



ams
student society

SECOND QUARTERLY REPORT

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President
AMS Student Union
June-September 2009

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INTRODUCTION

September 21, 2009

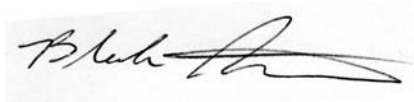
Dear Constituents,

My second quarter as AMS President spanned the summer months, which is a weird and unique time at the AMS. Since most activities on campus slow down significantly during the summer, my focus shifted more heavily to office work and meetings. While the past four months have been productive, I am glad that it is now September and that the University is alive again.

In accordance with the *AMS Code of Procedures*, I submit this Quarterly Report as an update on the progress that I have made on the projects that I have initiated and those assigned to me by AMS Council. I have tried to provide sufficient detail so that the report is easy to understand, but also keep it at a readable length. I hope that this report meets your expectations.

It is important to note that this report is not necessarily exhaustive of the work I have done over the first half of my term, but is rather meant to highlight key projects and responsibilities. If you ever have any questions or comments, I invite you to contact me by phone at 604.822.3972 or by email at president@ams.ubc.ca.

In solidarity,



Blake Frederick
100th President of the AMS Student Society

COMMUNICATIONS

AMS PROMOTIONS AND BRANDING

Communications is one of the main responsibilities of the President. Luckily, we have a fantastic Communications Department to assist me with this job. My goal has to been to increase the profile of the AMS by implementing consistent and meaningful branding throughout the organization. The AMS does a lot for students, but this has not always been the prevalent perception due to a lack of focus on communicating our relevancy.

Over my first term, along with help from the Communications Department, some of the initiatives I have undertaken are:

- The creation of an AMS twitter account with daily updates. In addition, I have been writing daily tweets to update followers about the projects that I have been working on.
- An AMS Facebook page with over 300 followers and a high frequency of updates.
- Investment into Facebook advertisements promoting the AMS.
- Dropping our current website client due to poor performance and placing the website on our own server
- Ordering and handing out thousands of AMS promotional items including pens, highlighters, chap stick, and notebooks.
- An updated look to AMS Services including new logos and promotional banners for each of the services.
- The publication and distribution of over 20,000 AMS Insider agendas printed in full colour on FSC paper.
- Weekly half page ads in the Ubyyssey promoting AMS services, events, and initiatives.
- Personally attending over a dozen separate events run by AMS clubs and constituencies to promote the AMS.
- Delivering a speech during the GALA orientation for international and exchange students.
- Delivering a speech specifically designed to build pride amongst students in the accomplishments of the AMS to over 7000 first-year and transfer students at the Imagine Pep Rally.

It is always difficult to measure success in communications, but we do have some indication that the work we're doing has been successful. Some positive indicators include:

- Over 4000 unique visits to our website per day during the first week of September – a 125% increase over the same time last year.
- The successful distribution of 20,000 AMS Insiders.
- Appearing in over 25 media stories including print, radio, and television on CTV, CBC, CKNW, the Tyee, Province, Courier, Metro, OMNI TV, Fairchild TV, as well as dozens of articles in the Ubyyssey.
- A tremendous increase in applicants for both paid and volunteer positions in the Society.

Over the second half of my term, I plan to:

- Increase the awareness of the communications protocols and initiatives throughout the Society.
- Codify the activities and responsibilities of the Communications Department.
- Further centralize communications and marketing in the AMS so that the Communications Manager is aware of initiatives in all areas of the Society, including AMS Events and AMS businesses.
- Promote AMS Council meetings to students at large through existing communications sources such as the Ubyyssey, posterings, Facebook, Twitter, website, etc.
- Integrate Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube and other Web 2.0 functions into the AMS website.
- Reorganize the content on the AMS website to make for easier navigation and ensure that the information remains up-to-date.
- Send blast emails to first and second year students on a monthly basis promoting the work that the AMS is doing.

UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

CATERING

The exploding success of the AMS Catering business is a primary reason that our business operations have been so healthy over the past years. This business has increased profits each year that are in turn contributed to the AMS' general purpose operating budget that we use to run our services, events, and support student government.

