



# COUNCIL REPORT

DECEMBER 2025

## **President**

December has been devoted to ensuring students' success and support as the Fall Academic Term comes to a close. On behalf of the USSU, I am extremely proud of each and every one of our undergraduate students who have persevered throughout the term, especially those tasked with navigating academic challenges, food insecurity, housing precarity, and other issues that shape student experiences. These issues will continue to motivate the USSU's work into the New Year and remain top student priorities.

In late November, the USSU successfully held our Annual General Meeting and passed proposed resolutions which will be operationalized in the New Year, in order to provide student constituency groups with an adequate amount of time to share this information with their student body. The AGM is a chance for students to voice their concerns and central issues to the USSU and provide greater insight into the day-to-day priorities of students across the university.

Furthermore, this term the USSU partnered with the Saskatoon Sexual Assault and Information Centre to structure a coalition against sexual and gender-based violence. Eight students at the undergraduate and graduate levels supported community education programming. In the winter term, students will volunteer and provide insight into campus and student spaces, working alongside the USSU and the USSU Women's Centre. The USSU continues to advocate for changes and updates to the Sexual Violence response policy and procedures, and looks forward to working on this initiative in the New Year.

Heading into the Winter Term, the Student Legal Services Clinic, which Dr. Beth Bilson spearheaded, is set to open its doors and services to students at USASK. This working committee has met bi-weekly since September to structure, organize, and discuss the future of this service. This clinic would not have been possible without Dr. Bilson's commitment, legacy, care, and dedication to students, which will help provide the campus student community with greater access and navigational tools.

The USSU continues to focus on initiatives which centre EDI, and advocacy-informed lenses of student and university engagement. Student leaders recently shared with the President's Executive Committee (PEC) a focused conversation on how to mobilize EDI toolkits for the university community. Discussing strategies, values, and shared approaches to engaging with difficult and courageous conversations, this space facilitated opportunities to take back ideas to leaders within the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching and Learning to workshop resources for a broader delivery of EDI strategies and actionable implementation.

Working closely with our Indigenous Students' Advisory Committee, the USSU, in partnership with the Office of the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement (OPIE), will be sharing a series of

Conversation Circles in the New Year to help mobilize dialogue and engagement of students with ohpahotan | oohpaahotaan. We will also be hosting a series of student-wide events intended to foster increased connection and collaboration among Indigenous, International, and domestic students. Amplifying Indigenous student agency and continuing to grow the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students are central to supporting ongoing education initiatives.

Finally, the USSU would like to extend our sincere gratitude to President Stoicheff for his commitment and ongoing work with student leaders at his final University Council. Your ten years of leadership and service to the university community have impacted a generation of student leaders, and we thank you for your dedication to uplifting student success, initiatives, and innovation. On behalf of over a decade of students, and of USask's students today, as you move into the next part of your life, the USSU wishes you and your family the very best on your next adventure, the beginning of something else, something new, and to a future of joy, good health, good music, and endless creativity.

Respectfully submitted,



**Emma Wintermute**  
President  
University of Saskatchewan Students' Union

## **Vice-President Operations & Finance**

### **Summary:**

With finals and term papers rapidly approaching, November was both a busier and slower month than expected. Campus groups kept me busy, as did Transit and finances, but I also received far fewer student questions and concerns. Nonetheless, I am happy to provide the following report on my activities in the eighth month of my term.

### **Campus Groups:**

At the time of writing, there are 164 fully ratified campus groups, a notable increase from last year's total of 149. With many groups still completing their applications, I hope to see this number increase considerably in the coming months. That said, this metric is not the most impressive. Campus groups are more active than ever, with hundreds of events each month to support the academic and non-academic needs of undergraduate students. We have also seen a significant increase in the number of groups using USSU services beyond grants. Our Campus Club Space, for instance, has seen a meteoric rise in bookings, from only a handful per term to dozens each month. Groups have also made extensive use of Louis' and Louis' Loft, where we offer free bookings for ratified groups and discounted prices. Overall, Louis' saved groups over \$2,000 in event costs in November.

