



ams
student society

SECOND QUARTERLY REPORT

Johannes Rebane

Vice President, Academic and University Affairs

Alma Mater Society

June-August 2009

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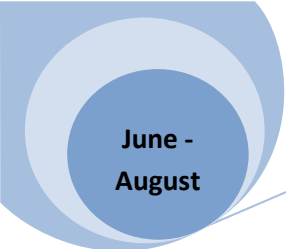
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INTRODUCTION

Dear Constituents et al.,

Number two of four. Two quarterlies gone. Two plane rides past. Two terms of UBC courses seen to their completion. Too many stories for one to tell.

My second quarter as VP Academic and University Affairs started off with a blast, as exams finished off and summer vacation began, and ended with one too as the start of a new winter term brought in over 7,000 new UBC students to the Point Grey Campus. A lot of accomplishments and achievements as well as a good deal of stress and learning. I have enjoyed it thoroughly.

As I stated in the last quarterly and will continue to state in this one, AMS code mandates that our quarterly reports include the following:

- a) outline all the duties of that Executive as prescribed by the Bylaws and the Code;*
- (b) outline specific additional duties assigned by Council;*
- (c) report the progress and work done for each duty as outlined in (a) and (b);*
- (d) report any other matter on which the Executive member is working; and*
- (e) outline the goals being pursued by the Executive member and the timeline for achieving those goals.*

I continue to hope that this report meets these and your expectations. If there are any questions that arise from your reading and interpretation of the document, do let me know. I am most contactable via email (vpacademic@ams.ubc.ca) and phone (604-822-3092).

In the meantime, I will continue to try and fulfill my duties as VP Academic to the best of my abilities over the fall and the rest of the year!

Most sincerely,

Johannes Rebane



CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT AND RELATIONS

LIQUOR POLICY

There has been a lot of positive and tangible progress with regards to our push to making liquor policies on campus as transparent and well-communicated as possible. That is, as possible as it is given that many of the policies which exist right now are arbitrary, ambiguous, and legislatively unsound. If you want a bit more background on the issues themselves, I would invite to read the finely written articles on the subject by Neal Yonson of the UBC Insiders, a summary of some of the work we have been doing this term:

<http://blogs.ubc.ca/ubcinsiders/2009/09/14/a-forensic-examination-of-the-war-on-fun-part-1/#more-737>

<http://blogs.ubc.ca/ubcinsiders/2009/09/15/a-forensic-examination-of-the-war-on-fun-part-2/#more-789>

Over the past few months, Neal Yonson and I have continued to meet with Sgt. Brian Decock and Sgt. Kevin Kenna to discuss these matters further. We were able to obtain from them an assurance that the current SOL distribution practices above and beyond that outlined in Provincial code will be posted in a comprehensive format online. There is still debate over whether the RCMP-specific policies surrounding minimum price and maximum drink regulation are reasonable, but having them communicated in their entirety will at least shift the argument away from one of clarity and communication to a matter of sound policy.

On another note, some student groups have brought their concerns about the arbitrary nature of the SOL distribution to the attention of the SLFS (Student Legal Fund Society). Whether a next step will be taken through that medium or not will have to wait until the next quarterly, but until then, I will continue to push this issue further.

UNA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Issues looked at over the last three months with the UNA:

- The Olympics and its effects on the UNA. It seems interesting that the residents of the UNA were given access to their properties whereas the Greek system was not.
- The potential construction of a skateboard park either in the neighbourhood areas or on UBC academic-purposed land as an AMS supported venture
- The development of a Noise Bylaw within the UNA (the draft passed, and further consultations now are proceeding)

GOVERNANCE

Over this past term, I assigned Ian Turner, my AVP Academic, to look into this issue in more detail. He is currently generating a report looking at the pros and cons of the different governance models which the Board of Governors has been debating and extending last year's report based on this research. This report will be going through the Campus Planning and Development committee soon and brought to council.

VANCOUVER CAMPUS PLAN

Entering stage five in less than a month, the key thing here has been getting a consultation process in place that considers and satisfies students to the greatest extent possible. What has been done here?

- Bijan hosted a meeting of motivated students to try to get them to start a project focused on getting students involved in the consultation process. Since then, we have been working particularly to support the project of one student who is putting together a video of a set of interviews covering the different issues surrounding the VCP debate.
- We have been pushing for as much student representation on the consultation committees as possible. In particular, we have been trying to C&CP to create a student position on a new core consultation committee that would pre-screen most projects coming to C&CP, Board, and elsewhere
- My portfolio is putting together a series of articles surrounding the main issues that students should be aware about when getting involved in the consultation process.