A large amount of the business that AMS Catering does, especially in the summer, is with clients of UBC Conferences. It has always been the practice that UBC Conferences to present both Wescadia, the University's catering service, and AMS Catering as options for catering. Recently, however, the University integrated the ancillary units of UBC Housing and Conference with UBC Food Services to create UBC Student Housing and Hospitality Services. With this change came UBC's move to exclusively recommend Wescadia for their clients, thus cutting out AMS Catering. As a result, revenues for AMS Catering have taken a substantial hit. This matter was presented to AMS Council on July 29, 2009 and the follow motion was passed unanimously:

"Whereas both the AMS and UBC operate competing conference and catering operations; and

Whereas the AMS relies on profits from its business operations to fund services that are fundamental to student life and safety on the UBC campus; and

Whereas UBC Conferences staff have been internally directed to recommend only the use of Wescadia (UBC Food Services) catering services;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct the AMS Executive to work with UBC to ensure that UBC Conferences reverts to the prior practice of presenting AMS Catering as a catering option for its conference clients."

Since then, both Tom Dvorak (AMS VP Finance) and I have had the following communication with UBC:

- I had a meeting with Stephen Toope (UBC President) and Brian Sullivan (UBC VP Students) during which I raised the issue of catering. Stephen was quite sympathetic and remarked that it did seem unfair that Wescadia had implemented new business practices that harm the AMS. Brian was less sympathetic and instead offered a defence for why the University needs this funding.
- I talked with Brian further and he suggested that Tom and I meet with Andrew Parr (UBC Director, UBC Student Housing and Hospitality Services). Tom met with Andrew and the conversation was largely unproductive. Andrew claimed that his responsibility to the University is to maximize the financial contribution of UBC Student Housing and Hospitality Services to the University's budget and as such, the new practice with Wescadia had to be implemented.

Over the second half of my term, I plan to:

- Involve Stephen Toope in the issue as he expressed concern with the change where Brian Sullivan did not. The AMS Executive has a meeting with Stephen Toope in early October and this issue will be raised.

- Seek other means of persuading the University to stop business practices in catering that negatively affect the AMS, if necessary.

STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The rising cost of education was my primary concern when I became involved in the AMS. I have put a great deal of emphasis when communicating to the media, students, and other external groups that our government and our universities need to do more to support students financially due to the barriers that have been created by placing a price tag on education.

Over the first half of my term, I have:

- Had two meetings with Barbara Crocker (UBC Associate Director of Enrolment Services) to discuss an expansion to the UBC Work Study program and increasing bursary support for UBC students.
- Prepared initial findings for a report on UBC financial assistance.
- Secured a commitment from UBC Student Financial Assistance and Awards that the AMS' over \$800,000 in support for bursaries each year will be acknowledged and promoted in the bursary application and award process.

Over the second half of my term, I plan to:

- Compile a comprehensive report on UBC financial assistance with recommendations.
- Assist Tim Chu (AMS VP External) in a campaign to lobby the Provincial Government to restore the over \$16 million cut from student aid.

CHILD CARE

Tim Chu (AMS VP External) has taken the lead on child care this year and is working with the GSS to hold a conference and campaign near the end of his term. I have not been as involved with this planning process as I would have liked, but I do hope to devote more time to aiding in this process in the future.

Over the first half of my term, I have:

- Drawn attention to the crisis of child care on campus in the media.

Over the second half of my term, I plan to:

- Develop and sign a memorandum of understanding between the AMS and UBC to reflect the AMS' \$1 million donation to building new child care spaces on campus and UBC's commitment to guarantee at least 40% of new spaces for children of students.

OLYMPICS

The issue of the Olympics has been primarily under the preview of the VP External, VP Academic and University Affairs, and the External Policy Committee, but I have been involved where my assistance has been required.

Specifically, I have raised concerns with Stephen Toope (UBC President) about section (d) of appendix VI of the 2009-2010 UBC Housing and Conferences Residence Contract, which reads:

"VANOC has imposed upon Olympic venue owners certain restrictions on marketing, signage and other forms of commercial identification at or in the vicinity of Olympic venues. Therefore, you agree that you shall not and shall not allow any other person to place on or affix to any part of your accommodation, the residence buildings that house your accommodation or the complex of buildings that make up your residence, in a place that is visible from the Thunderbird Winter Sports Centre any

(i) advertising signage or commercial identification that is in competition with an official International Olympic Committee or VANOC sponsor during the Olympic Period or;

(ii) any other signage that creates a false or unauthorized commercial association with the Olympics."

