things are happening in the realm of Academic Policy. The AMS Mental Health & Wellbeing Commissioner has been working on the attendance policy, withdrawal dates, a fall reading break, and a policy surrounding syllabi. Headway has been made on all, especially attendance and withdrawal.

- **First Week Brochures**

Postcards were created with UBC and Online resources, and were inserted into every first week package for first year students. These brochures/postcards will be an ongoing resource, and a call will go out soon for undergraduate societies and other groups to place orders to be able to provide them to their students.

### 10. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FINANCIAL AID & WUSC

- **International Student Financial Aid**

With increasing pressure for international students, especially with rising tuition prices, it is apparent that the current financial aid available for these students is not sufficient. The VP AUA is working with the VP Finance to survey other universities in Canada and their provision of financial aid to international students, and identifying improvements to be made at UBC, especially in terms of emergency aid to these students.

- **WUSC**

The World University Service of Canada is an organization that works with universities and their student societies to provide an education to refugees. The AMS works with WUSC and students are levied a fee of $2.61 every year to support about 12 refugee students every year at UBC. With recent events showcasing the need for the support of refugee students, the VP AUA office is looking into this fee and what should be done going forward (increasing the fee or providing better support to WUSC at UBC who works with these students). More information to come in the coming months.

### 11. OTHER

- **Broken Foot**

I broke my foot and have spent September on crutches or my very handy knee scooter. This did stop me from attending a few events and meetings, but everything is still on track and the month was still very busy. I should be back at it in October though. I apologize if this impeded on any events or items you had hoped I would achieve this month!
• **AMS First Week**

First Week was an amazing success, and so I spent the bulk of the first two weeks running between meetings and events.

• **Centennial & Board of Governors**

The UBC Centennial was celebrated from September 28th (in the Okanagan) to September 30th (in Vancouver). I was fortunate to be representing the AMS at both days of events. I was also at UBC Okanagan for the Board of Governors meeting on September 29th, where the AMS presented to the Board on the upcoming international tuition consultation, plans we have for the consultation, and expectations we have of the university and the Board. We hope that this will set us up for our presentation to the Board in December on said increases.

• **Changemaker Showcase**

I was the AMS representative on the Steering Committee for the Changemaker Showcase, an event to discuss students and community members who have made change, and inviting students to think about their place to make meaningful change. This event was extremely successful and was held from September 23rd-25th.

• **Thunderbird Support**

The AMS has been working to support the Thunderbirds, and specifically the football team. I have been involved in some of the events surrounding the football games, and look forward to more! Go T-Birds!

### 3. **WHAT’S COMING UP?**

• Online Undergraduate Research Platform
• Safer Party Plan Roll-Out
• Interactive Student-Friendly Campus Map (Through the AMS App)
• Vantage College Student Reps Support
• Next steps for OER Campaign
• Mental Health & Academic Policies
• AES 2016
• Musqueam Weaving Project
• And much more…