STUDENT HOUSING

Another exciting topic – Selena has been spearheading a lot of the efforts in this area. Some accomplishments in the past quarter:

- Lobbied for and received a guarantee that a pilot program for themed housing will take place next year. Woot.
- Approved the building of 500 extra beds in Totem (on PPPAC)
- Attended a number of different workshops on innovative residence design at the 22nd Annual Conference on the First Year Experience at Montreal
- Researched the efficacy of the VCP Hub model as an effective method to increase student housing, with the conclusion that, no, in most cases it will actually probably cause more problems than not, especially in terms of the incompatibility of the mixed uses ascribed to the Hubs (i.e. daycare centres + undergraduate residences in the same building?)

GREEK COMMUNITY RELATIONS

A lot of crazy stuff has been happening with the Greek village. A brief summary:

- RCMP and UBC issued noise violations to three fraternity houses for arguable reasons. Some potential court drama loomed for one of the fraternities as a result. Worked as a liaison between the fraternities and the UBC Students Office to try to mediate some of their concerns and prime them for fruitful discussion.
- Proposal came to Fraternities to rent out buildings during Olympics to company called Prime Strategies (specializes in workforce travel and housing). Working to ensure that no brother is left behind, so to speak, in that no fraternity should be renting out their house unless there is a clear consensus amongst the fraternity itself that they want to proceed with it, and that there is a very very well defined displacement strategy in place for those brothers who can't simply go home for the month.

HOSPICE

Front page of the Ubyyssey. On the top of the mind of most students cognisant of the history of the War on Fun on campus and those concerned about student life in general at UBC. You can check out an article on the topic with a lot of my commentary interjected into it right over here - <http://ubyssey.ca/news/?p=10009>. What has happened to address this concern?

- Meetings with the President and Brian Sullivan to bring up student discontent with the siting choice
- Interview with Ubyyssey
- Meeting with Campus Planning and Development Committee, Joe Stott, and member of the Order of St. John's

It seems like most of the work has been quite effective and I am cautiously optimistic that the Board 1 Approval will be delayed to ensure that more proper consultation be done surrounding the siting of the hospice.

PPPAC

Yes. That fun committee that approves whether buildings get approved or not. What has come by the plate so far this quarter?

- Proposal for Totem infill housing (+500 beds!). Approved.
- Proposal to build indoor tennis court on Osborne field. A lot of issues regarding consultation, optics, and alternate field space were brought up. As well as accessibility of the tennis courts for students, seeing as students currently don't have any extra discounts for tennis, and the target demographic for the construction project seems to be the neighbourhood residents. Delayed.
- EUS Student Centre. Approved!

ACADEMICS

UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE

This committee only meets only twice a year, so no meeting happened here. On a productive note, though, we were able to lobby the bookstore to stay open the Sunday before school starts to accommodate the greater need for shopping accessibility before the mad rush of first week. Woot!

LEAD INITIATIVE

Some really cool points of progress with this initiative:

- Took a trip down to Seattle to meet with Dana Green, a partner with Sage|Kotter Consulting, a change management consulting firm to discuss how the AMS could get involved with the LEAD initiative and get in on the conversation of changing the way things are taught at UBC. The conversation took a turn to talk about how the AMS could benefit from a change to make students more involved, and how we can create a sense of urgency to achieve many of the goals that we are setting out to accomplish.
- Met with Carl Wieman and Lorne Whitehead to discuss the potential role of the AMS in the development of a surveying model to see how relevant UBC teaching models are and how relevant the curriculum has been in the workforce for Alumni.
- Currently thinking of ways to increase student representation on curriculum development and advisory committees.

SUSTAINABILITY ACADEMIC STRATEGY

This process has been proceeding very successfully. Anthony Smith, a soon-to-be-graduated honours geography student has been the main representative on the core committee and has put a good deal of work into voicing student concerns during the development process of the strategic document. You can view the current version of the document here: http://www.sas.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/SAS_DraftDiscussionPaper_Aug18.09.pdf.

CAREER RESOURCES

There continues to be a good deal of support for more department and faculty-specific career coaches and advisors. In addition to the creation of two new career coaching positions for the FoGS, I have been pushing for ways to bring more of these positions into science departments, non-coop engineering, and arts.