I am also happy to report that November was the busiest month for funding applications and approvals. The Campus Groups Committee approved **\$10,726.11** by the end of November, all of it in the Projects & Initiatives Category. From annual general meetings to group socials, to fundraising supports and more, the P&I category funds the majority of group ideas and initiatives. While we approved no funding in the EDI, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression, or Executive Sponsorship categories, we look forward to supporting groups in these areas in the coming months. We will soon conduct more advertising and promotional efforts to ensure groups are aware of these funding opportunities.

Throughout November, I have worked closely with the Campus Groups Committee to reduce barriers to ratification and funding, and to make the processes clearer and easier to understand. To this effect, we have removed several redundant requirements from both the ratification and funding applications. Removals include:

- Providing a list of all planned group events;
- A hyper-detailed budget for each funding application that was unable to export from our USSUhub system;
- A promotions tab where groups could share graphics with me, which I would then send to another USSU staff member for sharing.

I will continue to work with groups and the committee to streamline our applications and make the USSU even more welcoming to campus groups, new and returning.

## **Transit**

As the weather becomes colder, more and more students will start taking the bus, whether for the first time or as experienced riders. To support students with their transit needs, the USSU's Student and City Connections Committee will film videos and share social media posts and advertisements, as well as those from the City of Saskatoon, to ensure students are aware of how to find their routes, activate their U-PASS, and more. You can expect these to begin appearing in the coming weeks and months.

With the Link (bus rapid transit) program rapidly approaching, the Student and City Connections Committee is also hard at work developing a communications plan with Saskatoon Transit to ensure students understand the project's impacts and value. There will be substantial changes to College Drive that many students remain unaware of, and the Committee's principal goal going forward is to dispel concerns about them.

## **University Students' Council & USSU Operations**

The University Students' Council was very active in November, with much of its work leading up to the USSU's Annual General Meeting on November 20. There, KPMG presented the USSU's audited financial report, USSU members considered several Bylaw amendments and motions, and our president gave the USSU's term-to-date report. As illustrated by the independent auditor's [report](#), the USSU is in a strong financial position. While other students' unions are facing considerable headaches regarding their finances and operating procedures, the strength of the USSU's finances demonstrates a commitment not only to the good governance of student affairs but also to the responsible and transparent management of student fees. Some highlights from the auditor's report include:

- Reliable financial policies and practices;
- A consistently strong investment portfolio;
- An achievable long-term debt-management plan;
- An overall operating surplus.

The Finance and Assessment Committee, to which I serve as chair, is developing a communications plan regarding the USSU's budget and fees to explain to students the value of their financial contributions to the union. The committee will conduct tabling sessions, share videos on social media and YouTube, and much more to ensure students understand the importance of the union and what it offers. As the USSU begins developing its 2026-27 budget

in the coming months, the committee will be active in promoting the process to keep our commitment to transparency and student awareness.

The committee will focus on areas where students have raised concerns in the past. This includes worries over the transparency of budget development, the use of student fees, and staff pay. Should anyone have questions about the USSU's finances, please direct them to me at [vpopfin@ussu.ca](mailto:vpopfin@ussu.ca). I am always happy to answer any questions and address concerns.

Also, regarding finances and transparency, we regularly share accountability reports that highlight our spending and adherence to the budget each month. These are available on our budget and student fees [webpage](#), along with the annual budget and the auditor's report. You may have also seen our monthly services snapshots on social media. These highlight the services we provide and the spending of our executives each month in an easily accessible and digestible format.

