



**University Students' Council Agenda
September 16, 2021
Via Zoom - 6:00pm**

- 1. Adoption of an Agenda**
- 2. Introductions**
- 3. Council Address**
 - 3.1. Access and Equity Services**
- 4. Minutes and Reports for Information**
 - 4.1. USC Minutes - September 9, 2021**
 - 4.2. Executive Committee Minutes and Report - September 14, 2021**
 - 4.3. Academic Relations Committee Minutes and Report**
 - 4.4. Appointments Committee Minutes and Report**
 - 4.5. Campus Groups Committee Minutes and Reports**
 - 4.6. Code of Ethics Disciplinary Tribunal Minutes and Report**
 - 4.7. Elections Committee Minutes and Report**
 - 4.8. External Relations Committee Minutes and Report**
 - 4.9. Finance and Assessment Committee Minutes and Reports**
 - 4.10. Indigenous Student Advisory Committee Minutes and Report**
 - 4.11. International Student Advisory Committee Minutes and Report**
 - 4.12. Student Experience Committee Minutes and Report**
 - 4.13. Sustainability Committee Minutes and Report**
 - 4.14. Association of Constituency President Minutes and Report**
- 5. College/Constituency Report**
- 6. Motions Arising from the Minutes and Reports**
- 7. Business**
 - 7.1. Elections for Committees and Ad-hoc Committees**
- 8. New Business**
- 9. Questions, Comments, and Announcements**
- 10. Adjournment**



**University Students' Council
Minutes for September 9, 2021
Via Zoom - 6:00pm**

Present:

Tasnim Jaisee, President (she/her)
Abhineet Goswami, VP Operations and Finance, (he/him)
Nickol Saenz, VP Student Affairs (she/her)
Kyle Kirzinger, Agriculture and Bioresources (she/her)
Cassidy Ross, Agriculture and Bioresources (she/her)
Sharon Jacob, Arts and Science (she/her)
Samuel Papp, Arts and Science (he/him)
Harmanbir Singh, Engineering (he/him)
Justice Noon, Indigenous Students' Union (she/her)
Maria Khan, Kinesiology (she/her)
Levi Perrault, Law (he/him)
Dominique Lummerding, Pharmacy and Nutrition (she/her)
Elisabeth Bauman, St. Thomas More (she/her)
Angela Yu, WCVN (she/her)
Kanika Gupta, Arts and Science
Monisha Chakder, International Students

Also Present:

Lia Storey-Gamble, USC Chairperson (she/they)
Jason Ventnor, Communications and Marketing Manager (he/him)

Absent:

Jesse Rohs, Education
Henok Gebreab, Engineering
Haseeb Bhatti, Dentistry
Punya Miglani, International Students (he/him)
David Kim, Medicine (he/him)

Approved Regrets:

Tauqeer Iftikhar, VP Academic Affairs (he/him)

Guests:

Patti McDougall, Vice Provost Teaching, Learning, and Student Experience (she/her)
Jay Wilson, Incoming Vice provost Teaching, Learning, and Student Experience (he/him)
Wade Epp, Associate Vice Provost Student Services (he/him)

*Please note that verbatim minutes are not produced. The full discussion can be heard on the audio recording.
<https://ussu.ca/main-page/governance/university-students-council/usc-agendas-minutes/>*

1. Adoption of an Agenda

Chairperson Storey-Gamble stated the land acknowledgement:

As a Council of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous students we acknowledge that we gather on treaty 6 territory, the homeland of the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene and Dakota people. We acknowledge the harm that colonial institutions, such as the University of Saskatchewan, has done. We remember that there were centuries of governance and education on this land before the settlers arrived and that these forms of education and governance are continuing today. We honor and reaffirm our relationships with one another and the land that we are on as we work to dismantle the systematic barriers to education that First Nations, Métis, Inuit and other marginalized people face.

Move to adopt the agenda.

USCMotion005: VP Goswami / Councillor Lummerding

CARRIED

2. Introductions

3. Council Address

3.1. PRT Representatives

Patti McDougall thanked President Jaisee for the invite to Council. Patti shared that on the first of October she will be transitioning to Deputy Provost and Jay Wilson will be stepping into the role of Vice Provost Teaching, Learning, and Student Experience. Patti highlighted some of the changes that have taken place over the past couple of years and how COVID has changed the delivery of education and services at the University. Patti noted that currently a majority of classes are in-person, with over 80% of students having at least one in-person class.