FIRST YEAR SEMINAR PROGRAM

Coming into the position, the First Year Seminar Program project was the project that I was perhaps most excited about. As a result, I have placed a good deal of my portfolio's time and resources towards making sure that some form of the program comes to be eventually. Major steps taken this quarter:

- Representing UBC at the 22nd International Conference of the First Year Experience In Montreal
 - Attended workshops, master classes, and other sessions on how to create and manage an effective FYSP
 - Made connections with professors and administrators who coordinate first year curriculum, seminars, and experiences for their institutions
- Developed a comprehensive marketing proposal for the project
 - In the process of adapting the proposal to shorter, more distributable project
- **Managed to lobby the University to add the creation of a First Year Seminar Experience to the University's strategic documents**
- Refer to Eunice's updates for more information on activities happening surrounding FYSP

STUDENT DIRECTED SEMINARS

As I mentioned last time, the international review for SDS was completed. The results came back generally positive and, as such, the program will continue to live on. I spent a good bit of time earlier in the summer approving SDS applications and encouraging students to get involved with the SDS program.

VP ACADEMIC CAUCUS

Another one of my campaign promises was to bring together student leaders about academic issues. The VP Academic Caucus is the incarnation of that commitment, and has brought a wide variety of academic issues to the table where fewer, more centralized problems were seen before. The makeup of the committee is the AMS VP Academic Portfolio as well as the VPs Academic from each constituency (or an equivalent position). Samples of issues brought forward:

- Midterm policy
- Presence of VPs Academic on curriculum committees
-

UNIVERSITY POLICY

INTERNATIONALISM STRATEGY

Work on the Internationalization has been very effective with the help of James Lin, the International Students Commissioner. Though he has been spearheading most of the initiatives, we have met over the past few months with a Helen Pennant, the Director of Internationalization at UBC, and other relevant

administrators. An interesting shift has occurred where the Internationalization function of the university, with the departure of Craig Klafter, the previous AVP International, has been moved to the VP Research's portfolio. It has been my objective to make sure that this placement of the function does not result in the student perspective on creating a global campus and community becoming lost.

Please refer to James' update for more details on the projects that we have been pursuing.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING

At the only meeting of this committee this term, the standing issue of professor opt-in rates raised its heels again. Legally speaking, the university cannot implement an opt-out policy for this system due to the restrictions outlined in the collective agreement. The opt-in system does create a bit complications and incomplete information when some professors either do not know about opting in or how to do it.

The important thing in this case is for students to lobby their professors as much as possible to take that step to opt-in. This is something that my office has been encouraging as much as possible. Once a tipping point has been reached in terms of the number of professors registered, the resource's relevance and usability will vastly increase. Until that point, however, students will probably not use the resource as much for convenience reasons, and will probably default to ratemyprofs and other resources for gauging professors' teaching skills.

AMS INTERNAL/EXECUTIVE ISSUES

APPOINTMENTS REVIEW COMMITTEE

There was not too much work with this committee over the summer. Many of the committee members were out of town for the large part of the summer – but the meetings that we did have focussed on the main purpose of the existence of the ARC. The result of our conversations was the realization that the body had been filling a mandate that should have been that of council. Though it is the responsibility of ARC to determine hours of work and wages that are appropriate and ethical given the job description provided to the committee, it is in fact council's and not ARC's responsibility to determine whether: a) the position is necessary and a good fit for the society and b) whether council should approve the salary expense annuity stemming from the creation of the new position.

ARC has now successfully compiled a Compensation Review Report and model. With an HR Director now hired by the society, the committee will continue by working with him to figure out the new purpose of the ARC in the context of the CR model, the HR Director, council, and all of their respective responsibilities.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

As the nominal chair of the AMS Budget Committee as dictated by code, I participated in the process of developing the \$13,000,000 budget for the AMS fiscal year 2009-2010. Factors that shaped a lot of our decision making:

- Decreased projected catering sales and revenues gave us less of a projected surplus to work with
- Heavy usage of the President's fund over the past year left the AMS with less money than usual in non-replenishable funds
- Inflating salaries for AMS employees
- Inaccurate financial reporting in previous years and a resultant disparity in assumed assets and actual assets
- Programs and services which had not undergone review in a while and which had been budgeted for consistently based on precedent and not on present value to the society.

The budget was passed by council and can be viewed in its entirety (including the history and rationale of all numbers) by visiting Tom Dvorak, the AMS VP Finance.

Since the passing of the budget, the committee has been cooperating with the AMS oversight committee in the execution of a systematic of the AMS' services, departments, and structure in general to see how we can overcome the structural deficit currently encumbered by the society.

