



VICE PRESIDENT ACADEMIC & UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS - 2020/21 GOALS

This midterm review summarizes the accomplishments of the Vice President, Academic and University Affairs for the past six months (May-Dec 2020). In this time, there has been progress made on projects to support food security, host anti-racism workshops for students, collect data to inform our Covid-19 recovery plans, and advocate for student concerns around remote invigilation softwares. The nature of the projects have ranged from urgent/immediate to long-term, and rely heavily on our COVID-19 survey, engagement with social media, consultation from Undergraduate Societies, Advocacy Committee, and various other leadership groups. The continued empowerment of student voices will help guide our advocacy projects for the remainder of the year. We thank all of those involved.

1. Goal: Active COVID-19 Response

Values: Compassionate, Proactive, Communicative

The top priority for the past six months has been to ensure an active Covid-19 response for students to continue their studies safely. In alignment with the AMS commitment to data-driven advocacy, a COVID-19 Impacts on Students survey was developed in collaboration with UBC PAIR and the GSS. The results were presented to the AMS council and distributed as a report to UBC administrative units, such as Enrolment Services, VPS, CSIC, the Provost's Office, as well as to Undergraduate Societies. A shareable COVID-19 informational campaign was also created on the AMS social media platform to address concerns around masking in the Nest and on campus.

Like many other institutions around the globe, the pandemic has caused UBC to transition to entirely online learning platforms. This has raised concerns regarding privacy, time zone challenges, inconsistent hours of teaching, and remote invigilation. Our office has worked closely with the Associate Deans, Academic Collective and Provost Office representatives to ensure that student concerns are being addressed. Our feedback has been given to the [Guiding Principles for Fall 2020](#), to support instructors and we are currently working with the Ombuds office to educate faculty and students on what is to be expected from their instructors.

In response to concerns about Proctorio and other remote invigilation softwares, we have worked with the Provost's office and CTLT on the 'Principles for the Appropriate Use of Remote Invigilation'. We are seeking to get these Principles endorsed by the Senate. This ever-evolving goal will be an ongoing priority until the end of the COVID-19 pandemic and is on track to meet all key performance indicators.

2. Goal: Increasing Accessibility and Experiential Learning

Values: Accessible, Inclusive, Equitable

2.1 Increasing Student Accessibility

Our goal to improve accessibility saw progress as we worked with the Centre for Accessibility (CFA) to improve the learning experience of disabled students. After successfully presenting data about the difficulties of registering with CFA, they agreed to hire an intake coordinator to facilitate registration and additional invigilators to support students with their online learning needs.

The consultation process has involved various groups involved with disability advocacy, as well as discussing the AMS Equity Plan, speaking with CiTR All Access Pass, and participating in the VPS communication audit. Furthermore, it has involved advocating for Accessibility Audits of UBC Buildings with Campus and Community Planning with the Rick Hansen Foundation every two years.

2.2 Expanding Experiential Learning and Research Opportunities

Many research projects have been placed on hold due to the pandemic, therefore minimizing the number of opportunities available to student volunteers. However, our office collaborated with the Undergraduate Research Opportunities (URO) AMS Club by connecting them to VP Innovation and Research, Gail Murphy, and VP Students, Ainsley Carry, to share their ideas of connecting students with research positions. This collaboration led to a joint project between Graduate Student Society (GSS) and URO to update the graduate school website with projects that were open to undergraduate student volunteers.

Furthermore, we hope to continue advocating for the strategic allocation of UBC budget towards experiential learning opportunities such as Centre for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL) and research-based WorkLearn jobs for students. Specifically, we advocate for the reallocation of strategic EDI funding towards WorkLearn positions intended for racialized, Indigenous, and disabled students in our Budget Report 2021. This goal is on track to meet all Key Performance Indicators by the end of this year.

3. Goal: Proactive Consultation, Amplifying Student Leadership, & Accountability

Values: Transparency, Engagement, Dedication

3.1 Proactive Consultation with Students and Amplifying Leadership

Online engagement with students has been conducted over platforms like Reddit and several Zoom consultation sessions. Additional plans include hosting a virtual TownHall, posting summary infographics on Instagram, and recording summary videos to share information with students.

3.2 - Accountability and Feedback

During the course of the summer, the AMS Internal Policy I-11 was drafted and presented to Advocacy Committee. It is currently awaiting approval by council. As well, meetings were held between the VP AUA Office and the Vice Presidents, Academic of the Undergraduate Societies to discuss updates and projects on numerous occasions.

We have been working on and finalizing an MOU with the UBC Ombudsperson, including the promotion of their use by students. As well as consulting with the AMS Ombudsperson and Student Advocacy offices to be able to address concerns around Academic Integrity. Additionally, a meeting with the RHA resulted in an agreement (not an MOU) but rather an evolving agreement that will allow flexibility as we shape the collaborative working relationship.

Members of our team have also served on the Student Evaluations of Teaching Working Group to review the current teaching evaluations and implement the recommendations of the report. An example of this being the name change to “Student Experience of Instruction” to reflect a more accurate description of the nature of the SEOI.

3.3 Climate Justice and Sustainability

The AMS has been involved in supporting the Climate Emergency Task Force and plans to ensure the implementation of their recommendations. Similarly, we have been amplifying student-led advocacy by meeting with activism-based student groups such as UBCC350, Climate Hub, and the Social Justice Center.