At the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, the University created a Pandemic Response and Recovery Team (PRT) to oversee recommendations for the University amidst COVID-19. The group consists of 10 individuals and all the information regarding the work of the committee and members can be found on the USask website, here: <https://covid19.usask.ca/about/prt.php>. The PRT also works together with the USask Crisis Operations Team. Throughout the last couple of years, the USSU Executive have been actively involved with the PRT and President's Executive Committee in regards to COVID-19 response.

The PRT representatives explained the vaccines and rapid testing plans on campus, as well as other safety protocols, such as masking and increased cleaning, that the University has implemented.

Patti McDougall addressed student concerns regarding course delivery options. She noted that students were encouraged to check the registration systems online to see if there were any changes to in-person or online classes. She shared that she recently received news of a student that had moved here from out of province and had their courses switched to online; she noted that this doesn't make her happy but she also doesn't believe that the staff and faculty had any intention of misleading or misdirecting students. Moving forward she has

asked that consultation take place between professors and department heads to ensure that options are being considered. She is putting faith into the UofS staff to communicate with students when changes from in-person to online occur.

Patti addressed the topic of compliance/adherence to the COVID procedures. There is a declaration on vaccine status. If students are not vaccinated, they must complete two rapid tests per week and upload the results. Students who fail to upload documentation will be contacted. Patti noted that masking has been going well, but if students are not masking in a class they will be asked to mask. If students refuse to mask, the faculty will leave the class and dismiss students and will report the situation. If students are symptomatic in class, students are asked to report the situation to the professor. She noted that the President of Usask does have the right to suspend students, and as a last resort that will be utilized.

The PRT is cautiously optimistic for the upcoming term in January. But recognize that they have to follow provincial restrictions, and make decisions depending on the changing situations.

Councillor Kirzinger asked if the PRT had a metric or measurement point that will determine what will bring back students to the University into a normal class? Patti shared that the best way to ensure the University heads into the direction of a more normal return to campus is through vaccinations and following the masking rules.

Councillor Bauman brought forward concerns around not being able to access course materials while students are feeling slightly ill (such as a small cold) and are asked to stay home. Patti noted that professors are being encouraged to utilize the canvas platform to share course materials, she also brought forward a thought about what happened in the past when students got sick.

Councillor Perrault brought forward questions regarding the rule around only water and no food in classrooms. Patti noted that the idea is to encourage masking within the classroom, while also considering people's need for hydration.

Councillor Ross asked where the rapid tests can be found on campus and asked if the tests will be available to individuals that are vaccinated, and asked if there will be a fee. Patti shared that those who are required to test will receive a message from the University within the next hour or so. Within the message there will be written instructions and a training video. She noted that at this time there will be no charge for the tests. The University is going to look into costs and procurement of more tests once there is some data on who needs the required tests.

Councillor Chakder asked if there is an option for the university to reach out to international students who are currently quarantining. Patti shared that the best thing the students can do is reach out to staff at the International Student and Study Abroad Centre and the Student Wellness Centre.

Chair Storey-Gamble asked if the PRT is considering masks for January. Patti said that there hasn't been too much conversation about the topic. She said that the University is leaning towards continuing masking if that means being able to do more things in person.

Patti commended the Council on their grace and their questions. She again thanked the Council for their invitation to attend.

4. Minutes and Reports for Information

- 4.1. USC Minutes - September 2, 2021**
- 4.2. Executive Committee Minutes and Report - September 7, 2021**
- 4.3. Academic Relations Committee Minutes and Report**
- 4.4. Appointments Committee Minutes and Report**
- 4.5. Campus Groups Committee Minutes and Reports**
- 4.6. Code of Ethics Disciplinary Tribunal Minutes and Report**
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- 4.14. Association of Constituency President Minutes and Report**

5. College/Constituency Report

6. Motions Arising from the Minutes and Reports

Move to adopt the USC Minutes of September 9, 2021 into the official record.

USCMotion006: Councillor Perrault / Councillor Papp **CARRIED**

Move to adopt the Executive Minutes as listed in the agenda into the official record.

USCMotion007: VP Saenz / President Jaisee **CARRIED**

7. Business

7.1. Elections for Appointments Committee

President Jaisee provided an overview of the Appointments Committee.

Chairperson Storey-Gamble opened nominations for the appointments committee.

Councillor Bauman nominated herself.

Councillor Papp nominated himself.

Councillor Jacob nominated herself.

Councillor Ross nominated Councillor Kirzinger, Councillor Kirzinger accepted his nomination.

No other nominations were received. Councillor Bauman, Councillor Papp, Councillor Jacob, and Councillor Ross have been chosen to populate the Appointments Committee.