I requested that UBC amend the Residence Contract to either strike this section or add a new section explicitly stating that students' freedom of expression would be fully protected during the Olympics. In response, UBC Student Housing and Hospitality added this to the contract:

"For greater certainty, this section relates to commercial advertising, signage, displays and identification and does not limit your ability to express your personal and/or political views, whether positive or negative, about the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games"

I have also had several meetings with Michelle Aucoin (UBC 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Secretariat), both unproductive and productive in nature. The content of these meetings has predominantly been that of information sharing to ensure that the AMS is aware of all the coming impacts on the campus and opportunities for students.

Over the second half of my term, I plan to:

- Consult diligently with AMS Council on any major decisions the AMS makes related to the Olympics.

- Assist the AMS VP External, VP Academic and University Affairs, and External Policy Committee when needed.
- Respond to media requests on Olympics related issues.
- Work to minimize the negative impacts on students and maximize the positive opportunities for students during the Olympic and Paralympic period.

TUITION CONSULTATION – UNIVERSITY POLICY 71

In accordance with the UBC Policy 71, the University administration (primarily through the VP Students) is required to consult extensively on any proposed tuition and other mandatory fee increases with both the elected student leadership and the student body. The University's consultation process this year was extremely lacklustre – so much so that UBC did not even bother to give a presentation of proposed changes to the AMS Council. Even worse, the consultation that the University did conduct (blast email, website and a poorly advertised town hall) was done after the proposal for increases had already been submitted to the UBC Board of Governors for approval.

In response, I authored a document along with the presidents of the GSS, International Students' Association, and UBCSUO entitled "Expectations for Tuition Consultation" which was tabled with the Board of Governors. Brian Sullivan's (UBC VP Students) defence for not following the proper consultative requirements was that the AMS has a policy in place allowing for increases in tuition that do not exceed 2%. This, of course, ignores the fact that the proposed tuition increase for international students was 5%.

Though the Board passed the increases, they did clearly state that the VP Students Office had not provided enough time nor opportunities for student feedback on the proposal. From the minutes of the April 7, 2009 Board of Governors meeting:

"Board members stressed the importance of providing sufficient time for consultation with students in the future, perhaps approaching consultation as an educational opportunity to share information on the University's overall budget, and to receive feedback from students on their understanding of the situation."

In September I met with Brian Sullivan (UBC VP Students), Arvind Saraswat (GSS President), Anne DeWolfe (UBC VP Students Executive Coordinator), Hubert Lai (UBC Counsel), and Tim Chu (AMS VP External) to discuss the possibility of strengthening the language of UBC Policy 71. In the end, we decided that the requirements under the policy are adequate, but have not been followed in previous years. Brian Sullivan committed to following the policy more strictly by beginning the consultation process within the next month and undertaking a mutually agreed upon process with the AMS, GSS, and University administration.

Over the second half of my term, I plan to:

- Ensure that the University administration is accountable to the requirements of UBC Policy 71.
- Develop a mutually agreed upon tuition consultation process for this year with the GSS and the University administration.

UBC BUDGET CUTS

UBC currently has a \$25 million structural deficit due to inadequate government funding and failing endowments. Pierre Ouillet (UBC VP Finance) and Brian Sullivan (UBC VP Students) have informed the AMS that UBC's plan is to make strategic cuts to the University's operations instead of cutting across the board.

So far, I have:

- Had a discussion at the AMS Executive Committee with Pierre Ouillet and Brian Sullivan about how best to approach the funding gap.
- Requested and received representation on all eight of the working groups that UBC is employing to make recommendations for cost-saving measures.
- Identified representatives for these working groups.
- Arranged for Pierre and Brian to give a presentation to AMS Council. For information on this presentation, see the August 19, 2009 minutes of AMS Council.
- Voiced opposition in public and private to UBC's lobbying the Provincial Government to remove the 2% tuition cap on professional programs as a means to balance the budget.

Over the second half of my term, I plan to:

- Hold an information crash course on UBC's budget for AMS/GSS Executives and the representatives on the budget working groups.
- Coordinate and lead the working group representatives, along with Johannes Rebane (AMS VP Academic and University Affairs), to ensure productive student feedback on the University's proposed budget cuts.

SENATE AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS

It is of the utmost importance that the AMS maintain a positive and influential role amongst representatives on the UBC Senate and Board of Governors. In particular, it is vital that the AMS communicate regularly with the student representatives elected to these bodies.

Over the first half of my term, I have:

- Attended most Senate and Board of Governors meetings.
- Communicated regularly with the Student Senate Caucus and Board reps.