VP ACADEMIC/UA PORTFOLIO

I have been absolutely blessed to have one of the most amazing teams ever. I could not have accomplished nearly as much as was achieved so far this year without the patient, competent, and cheerful support of my University Commission. A highlight of their accomplishments and plans for the year are outlined below.

CAMPUS PLANNING COMMISSIONER - SELENA SHANNON

- Working on enhancing residence programming as to include themed housing floors and living learning centers in residence
- Researched existing programs at various institutions in North America
- Wrote a proposal outlining potential living learning center options that would be viable at ubc
- Met with Andrew Parr to discuss the creation of a committee to spearhead this project (committee comprised of 3 AMS representatives and 3 housing office representatives meets for the first time September 29 at 11 am)
- Met with representatives at UBC Farm and Land and Foods Systems to adapting programming that already exists into a themed sustainability floor
- Met with the heads of CAP, Science One and CSP to discuss a gateway program hub in residence
- Tentatively planned a tour of Columbia's Living Learning Center for October

- Working on finalizing a meeting agenda for first committee meeting
- Researching the potential of a Dons system in first year residences
- Worked on assessing the Fraternity Land Agreement with UBC
- Attended various information sessions and meetings with Campus and Community Planning to learn about campus development and the upcoming review of the Vancouver Campus Plan
- About to embark on a joint AMS and Board of Governors campaign to promote the final review of the draft Vancouver Campus Plan starting in the next couple weeks and leading up to the review in October/November.

AVP ACADEMIC - IAN TURNER

- Interviewed several people about governance (Bijan, Naylor, J-Mac....)
- Read reports: University Act, Local Government Act, last year's governance report.
- Spent hours on the phone with Toronto, trying to find out if by-laws there influenced research at U of T
- Arranged for meetings with Mary Harrison + UNA rep
- Was to meet Carol Naylor (career services) had to miss meeting b/c of surgery - meeting her later this week
- Also, will be talking to linda from sauder soon to understand their program
- Finally, in contact with the bookstore about releasing their book lists early so that students can buy textbooks for their classes elsewhere. Its slow moving, but it should happen.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS COMMISSIONER - JAMES LIN

August

-complete draft of recommendation report to UBC Strategic Plan, Internationalization

-write a preliminary proposal for reviving the Global Citizenship Project and conference

-review report by International Students Research Intern; create survey to international students to further investigate their needs and concerns

September

-help International House to begin organizing for International Week

-work with Nazanin Moghadami (International Student Representative on Council) and International House to create monthly cultural workshops at the Student Union Building

-form *ad hoc* organizing committee for the Global Citizenship Conference; the planning process should continue throughout the year

October

- research on new universities to be a part of UBC Joint Academic Program
- lobby for changes of the contents and administering of the LPI examinations

November

- appraise existing courses relating to internationalism; lobby for changes in such courses and implementation of new courses; collaborate with FYSC
- evaluate international student resources at I.House (international student advising, peer programs, etc.); work to diversify and eliminate redundant I.H services

December

Same as November

January

Same as November

February

- determine mutually beneficial partnerships with international agencies and organizations; lobby for such partnerships

March

- help organize International Week

April

- assess the effectiveness of the past year's efforts in promoting "Internationalization" at UBC
- complete transition report to incoming International Students Commissioner

FIRST YEAR SEMINAR COMMISSIONER – EUNICE HII

August: meetings meetings meetings, draft proposal, FYS is in strategic plan!

September: continue to meet with deans of prospective faculties, Anna Kindler to govern?, meet with chair of curriculum and enrolment officer to decide how to proceed to senate, hold think tank by end of september

October- November: establish comm. To continuously review and amend proposal of FYSP, finalize prospective FYS profs from at least 3 faculties

December: make sure all profs have course proposals etc. ready

January- February: present to senate

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES & THE AMS

TAKING COURSES DURING THE SUMMER

To compensate for fewer courses taken during my second term last year, I decided to take 12 credits of courses this summer. I ended up doing well in the courses, and I set myself up for a situation where I can take fewer courses now in my first term, but I also caused myself to be in a situation where there were mainly stressors in my life and I was burning out a lot faster than I had hoped. If I were to do this again, I would have taken fewer courses. This leads me to the next personal point

VACATION!

I took two weeks of vacation at the end of the summer because I felt I was about to burn out. During that time, I shut out the AMS world and focussed on areas of my life I had neglected including friends, sleep, recreation, and family.