8. New Business

8.1. Ad-Hoc Committees

8.1.1. Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression Ad-Hoc Committee

President Jaisee provided a background on the Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression Ad-hoc committee. The proposal, with details for the Ad-hoc committee, was included in the council package.

8.1.2. First Year Students' Ad-Hoc Committee

VP Saenz provided a background on the First Year Students' Ad-hoc committee. The proposal, with details for the Ad-hoc committee, was included in the council package.

8.1.3. Student and City of Saskatoon Connection Committee

VP Goswami provided a background on the Student and City of Saskatoon Connection Ad-hoc committee. The proposal, with details for the Ad-hoc committee, was included in the council package.

Move to strike 3 ad-hoc committees: the Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression Ad-hoc Committee, First Year Students' Ad-hoc Committee, Student and City of Saskatoon Connection Committee.

USCMotion008: VP Goswami / VP Saenz

CARRIED

Councillor Chakder asked VP Goswami if there could be an increase for International students seats for the Student and City of Saskatoon Connection Ad-hoc Committee. VP Goswami noted that the seats are reserved, but there are no restrictions for more students to be a part of it.

8.2. Elections for all other Committees

President Jaisee noted that all other committees will be populated next week.

9. Questions, Comments, and Announcements

VP Saenz announced that Equity, Diversity and Inclusion week will take place next week.

Councillor Jacob reminded Arts and Science Councillors to attend their constituency meetings.

Councillor Bauman asked the Executive if there is any information they can provide for constituencies to give to their groups related to byelections. Jason Ventnor encouraged them to reach out to him.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.



Executive Meeting Minutes for September 14, 2021

Present: President Jaisee, VP Goswami, VP Iftikhar, VP Saenz, Jason Ventnor

Absent:

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 2:43 p.m.

2. Quorum

Quorum was present.

3. Roundtables

a. President Jaisee

i. Meetings

1. Golden Mobility & Rehab Ltd.
2. Spinal Cord Injury Saskatchewan Inc.
3. Abhineet
4. Lia
5. Stef
6. Jason V
7. Jason K
8. Amanda
9. USC Brief
10. USC
11. Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan
12. Ministry of Advanced Education
13. Airini and Troy - Accessibility Tour

ii. Projects/Initiatives

1. Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Ad-Hoc Committee Proposal
2. First Year Students' Ad-Hoc Committee Proposal
3. Review USC Packages
4. Accessibility Tour planning
5. USask Instagram Takeover planning + executing
 - a. All USSU Services
 - b. President Role
6. AOCP Agenda

iii. Other

1. Campus Groups Hangout

b. VP Goswami

i. Meetings

1. Scott and Stefanie - space booking form/procedure

2. Planning and Priority Committee
3. Campus group FAQ
4. Tasnim
5. Jason V and Scott - Studentpreneur survey
6. Matt regarding CG hangout
7. Dan regarding CG hangout - final discussion
8. UCRU
9. ASSU
10. LSA
11. UofS Space design team
12. USC brief
13. USC
14. Quintin, Cory, Allison - Transit accessibility
15. Kinesiology Students Society
16. Ministry of Advanced Education
17. Student regarding starting a new campus group
18. Airini and Troy - Accessibility Tour

ii. Projects/Initiatives

1. USSU CG welcome week in Arts and Science Tunnel
 - Setting up the table
 - FAQ sessions with CG executives
 - Giveaways and information pass-on
2. USSU Campus group Hangout
 - Louis Private room from 3pm to 5 pm
 - Various giveaways
 - Get to know you BINGO
 - Leaders introduction
 - USSU ratification benefits Trivia with giveaways
3. USSU Orientation giveaways
 - USSU gave 4 Pizza hut gift cards and 1 samsung galaxy 20 phone to the draw winners

iii. Other

1. Campus group ratification applications, grants applications and cheque requisitions
2. Reviewing USSU auditors report 2020-2021 and other revisions and submissions for financial document

c. VP Iftikhar

i. Meetings

1. Dallas
2. Jason V
3. Calls with students regarding concerns

4. Students for Registration suggestions
5. Eng. Student for an appeal
6. Student Grievance
7. Saskatoon Open Door Society
8. Airini and Troy - Accessibility Tour

ii. Projects/Initiatives

1. USSU Peer Mentorship
2. USSU Academic awareness week planning

iii. Other

d. VP Saenz

i. Meetings

1. Sustainability Week - GIWS/GWF with Matt and Stefanie
2. Dan about Friday's event
3. Stef
4. GSA in regards potential initiatives
5. USC brief
6. USC
7. LDAS
8. Lung Association
9. Centre's Meeting
10. Scott H. for set up on mobile plasma
11. Volunteers at north concourse
12. Performers for talent show event
13. Airini and Troy - Accessibility Tour