## **Meetings and Advocacy**

The USSU continues to work on its Advanced Education Lobbying Document. As stated in my most recent report, this document will include the executives' most pressing concerns regarding student well-being and support. While not a comprehensive list, we look forward to publishing this document in the new year to bring the following to the government's attention:

- Cost-of-living;
- Student housing;
- International student cap imposed by IIRC;
- Open educational resources (OERs);
- Support for regional and northern colleges;
- Financial support for Indigenous and international students.

Also on the advocacy front, we look forward to implementing gender-affirming care and virtual healthcare as part of our expanded student health and dental plan in January. More details about these additions will be included in our January reports.

Respectfully submitted,



**Owen Deis**

Vice-President (Operations & Finance)  
University of Saskatchewan Students' Union

## **Vice-President Academic Affairs**

December focused on translating emerging academic frameworks into tools and practices that support clear, equitable, and accessible learning for students. As assessment reform, teaching recognition, accessibility planning, and instructional evaluation continue to develop at the institutional level, the primary emphasis of this portfolio has been ensuring that these initiatives are understood and experienced by students in ways that support their academic decision-making and overall learning environment. Much of this work has involved bringing student perspectives directly into policy design, preparing communication tools for implementation, and prioritizing clarity in areas where students most frequently seek guidance.

### **Assessment, Teaching Effectiveness, and Student Navigation of Academic Processes**

Assessment policy discussions continued to move forward under the Teaching, Learning, and Academic Resources Committee (TLARC), with a working group now beginning to examine how assessment changes will be implemented. The focus of this work has been on the transition itself: what resources must be prepared in advance, how faculty and students will be informed, and what mechanisms support consistency across colleges. These discussions are shaped by the regular student inquiries that come to the Vice-President Academic portfolio regarding grade explanations, reassessments, expectations in syllabi, and the interpretation of academic regulations. The goal is to ensure that changes to assessment policy are accompanied by clear pathways that all university staff and students can understand and use with confidence.

A second TLARC working group has begun examining the evolving role of artificial intelligence in teaching and learning. The working group's early discussions have centred on how AI tools are used in academic work, what constitutes appropriate academic support, and how learning objectives should adapt to reflect technologically mediated learning environments. These conversations are closely tied to concerns raised by students regarding academic integrity expectations and clarity of course-level AI use policies. With guidance needs now spanning basic writing assistance, generative research tools, and discipline-specific software, student perspectives will be essential in determining how policy and pedagogy evolve to manage AI while supporting learning outcomes.

Parallel to these policy initiatives, student consultations this term continued to reflect a consistent theme: students require structured, early, and accessible information to navigate assessments, academic integrity, accessibility, and course expectations. These cases have provided valuable documentation for committees, highlighting areas where clearer syllabi, more transparent assessment criteria, and accessible instructional materials can reduce barriers in routine academic decision-making. As new frameworks are introduced, the portfolio's work has increasingly

focused on ensuring that policy and communication develop side by side, so that students understand both what the rules are and how to exercise their rights within them.

### **Teaching Recognition, Instructional Feedback, and the Student Academic Experience**

The Teaching Excellence Awards (TEA) continued to advance, guided by the instructional values consistently identified by students: clarity in expectations, accessible course design, thoughtful assessment practices, and responsiveness to learning needs. Students remain deeply engaged in recognizing instructors who contribute positively to their academic experience, and the TEA criteria continue to evolve in response to this input. The purpose is not simply to celebrate effective teaching, but to ensure that the characteristics students find most supportive become visible standards reflecting high-quality academic practice.

Work on the Student Learning Experience Questionnaire (SLEQ) progressed this month through question validation and review, with an emphasis on ensuring that student feedback produces meaningful and usable information for instructors. Students participated in discussions on how questions are understood, whether language is clear, and what types of responses contribute to instructional improvement. The focus remains on ensuring that SLEQ questions are practical for students to answer and informative for faculty development. Together with ongoing conversations about teaching effectiveness, these initiatives reflect a broader effort to connect feedback, recognition, and policy in ways that strengthen teaching and learning through direct student participation.