The vacation produced tremendous results with regard to my renewed productivity, happiness, and excitement levels. I would highly recommend to all executives and involved students some sort of solid and dedicated vacation time during the summer in order to not burn out and to maintain the excitement and passion which is necessary to be a leader on campus.

RECAPITULATION OF CAMPAIGN PROMISES

As some of the more fervent elections followers may have noted, most of the candidates and all of the elected executives posted a number of campaign promises and goals for their term on their campaign website and other marketing material. I was no different in that regard, and the more Web 2.0 savvy of you may have seen these promises summarized on the VFM Award Winning Blog, the UBC Spectator. In order to maintain as much accountability as possible, I have provided here the list compiled on that blog about my campaign, along with a summary as to what my status with them has been.

INCREASING FUNDING FOR TA TRAINING

- Through UBC TA Training Adjudication Committee, successfully pushed to increase amount of funding distributed to departments and faculties by over \$100,000. An Increase to take note of is the increased funding to departments in the faculty of science.
- Lobbied to and received commitment from the Dean of Arts to push for the creation of an official TA Training program for the Department of Economics, where there has been expressed concern on the students' part with regard to the consistency of TA teaching quality.

BRINGING A GREATER DISCUSSION COMPONENT TO TUTORIALS

- This line item seems in hindsight to have been quite vague in terms of actionable lobbying points or next steps; however it continues
- This has been an issue addressed in many discussions surrounding the LEAD (Lasting Education, Achieved and Demonstrated) Initiative.

FIRST YEAR SEMINAR PROGRAM

- One of my top priorities going into this position was the improvement of first year curriculum and the first year academic experience. It has been added to the university's strategic document.

PASS/D/FAIL POLICY

- I cannot take much credit (not even pass/fail credit) for the success of this policy. To the extent that I could from my position, I supported the passing of this motion by putting in a good word for it whenever meeting with a university official and motivating for it at AMS council. However, the majority of work was done by students and student senators for the past number of years. It has passed now, though, so I am excited to see what happens with it.

EXTENDING DUAL DEGREE/DOUBLE MAJOR OPTIONS

- BA/BCom has been approved by side Arts and side Commerce. All it needs to do now is pass Senate, but the support is there.

CONCENTRATING RESOURCES ONLINE

- Working with Jamil Rhajjak to place all careers-related events on events.ubc.ca. Working with executive to encourage constituencies and clubs to post all events on events.ubc.ca to have a one-stop-shop for career resources.

CAREER COACHES AND COUNSELORS WITHIN DEPARTMENTS BRINGING LEADERSHIP RESOURCES TO STUDENT GROUPS

- Two new career coaches in FoGs!
- Pushing for more!

MORE ACCESSIBLE STUDENT ADVISING

- More work could be done here. Discussions have been had regarding the issue at VP Academic Caucus.

U-BOULEVARD DEVELOPMENTS

- To whatever extent possible I have been lending my support to Crystal and Blake to make sure that development around the SUB is as beneficial to the AMS as possible. Not a lot of jurisdiction over the area as I thought, though.

TAKING TANGIBLE ACTION ON LIQUOR POLICY

- Check the first update! Tangible action is being taken by getting the policies down in writing for once.

CHILD CARE ACCESSIBILITY

- Have lobbied for increased childcare space in new Wesbrook Community Centre at South Campus successfully.
- Have lent as much support as possible to the Child Care Conference being hosted by the AMS and GSS

EMPHASIZING STUDENT LEARNING FOR THE UBC FARM LAND

- Pushing usage of the farm through the sustainability academic review process
- Farm Trek! (I may have only volunteered...but I was there!)

AMS-TRANSLINK RELATIONS

- I have found out that this is mostly Tim' jurisdiction, so I am leaving this to him but ready to help wherever possible.

SUSTAINABILITY ACROSS CAMPUS

- Sustainability Academic Review Process

- Met with and voiced support for Biomass heat and power centre on campus (Nexterra)

CAMPUS-WIDE PUSH FOR SUSTAINABLE CURRICULUM

- Achieved official implementation for proposed Concentration in Business and Sustainability
- Have been lending support to efforts towards innovators of BA major and minor program in environmental studies

INCREASED INCLUSION OF INTERNATIONALISM WITHIN CURRICULUM

- See James' update

CREATING MORE MEDIUMS FOR INTERACTION BETWEEN STUDENT LEADERS

- VP Academic Caucus!
- Regular meetings with IFC and Panhell