ii. Projects/Initiatives

1. EDI Project
 - a. EDI Week/ Accessibility Week is featuring this week
2. Sustainability Week
 - a. Waiting for possible research from GIWS where SAL could collaborate in the Sustainability Week

iii. Other

1. Volunteering at the Help Centre
2. Volunteering at the Woman Centre

4. New business

a. Indoor Masking

President Jaisee shared that a student had reached out to her regarding a professor taking off their mask during lectures since the beginning of the term. The student said that the professor told the class that they had been approved by the college to take their mask off when they were lecturing. Students in the class felt uncomfortable since there is no content on the USask website outlining

instructor exemptions. VP Iftikhar noted that there have been some discussions with Patti McDougall and he is going to follow up with the faculty association.

b. U of S Debate Group Funding

Move to approve \$491 in XL Print and Design funding for the UofS Debate Society.

EXECMOTION016	VP Goswami / President Jaisee	Carried
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c. Campus Groups Week Debrief

VP Goswami shared that campus groups week went really well. The first day started off a bit slow, with not many groups in the tunnel. But the rest of the week was busy. He noted that over 30 people attended the social event at Louis. Groups reached out to him and asked if the event could take place again. Many of the groups are interested in governance and finance training. The groups were really happy with the student involvement and wanted to see more events like this.

d. Student Development Summit (SUDS)

President Jaisee noted that SUDS will be taking place between two of the advocacy weeks and asked if there will be any conflicts. VP Saenz said that she will prepare her events early on. Jason Ventnor asked the group if they knew what the plan was for speakers and workshops, and if they had an idea of how many student organizations were attending. VP Goswami will follow up with the SUDS organizers.

e. EDI Week

EDI week is this week. Individuals will be invited to create social media posts regarding diversity and inclusion throughout the week. Yesterday there was a wheelchair challenge, Wednesday there will be a talent show taking place in Louis, and on Thursday there will be a disability simulator and bias test.

f. Centres

VP Saenz has reached out to centres to discuss inclusion. She is wondering if there is a map of gender neutral washrooms on campus and brought forward concerns about the lack of gender neutral washrooms in the College of Law.. Jason Ventnor shared that when Jack Sanddleback was with the USSU he may have worked on creating a map. Jason will reach out to Stefanie Ewen to see if she has a map. VP Saenz also brought forward questions regarding naloxone kits. The Centres are wondering if they could each have a kit in each centre. VP Saenz is going to reach out to the university regarding the disbursement of naloxone kits.

g. AOCF Items

The Executive discussed items to bring forward at the next AOCF meeting:

- UC Reports of June and September.
- USSU Town Halls
- Lobbying - Advanced Education
- Constituency Updates

h. USC Items

- Group Chat

Executives have been asked if there can be some sort of group chat for Council. President Jaissee suggested using discord this year, as the Centres already have a discord as well.

- Committees

Committees will be populated this week.

- Social

President Jaissee is going to reach out to Dan to see what is possible for an in-person social for Council.

- University Council Reports

To be attached to the Council Package.

- Regrets

AGA Burnett will explain regrets/absents in his next email to Council.

i. USask Instagram Takeover

This week the USSU is taking over the USask Instagram. Monday was about all of the USSU's services. President Jaissee shared information about her position for Tuesday. VP Goswami will take over Wednesday; VP Iftikhar on Thursday and VP Saenz on Friday.

j. UC Reports

President Jaissee asked if Jason Ventnor could put the USSU University Council Reports on the USSU website. He said yes, and he will add them to the Council section of the website.

k. Meeting with Ministry of Advanced Education

The executive noted that they had a productive meeting with the Ministry of Advanced Education. Gene Makowsky has asked if they could attend a University Students' Council meeting in the future. President Jaissee will work on coordinating their council address.

l. Aboriginal Students' Centre

President Jaisee shared that since the execs had previously discussed sponsoring one of the soup and bannock lunches hosted by the ASC, she reached out for a quote on the event. ASC let her know that once they start having the events again, the representatives from ASC are going to reach out to President Jaisee.