We had a core role in the creation of the 1.5 million dollar Climate Change Emergency Response Fund and supporting the Administration Portfolio with their Sustainability Symposium.

4. Goal: Affordability Through Holistic and Systemic Action

Values: Data-Driven, Supportive, Sustainable

4.1 - Tuition and Financial Aid

We have successfully advocated for increased funding and accessibility towards technology bursary for online learning. We have also advocated for continued funding for bursaries. We will be continuing to advocate on making financial aid more equitable.

4.2 - Food Insecurity

Food insecurity has been heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus of UBC initiatives has been on the development of a digital meal donation program that is to be launched later this term. As a long-term goal, we will continue to advocate for the restructuring of pricing models such as a “All That You Care to Dine” at UBC Food Services to reduce food waste, nutritional value, and the creation of a comprehensive affordability plan. Our goal of collaborating with the

FSI Core Team and AMS VP Administration in the development of a Community Food Security Hub and more comprehensive educational resources on food insecurity continues to be advancing into this academic term.

4.3 - Student Housing

As we continue to work towards affordable, convenient housing for students, it must be considered as a long-term goal for the AMS which has been delayed by the pandemic. Progress on the Hospitality Services Trust has been delayed significantly due to the pandemic and barriers with the CRA. If it moves ahead, we will endeavour to ensure student priorities are enshrined in the pending Hospitality Services Trust through the creation of Guiding Principles for the allocation of revenue towards student-facing initiatives. Furthermore, work has been done with the University to implement the Hospitality Services Trust (HOST) in order to efficiently and rapidly develop on-campus student housing. We also plan to ensure student priorities such as student housing and sustainable development are coded in the upcoming Land Use Plan (Campus Vision 2050) review, beginning in 2021, as part of the COVID recovery.

4.4 - Open Educational Resources

There has been incredible progress in this area due to the need for remote learning to have virtual resources and for faculty members to engage with Open Scholarship. We are currently in the process of converting the 'Principles for Digital Learning Materials' endorsed by the Senate into enforceable policy as done by the UBC Okanagan Senate last year (see Policy O-131).

The #textbookbroke campaign was hosted on Instagram and was shared with UBCSUO, UVSS, and each Undergraduate Society at UBC. Furthermore, a Qualtrics survey was shared on social media to gather signatures from students who support Open Learning at UBC. The idea for a Senate Adjudicated Open Champions Award was shared to the Senate Awards Committee Chair. However, this year the awards were presented by Simon Bates from the Provost Office and the AMS, with letters signed by Santa Ono and Cole Evans.

Members of this office sit on the Open Education Grant Adjudication committees to have student input into the selection of grant winners. Principles of accessibility and connectivity were also incorporated into the Open Education Resources Fund in August. Finally, we published an article with the UBC Library about the importance of OERs to students and shared resources with Undergraduate Societies to raise awareness of Open Education within their communities as well.

5. Goal: Advancing an Equitable and Inclusive Future through Community Support

Values: Collaborative, Open-minded, Progressive

This past fall, a workshop was hosted that focused on bystander intervention, which is part of a series of anti-racism videos and community dialogues to make the community a safer place. In alignment with UBC's commitment to equity and inclusion, we participated in VPSICED meetings as student representatives with Sara Jane Finley and Ainsley Carry. Thereby, holding UBC

accountable to the implementation of the Inclusion Action Plan, as well as Santa Ono's anti-racism commitments and ensuring its retention over time.

We have yet to collaborate with the Pride Collective on a campaign regarding gender diversity and continue engagement around gender neutral bathrooms on campus.

5.1 Meaningful Engagement with Indigenous Students

Through discussions with the VPS Office we have been holding UBC accountable to the implementation of the Indigenous Strategic Plan. As well, we have connected with the First Nations House of Learning and Student Engagement representative Sierra Stonechild, to learn about how the AMS can assist with community involvement, education about indigeneity, and help establish a sense of belonging during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have also reached out to the Indigenous Committee, the Indigenous Legal Students Association, Arts Indigenous Student Advising, the First Nations Indigenous Students Association and Indigenous Collective to support them in their initiatives, based upon their preferences and needs. More regular meeting times will take place in Term 2.

5.2 Goal: Creating a Culture of Consent and Supporting Survivors

The completion of the Policy SC17 review has allowed the project to move on to the next steps of implementation through the Implementation Committee and affirm the choices of survivors. Part of this work has been advocating for the institutional acknowledgement of SASC in sexual violence prevention on campus. Furthermore, the creation of an easily accessible FAQ/plain-language version of Policy SC17 is being developed. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, FAST is unable to perform this year due to public health guidelines restricting gatherings and lowering risk of student infection. We have spoken with FAST to become more integrated in the social maintenance scene for next year.

5.3 Goal: Community-Driven Mental Health and Wellbeing

This year's Thrive campaign was supported by our involvement through the interactive, social-media campaign collaborated upon with the Graduate Student Society. It was designed to highlight members of the UBC community and how they set themselves up to thrive. Furthermore, there was AMS student representation on the Search Committee for Associate Vice President of Student Health.

Additional projects included advocating for wider training for student leaders and the UBC community for the expansion of QPR, mental health first aid, and naloxone training in order to best equip our community for conversation surrounding mental health. There has also been a report developed to identify the importance of culturally appropriate mental health resources for students. Our goals for this area are rooted in ensuring the holistic wellbeing of the community is acknowledged and transparent while holding the university accountable.