Ongoing / Continuing Work

1. Board of Governors

BOG last met September 24th. I can now openly comment however on an extremely exciting development. After months of consultation and work led by Dr. Catherine Cook and her team, the University of Manitoba will soon initiate the position of Vice-President Indigenous! There were a number of other recommendations in this report as well, to ensure this position is properly supported throughout the university and in senior leadership. If these recommendations are followed through on I think this is a really positive step towards decolonization of the academy.

2. Presidential Search Committee

The Presidential Search process is close to finalizing its recommendation, and much more will be made public in short order. I will provide further comment when possible but will never be able to reveal information about other candidates, or the deliberations of the committee. Regardless of the final result, I feel greatly honoured to have had the chance to serve on this extremely impactful committee. It is my hope that whoever is chosen will take seriously the feedback we received from our consultations, and will work to transform this institution in all aspects. However, I hope more than anything that they will work tirelessly to lead the university towards becoming the leader in Indigenous education inside and outside of the classroom in this country.

3. Open Education Week

This week is Open Access Week! In light of the federal election happening this week however, we are running UMSU’s inaugural Open Education Week next week from Oct 30 – Nov 1. This week will feature an open educational resource book fair, a pop up event for faculty members to learn more about OER, a social media campaign for students to pledge their support to #OpenUpUofM, and information for students and faculty on all manner of ways to make course materials more open and more affordable.

4. Federal Election / Federal Lobbying

On Oct. 21st we had a federal election. I want to commend Sarah, our staff, and all our volunteers on the effort they put in during our GOTV campaign. We are still awaiting some incoming pledges from student associations but we had over 1000 students pledged to vote!
The next government provides a unique opportunity for us to make our voice heard, as all parties will have a chance to have their say on policy directives in a minority government. As Vice-Chair of UCRU, I will be working alongside Sarah and U15 University Student Unions across Canada to put our issues at the forefront during our lobby week tentatively scheduled for early February. Sarah and I will also be attending CASA’s Policy/Strategy Conference in November in the lead up to contributing to their lobby week also tentatively scheduled for February.

5. Sustainability

We held our first meeting of the SWG’s Strategic Planning subcommittee last week and I am very excited to begin work on consultations and guiding UMSU towards a strategic plan for the next several years to help us work towards being a more sustainable organization in all facets of our operations from events, to businesses, to our office practices, to our lobbying work. We hope to present this plan for ratification by the board by the end of the term so if you have any thoughts on this ahead of time please share them with me or consider joining the group!

We are also hosting a campus cleanup alongside numerous other student organizations Friday October 25th from 1-4pm. It’s expected to be a beautiful day outside and we hope to see a lot of you there!

Lastly, I am working with UMFA and the GSA towards passing similar positions to ours on emissions reduction. From there, I’d like us to craft a joint letter to petition the university to allocate funding towards a feasibility study of these emissions targets in its next budget.