President Jaisee shared that she also had a discussion with ASC about making academic advisor appointments more comforting for Indigenous students (since this was a concern brought up to her by students). ASC said they can have one of their staff sit with students during their academic advisor appointments if needed. President Jaisee noted this type of support is beneficial for students and asked if there could be more visibility/awareness could be made about it through posters or other media by the ASC which the USSU would be happy to re-share and promote.

m. Student Central

VP Saenz brought forward concerns regarding Student Central not being open. Numerous students have been coming to the USSU office with questions that are related to Student Central. VP Goswami noted that an email has been sent regarding this concern to Patti, but the Executive acknowledged that she is currently in a transition period. VP Goswami is going to follow up with Jay Wilson. Additionally, concerns regarding ISSAC not being open were also discussed.

n. Library Services

VP Saenz reached out to the library today about late-night study. She will follow up in a couple of days.

o. Online Course Issue Follow-Up

VP Saenz asked the Executive if they've heard anything regarding notification to students when courses change from in-person to online. President Jaisee noted that she hasn't heard back yet from Patti but will follow up.

p. Lung Association

The Executive were approached by the Lung Association asking if they would support a campus smoking-free policy. Jason Ventnor shared that this has been brought forward before and the University declined the policy. The Executive agreed that at this time this initiative is not a priority and will respond to the Lung Association representatives.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

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June 2021

Starting our USSU terms on May 3rd, our executive committee has been busy learning all about our roles and responsibilities of our individual portfolios and governance of the USSU. With the start of a fresh new year of executives comes a series of orientations and preparations. We spent the first few weeks in various meetings learning about IT support, accounting, Studentcare, internal operations, bylaws and policies, event planning and more. During this time, we also had the opportunity to introduce ourselves to the USSU Daycare director (Colleen Gerling) and Centre Coordinators. We are grateful to our incredible team of Senior Managers, Jason Ventnor, Jason Kovitch, Stefanie Ewen, and Amanda Mitchell, for their patience and dedication in coordinating these orientation meetings and supporting us in our learning of the USSU's organizational structures.

We are particularly focused on making our individual executive projects a success this year. We started by building a completely new record-keeping approach for all executive projects in order to lead a strong year of initiatives. Every phase of individual projects is now recorded and processed for all executives to oversee layer by layer. We believe that by doing so, we will be able to ensure that project deadlines are reached on time and that we will be able to offer constant progress updates on each project. We make it a point to meet weekly with our executives to keep each other updated on the status of these projects. We also meet weekly with our group of senior managers as an executive to ensure that all significant union operational tasks are running smoothly. Our work on academic advocacy, sustainability, and accessibility will continue throughout our term.

University Students' Council (USC) and Association of Constituency Presidents (AOCP) are vital to our executive communication with students. We are compiling a complete list of contact information for all students selected for these memberships for the following terms as we prepare for these meetings, which will begin in September. We anticipate that by establishing this early communication line, we will be able to ensure that these students receive enough support from the USSU when they begin working in their elected roles. We are also in the process of putting together packages for USC and AOCP members. In the coming months, we will send out the complete versions of these packages to help these students understand their duties and duties for these particular committees. In addition, we are in the process of arranging guest speakers from other university departments to attend and present relevant topics for students at these meetings.

As the USSU supports more than 200 campus groups every year by sponsoring their events, space booking, training, and more, we are concentrating on drafting an updated comprehensive campus group policy. The policy will be revamped to make the USSU more inclusive, transparent, and accessible. This updated policy will not only support the campus group to operate smoothly but will also help the USSU to expand. Furthermore, to continue to support the

work of campus groups, we are updating our Campus Group Management System which collects and stores many details of these groups. We are currently working with our IT manager, Scott Henderson, to strengthen the system's user interference capabilities.

We have started forming early relationships with students in positions of leadership at other university campuses. During our first meetings with the Undergraduates of the Canadian Research-Intensive Universities, the organization underwent an election, and we welcomed a new Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary-Treasurer. We are thrilled to collaborate with the new team, and we have begun to engage in meaningful dialogues on vaccine campaigns and other current events affecting post-secondary students across Canada. Also, we connected with student executives from the University of British Columbia to discuss improving campus housing. Additionally, we met with student executives from the University of Regina to discuss increasing job opportunities for students.

For student advocacy pieces, earlier this month, we voiced our support for students in the College of Education who were starting in their placement opportunities as they were initially unable to receive vaccines regardless of teachers being eligible for their first dosages. We worked with Patti McDougall, the Vice Provost Teaching, Learning and Student Experience on this advocacy and we were updated with news that these students were finally eligible to receive their vaccines. Next, we are also working with Patti to create a plan for an exam writing center for students in the upcoming terms, during this pandemic, we have had many students concerned about the lack of quiet places in their homes to write their finals. After that, with Patti, we are in the initial process of co-developing certificates of recognition for students who attended and passed their courses during this covid-era. Lastly, for advocacy, we are working with the university's communications team on a new vaccine campaign to encourage students to get vaccinated so that we can all keep our communities safe.