Over the second half of my term, I plan to:

- Continue to act as the primary point person responsible for liaising with and assisting student representatives on the Senate and Board.

UBC ST. JOHN'S HOSPICE

UBC has proposed to build an end-of-life hospice on campus – basically an idyllic facility designed for people who are at the end of their lives and wish to die in peace outside of a hospital setting. This capital funding of this facility is to be secured entirely through donations with UBC to cover some of the maintenance costs.

This building has become an issue due to its proposed location. UBC Campus and Community Planning surveyed eight locations on campus and decided that the hospice would be best placed beside Place Vanier and Marine Drive residences. This has created significant concern within the AMS due to the potential impact that the hospice would have on student life if placed in such close proximity to residences. Although I have voiced opposition to the proposed location, I am not opposed to construction of a hospice on campus.

So far, I have:

- Raised the proposed location as a concern to Stephen Toope (UBC President). He has said that he understands these concerns and encouraged the AMS to voice it through Campus and Community Planning's consultation process.
- Attended a special meeting of the AMS Campus Planning and Development Committee to voice concerns to Joe Stott (UBC Campus and Community Planning Director).

Over the second half of my term, I plan to:

- Work with Johannes Rebane (AMS VP Academic and University Affairs), Bijan Ahmadian (UBC Board of Governors and Chair of the AMS Campus Planning and Development Committee), and University administrators to ensure that the hospice is built in a location on campus that does not negatively impact student life.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

CASA

Since my first Quarterly Report, I have had only minimal communication or involvement with CASA. AMS Council has mandated the External Policy Committee to conduct a review of our associate membership standing in the organization and is now in the process of doing so.

Over the first half of my term, I have:

- Attended the 2009 Policy and Strategy Conference in Calgary.
- Given a presentation to AMS Council about the outcomes of the 2009 Policy and Strategy Conference.

Over the second half of my term, I plan to:

- Attend the AGM planned for November in Halifax.
- Assist the AMS External Policy Committee and AMS Council in making a decision on whether or not the AMS will continue membership in CASA.

CANADIAN STUDENT HORIZONS GROUP

I have been appointed as a board member to the Canadian Student Horizons Group. CSGH, which the AMS is a member of, owns 24% of the shares of Travel Cuts. Over the first half of my term, I have attended meetings with other student unions with the purpose of maximizing the AMS' revenue from these shares.

AMS INTERNAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND INITIATIVES

EMPLOYEES

It would not be possible for me to perform my job well without the assistance I have received from Katie Berezan (AMS President's Assistant) and Jeff Geng (AMS Executive Special Projects Assistant). Katie and Jeff have done fantastic work so far. Katie has provided assistance in some way to nearly all of the projects and responsibilities in my portfolio, including planning the All President's Dinner, which will be held in early October. Jeff has acted as a pseudo AMS engagement coordinator. He has built connections with many groups on campus and secured AMS involvement in many of the first week activities on campus as well as authored a report on initiatives the AMS should undertake to better engage students.

HIRING

I have been involved in hiring a full-time Human Resources Manager for the AMS. Although I fell ill and had to miss some of the interviews, I did participate in committee discussions and I am very excited that we have decided to hire David Hannigan.

NEW SUB PROJECT

For a detailed elaboration on the progress that has been made on the New SUB Project, I encourage you to read Crystal Hon's (AMS VP Administration) quarterly report. I have been heavily involved in this project and it continues to account for most of work hours.

Over the first half of my term, I have:

- Attended about a billion meetings both internal to the AMS and with UBC, the Alumni Association, and other groups.
- Acted as one of the lead negotiators to develop a mutually agreeable governance structure for the project with the University.

Over the second half of my term, I plan to:

- Give a series of presentations to AMS Council detailing progress on the project.
- Continue to negotiate agreements with the University and bring a proposal to AMS Council for approval.

SUSTAINABILITY

In 2007, I helped develop the AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy. Unfortunately, this year, I have not had much time to devote to implementing the strategy. I have, however, provided some guidance and assistance to Tom Dvorak (AMS VP Finance), Joyce Shen (AMS Sustainability Coordinator) and the AMS Impacts Committee in how to best implement the strategy this year.

Over the first half of my term, I have:

- Helped to eliminate plastic cutlery in the AMS food outlets.

Over the second half of my term, I plan to:

- Eliminate Styrofoam containers in the AMS food outlets.
- Review the AMS' policy on ethical procurement.