Accessibility planning also continued to integrate into classroom practices, particularly through work with student groups and committees concerned with instructional design. The emphasis this month has been on proactive accessibility; structuring course materials, assessment formats, and learning supports in ways that reduce barriers before accommodations are required. This approach aligns accessibility planning with the broader teaching and assessment initiatives underway, connecting inclusive course design with clarity in evaluation and transparency in academic expectations.

### **Research Engagement, Provincial Advocacy, and the Expansion of Academic Opportunities**

Undergraduate research remains a developing area of this portfolio, with further conversations focused on reducing barriers to participation and increasing transparency in available opportunities. Current discussions include the potential development of centralized listings, clearer eligibility information, and mentorship pathways for students interested in entering research for the first time. Strong enthusiasm across colleges reflects a shared vision of undergraduate research as an integral part of academic life at USask, building on the successes of programs such as SURE and expanding experiential learning as a core academic opportunity.

Work on the provincial lobbying document was finalized this month, emphasizing investments that support academic quality through direct student benefits. Central areas of advocacy include the expansion of Open Educational Resources (OERs), strengthened student academic supports linked to wellbeing, and enhanced alignment in academic integrity expectations across Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions. This work affirms the education direction of the portfolio: advancing academic policy, instructional quality, and learning resources that support student access, understanding, and academic success.

Looking ahead to the winter term, efforts will continue to focus on student-focused implementation of assessment reforms, refinement of SLEQ tools, support for responsible AI usage in learning, and expanded recognition and research opportunities. The upcoming USSU Excellence Awards and Undergraduate Research Symposium will provide further platforms for student-centred academic engagement, reinforcing a commitment to accessible and informed participation in the university's academic landscape.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Norah Jacob". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Norah" on the top line and "Jacob" on the bottom line.

**Norah Jacob**  
Vice-President (Academic Affairs)  
University of Saskatchewan Students' Union

## **Vice-President Student Affairs**

### **Events**

The USSU has been fairly quiet for events in the last month, with the wrap-up of the fall term and finals taking up most of December. Throughout this month, student engagement has been focused on supporting students through finals. We have hosted a Holiday Movie Night and recurring Cocoa & Colouring hangouts to encourage students to take regular breaks. We have also continued our biannual Final Exam Goodie Bags, including stationery and snacks, distributed at the main libraries on the Saskatoon campus, and have added bags for the Prince Albert Campus. This month is being used to plan and prepare for students' return to campus following winter break. We are working closely with other campus groups and departments, such as the Office of Sustainability and the International Student and Study Abroad Centre to organize some such events.

### **Student Concerns**

The USSU has been working consistently with university departments to address student concerns in a variety of areas. Main areas of concern include parking and transportation, fees and payment, and student navigation. Communication is the main source of these concerns, and the USSU continues to advocate for increased consideration of student perspectives in decision-making and how these decisions are communicated to the campus community.

### **University Students' Council**

University Students' Council committees continue to be an exceptional source of student engagement and help inform the USSU on pressing student issues. The committees chaired by the VP Student Affairs position have focused primarily on organizing initiatives to improve visibility of USSU supports to students. The Student Life and Sustainability Committee has planned additional free Style Swaps and performance events for the coming semester, while the International Student Advisory Committee has opted for community-building events and collaborations with Career Services to better serve International Students seeking work in Canada.

### **USSU Centres**

The USSU Centres have become quieter throughout November, with the exception of the Food Centre. The Pride Centre hosted Trans Awareness Week from November 17-21, with Trans Day of Remembrance taking place on November 20th. The Food Centre has paused the Fresh Market for December, but has seen a significant increase in emergency hamper orders, as is usual during finals season. The Women's Centre, Help Centre, and Student Crew have continued with their regular activities and planning for the Winter Term.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily Hubick".

**Emily Hubick**

Vice-President (Student Affairs)

University of Saskatchewan Students' Union