This last month, execs represented the USSU in over 15 different USask-related committees and met with varying university branches. We were invited to attend a Mental Health First Aid training, and going forward, we hope to have all executives receive that form of training. We attended the Studentcare Summit and learned about many new programs that Studentcare will introduce in the coming year to improve the student experience and mental health wellbeing. We also attended the Grounding Circle in support of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc community to show our solidarity with the USask Indigenous community and the wider campus affected by the recent events.

On our executives' social media (Instagram and Facebook), we introduced the four executives as a group and then featured each exec individually with their bios. We also created a post congratulating the USask class of 2021 on their convocation. Additionally, we spoke about our support for the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc community and shared a post reminding undergraduate

students of the free online Empower Me counselling service that we provide. On the Centres' social media accounts, they started another round of promotion for the USSU Centres Discord server. On the individual USSU centres' social media accounts, Women's Centre celebrated Mother's Day and Menstrual Hygiene Day and Pride Centre celebrated International Day Against Homophobia and Pansexual Visibility Day.

We also welcomed two newly hired coordinators into our organization, Madi Kuhn as the USSU Women's Centre coordinator and Rayna Rahman as the USSU Help Centre coordinator. They will be joining our continuing Pride Centre coordinator, Rene Clarke and provide various types of resources for students throughout this next year. In the meantime, centre coordinators and their volunteers continue to use the Discord platform to provide peer support to USask students. With all USSU Centre services being delivered online, student volunteer duties will be overseen by the coordinators throughout the summer. This is different from other years where volunteers end their shifts in April. Now, volunteers will have the eligibility to stay on as volunteers through the summer and into September during the new volunteer recruitment cycle if they choose. Centre volunteers are also facilitating several summer discussion groups, including Queer Women's Night, Desi Women's Discussion Night, Pride Centre Hangout, and Queer Book Club. Our pride centre coordinator is currently focusing on initiatives for Pride Month in terms of new centre projects.

While all our office duties are still running through online communication, we are optimistically upholding our responsibilities and providing strong support for our USask undergraduate students. We are thrilled to have such a wonderful group of staff to work with for the following year. We are looking forward to embarking on many projects, and we are optimistic about a safe return to campus eventually.

With Respect,

Tasnim Jaisee, President
Abhineet Goswami, Vice-President Operations and Finance
Tauqeer Iftikhar, Vice-President Academic Affairs
Nickol Saenz, Vice-President Student Affairs

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September 2021

As the summer draws to a close with the start of a bright new semester at the USSU, we have been working hard gearing up for the year. We are settled into our new roles and actively engaged with our student community to continue supporting them throughout this transitional year. There are now essentially two years of first-year students on campus. The sense of excitement is in the air as many of us are eager to bring back the nostalgic feeling of reliving our campus experiences from the days we have missed.

Return to Campus

The executives finally got a chance to access our offices. We have re-opened our USSU information desk for students to drop-by. Our centre coordinators have also been able to gain access to their spaces and have been decorating them with art and other pieces to make them more inviting for student drop-ins and visits. Louis' and Louis' Loft have reopened and are providing delicious food to everyone on campus. A new shop, as well as returning titles, will be opening shortly in the food court. It has been exciting for us to prepare to revitalize many of our inaccessible operations during the past year's campus closure.

With the USask fall vaccination plan in place, we feel much more at ease returning to campus, and we have had a lot of encouraging feedback from students. We have been meeting with USask representatives to discuss strategies for a safe return to campus including topics such as masking protocols, pop-up vaccine sites on campus, accessibility around the PAWS Vaccine Status channel and more. Sustainability also has been a critical matter for us during this return, including conversations on mask recycling bins, refillable water stations to reduce plastic on campus due to the closure of water fountains etc. Safety is our number one priority and Protecting the Pack remains crucial. We continue encouraging students to be vaccinated if they can.

Studentcare

We met with our healthcare provider, Studentcare, many times over the summer to discuss improvements to their health and dental plans and to improve accessibility for students who use the Empower Me program, an online counselling service that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We've also provided input to the remodeling of their office so that students seeking information about their services may chat with their representatives more comfortably. The health and dental plan are one of the most important services we offer students, and continues to allow students access to much needed medical services at an affordable rate.

Campus Groups

For many students, contributing to campus organisations is a crucial component of their university experience. Students have been able to access and complete their ratification forms for their groups online. Our Campus Group Management System has now officially been rebranded

as USSUHub as we have reworked the system and made the program more user-friendly. We reduced our ratification costs to fifty percent until the end of July to encourage students to apply early and save money. All new campus groups (not ratified in the last five years) can now ratify for free, and we feel this process will significantly promote new student groups.

Our campus groups policy has now been separated into a suite of policies to help create a more comprehensive set of guidelines. Students can now apply for three official grants for their initiatives: the Project and Initiatives Grant, the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Grants, and the Sustainability Grant. We are also working to finalize our fourth new grant, which will focus on Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression. While all of this information is being added to our website, we continue meeting with numerous campus groups to discuss any questions about ratification. Additionally, we are attempting to ensure more student groups have easier access to Co-Curricular Records (CCR) credits for each event they organize.

Studentpreneur

One of our newest projects will focus on student empowerment. We know that students are full of energy and are actively seeking opportunities to grow and explore their creativity further. We are launching a program called Studentpreneur. Students will be able to network with business leaders and experts through this series of events and seminars. They will also learn valuable marketing, financing, and other business skills due to this upcoming project.

Academic Advocacy

In our academic advocacy, we have urged for increased study and learning spaces around campus, especially given the necessary social distance measures that students will need to maintain in the upcoming term. There have been ongoing conversations with the USask Library team around library hours and access to library resources. We had further conversations with USask representatives regarding increasing recording equipment in classrooms. We have also urged for the practice of lecture recordings to be continued for all courses offered in-person for the rest of the year, as we recognize they're an essential tool for students and their education. We were delighted to learn that our advocacy helped lead to material highlighting the importance of having access to lecture recordings and will now be included in professional development sessions and directed to faculty and instructors as they prepare for the new term.

Tuition Consultation

In our Tuition Consultation Working Group, we finalized a series of proposals with the Graduate Students' Association earlier this summer. Our focus has been on making tuition consultations more accessible and comprehensive for students. These recommendations were forwarded to our USask Provost Dr. Airini for her consideration. We hope to hear back on these recommendations in the fall to have ongoing meaningful discussions on this topic.

Focus on Advanced Education

We recognize that the pandemic has made severe strains on Advanced Education. During the summer, we researched critical points of advocacy necessary for students in the upcoming year. Our focus remains on accessibility and affordability in post-secondary education with the ongoing challenges students face through a lack of equitable opportunities. We met with Jennifer Bowes, MLA for Saskatoon University, and we discussed a broad range of student issues regarding tuition, mental health, and more. We are meeting with other provincial leaders in the next month to continue these conversations in advocating student needs and the future of higher education in Saskatchewan. In meetings with the University of Regina Students' Union, we have had ongoing conversations on lobbying platforms relevant to university students across Saskatchewan.

Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression

Our focus on Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression remains crucial to us. We will be utilizing our strategic goals of Path Forward in our leadership for students. We continue to be vocal in creating awareness for dismantling systemic barriers and using our resources to develop Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression-focused programming. Our executive committee has prepared an Anti-Oppression Speaker Series that we want to launch this year. We also have ongoing plans to initiate programs focusing on EDI. In the meantime, we are also communicating with culture-focused student groups regarding USSU services. We also met with International Student and Study Abroad Centre staff to discuss the pandemic's barriers for international students. During the meeting, we also spoke on the important relationships between Immigrant communities and Indigenous communities.

Throughout the discoveries of numerous unmarked graves near former Residential Schools, we recognize the enormous grief Indigenous students are facing in this time of mourning. As an executive committee, we continue to educate ourselves on Indigenous issues, rights, and history. We have met with Joseph Naytowhow, the USSU Indigenous Knowledge Keeper, for guidance regarding the USSU's work with Indigenous student-focused initiatives and will continue meeting with him as the year progresses. We have had individual meetings with representative members from the Indigenous Business Students Society (IBSS), Indigenous Law Students' Association, and Indigenous Students' Union about supports for Indigenous students and how the USSU can aid in amplifying the voices of Indigenous students. We met with the Aboriginal Students' Centre staff to discuss Indigenous student-focused programming and resources, as well as potential collaborations. As members of the Undergraduates of Canadian Research-Intensive Universities (UCRU), we led the discussion for the board to finalize and send on a letter to the Federal Government urging implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action focusing on supports for Indigenous students in post-secondary education.

Furthermore, we reached out to the Student Wellness Centre and Access and Equity Services to create a dialogue on adding resources for Indigenous students through their services. We

advocated for increased consultations with Indigenous student groups during our meeting with the President's Executive Committee and have continuing plans to focus on Indigenous student-focused initiatives with their representatives. We attended the Indigenous Strategy Gifting Ceremony and hope to see USask proceed actively towards decolonization. Strengthening the USSU's relationship with the wider Indigenous student communities across our campuses remains essential as we continue to seek ongoing communication in addressing institutional issues.

Association of Constituency Presidents

We held our first Association of Constituency Presidents (AOCP) meeting in August. It was wonderful to meet the new Presidents of each constituency, and we briefed the representatives on the USSU summer highlights, services, centres, and committees offered this year. Parking, ratification, and by-elections were among the major subjects discussed by our AOCP members at this meeting. Prior to this meeting, we also got a chance to meet with the Arts and Science Students' Union, Agriculture Students' Association, and the Law Students' Association about collaborations and resources. We successfully advocated for the Student Medical Society of Saskatchewan to receive an extended duration on their parking due to the College of Medicine having a different study period compared to most other colleges. We value our constituents' input and strive to improve our outreach and services for them.

University Students' Council

We welcomed our new University Students' Council (USC) Chair, Lia Storey-Gamble. We also redesigned our handbooks for Members of Students' Council. Our council meetings will begin on September 3rd, weekly on Thursdays at 6pm through Zoom. All meetings will be recorded, with meeting minutes transcribed in text and made available to the public on our website. All USask undergraduate students are welcome to join these weekly sessions. Additionally, we are also very excited to start our USSU committees work, with ten official committees and other potential ad-hoc committees on their way! Our Student At Large applications have been released online, with opportunities for students to get involved in our committees as a great way to learn about student governance, networking, leadership, and more.

Federal Election

With an approaching federal election, we anticipate many students to be negatively impacted due to the unavailability of the Vote on Campus Program. We have been vocal about our disappointment with this decision. We supported UCRU's letter to Election Canada voicing our concerns about the lack of voter accessibility for students on campus. In partnership with UCRU, we will be launching a UVOTE campaign to provide information about voting and encouraging students to go vote off campus. We will also be creating content focusing on local candidate platforms regarding Advanced Education and how they plan to support students. We encourage all students to stay informed on this election, as well as those who are eligible to vote, to do so and participate in this important democratic process.

Centres

Our Help, Pride and Women's Centre coordinators have launched their new volunteer applications and are developing a hybrid method for volunteers to contribute both in-person and online through Discord. The Help Centre has been updating their resource libraries in preparing for the new year. Our Pride Centre celebrated Pride Month in July through their Queer Confessions online campaign. The IBSS and our Pride Centre are collaborating on creating a two-spirit-focused discussion group. The Queer Women's Night discussion group collaboration between the Women's Centre and Pride Centre will be shifting to in-person meetings as the centres seek to re-populate their community space. The Women's Centre concentrated on two critical advocacy issues this summer. Firstly, a successful outcome arose from their collaboration with Gender Engagement in Medicine, when the College of Medicine heard student and community concerns and removed anti-choice related placement options for their students. Secondly, the Women's Centre released a supporting statement and created awareness for Bill 605: An Act to Provide Safe Access to Abortion Services.

Looking Ahead

Next month, our executives and coordinators will focus on Welcome Week, Campus Groups Week, Accessibility Week, and Sexual Violence Awareness Week. We hope students can participate in these campaigns through in-person events and online resources. We are excited to have the opportunity to make a safe return to campus and are thrilled to once again see students take part in campus culture.

With Respect,

Tasnim Jaisee, President
Abhineet Goswami, Vice-President Operations and Finance
Tauqeer Iftikhar, Vice-President Academic Affairs
Nickol Saenz, Vice-President Student Affairs

University Students' Council Attendance

	Sep. 02	Sep. 09
Tasnim Jaisee	P	P
Abhineet Goswami	P	P
Nickol Saenz	P	P
Tauqeer Iftikhar	P	PG
Kyle Kirzinger	P	P
Cassidy Ross	P	P
Sharon Jacob	P	P
Kanika Gupta	PG	P
Samuel Papp	P	P
Haseeb Bhatti	A	A
Jesse Rohs	A	A
Henok Gebreab	A	A
Harmanbir Singh	P	P
Justice Noon	P	P
Monisha Chakder	A	P
Punya Miglani	P	A
Maria Khan	P	P
Levi Perrault	P	P
David Kim	P	A
Dominique Lummerding	P	P
Elisabeth Bauman	P	P
Angela Yu	P	P

P - Present; A - Absence; PG - Permission Granted/Absence Approved; NYA - Not Yet Appointed; NM - No Meeting; CE - Communication Error