



Advocacy:

- UM Administration:
 - International student healthcare
 - Urged us to push the government for a “free” option
 - Provided a copy of our proposal, hoping for feedback
 - Later on, I reached out, asking for a letter of support, which was provided and responded to by Min. Jon Reyes
 - Bill 33
 - Urged them to stay cautious and keep fighting against it
 - We agree on disliking PBF of any kind
 - Mental health
 - 3 years of social anxiety and pandemic depression coming our way
 - Discussed the possibility of partnering on our efforts for students' mental health
 - Administrations goals
 - Bringing students back
 - Anti-racism work
 - Covid safety and safe return
 - Looking into a vaccine clinic on campus
 - Course Delivery mode working group
 - Met to discuss how to safely go forward as a university
 - Discussed classifications for courses – what kind of classes can we offer safely going forward
 - Printing requirements at UM
 - We spoke to the administration about starting the process of prohibiting professors from requiring the printing of notes or packages.
 - This adds an extra cost to students that A. UMSU cannot afford to pay the total on, and also, B. is absolutely unnecessary.
 - Furthermore, we will be including a question in the annual survey around the requirements of printing in order to evaluate student need!
 - The UMSU Service center now offers printing for small jobs – if necessary, please come visit!
 - International student financial aid
 - I had a meeting with Jane Lastra and Laurie Schnarr to continue our discussions surrounding international student financial aid
 - Looking into re-branding the whole system and possibly increasing the amount of money in that fund based on need
 - Period Product pilot proposal ask
 - We submitted a proposal to the UM administration to install period product dispensers in University Center
 - This is being worked on with the admin team – specifically Laurie Schnarr
 - We are currently looking into costing the pilot out!
 - Film program issues



- Charli, our SOFASA rep had brought up to me that there were issues with the media lab and its organization, as well as some overall scheduling issues with the Film program.
 - I reached out to the university and was provided a meeting with some members from the film program. We had a meeting with them, Victoria, Charli and myself, and discussed the program and what we can do to fix the issues
- Government:
- International student healthcare
 - We have met with Minister Jon Reyes twice, and he is hopefullu going to get us a meeting with Shared health to continue to push our proposal through government
 - Reached out to the premier, as well as Minister Gordon on the topic – waiting to hear back from Minister Gordon as we had initially been sent to Min. Reyes and we are now being told that it is Min. Gordons portfolio.
 - Due to non-response from the government, I had drafted and sent a letter inviting the leaders of the Liberal and NDP (Dougald Lamont and Wab Kinew), parties to sit and help us create a path to get international students healthcare
 - We met with both leaders and their teams to work on this – They are allied
 - Ran into Madhur Sharma the other day and he tried to allude to the fact that the minister would be uninterested in providing International Students with proper access to healthcare
 - I made it very clear that we have to keep advocating for such and pushed back when he said “international students have healthcare”
 - We cannot accept the bare minimum as the maximum!! Not to mention the fact that international students under MISHP have subpar access to healthcare of a private nature and it costs them lots of money! This is unacceptable!
 - Met with the minister to talk about International Students Healthcare
 - Presented him with our official MAPSS Proposal (reinstatement at 0\$)
 - Meeting was myself, Victoria, Keji, Minister Reyes and Madhur Sharma
 - Had to educate the Minister on the fact that MISHP was NOT a good alternative to provincial healthcare
 - He was unaware that there were “gaps” in the plan
 - Was hoping that we would leave the meeting with a final answer, instead, we were told that the minister would schedule a meeting with Shared Health as well as ourselves to discuss the proposal.
 - Not what we wanted, but still a great step forward.
 - I have since sent a follow up, and I am waiting on a response.
 - The minister had tried to push the responsibility off of himself, however, I told him that *“the premier and the minister of health had said that you were the one*



responsible. So, either they are wrong, or you are the one we should be going to about this. Regardless, tell us what we should do next, and we will make it happen.”

- Letter from President Benarroch and Laurie Schnarr
 - *I have attached this letter to my board report*
 - *I had sent a letter to President Benarroch asking for him to provide us a letter of support for International Students being reinstated back onto the provincial plan.*
 - *We were not expecting much, as it is risky for the university to take a stand against what the province provides.*
 - *However, to our surprise, this letter was sent to the minister and we had received a letter with the following:*

- *“Dear Minister Reyes,*

We are writing on behalf of the University of Manitoba community in support of the Manitoba Alliance of Post-Secondary Students' proposal to reinstate free provincial health coverage for international students.

As the largest and most comprehensive university in the province, the University of Manitoba is home to the largest number of international students in Manitoba. They make up over 21 per cent of our student population, provide diverse perspectives and experiences, contribute to research work, and enrich the overall student experience. In addition to our own international students, we also host international students participating in programs offered by the International College of Manitoba (ICM), many of whom later choose to continue their studies as UM students. In today's globalized economy, academic, and social interaction with students from around the world make our campuses and our classes more vibrant, diverse, and dynamic, enriching our learning environment.

Beyond their contributions to our campuses, international students make significant societal and economic contributions to Manitoba and Canada. International students contribute approximately \$21 billion a year to the Canadian economy and over \$380 million to our province. They also support the Canadian economy by addressing our short, medium and long-term labour market needs across a broad range of sectors.

While we are encouraged by the recent announcement by the federal government, temporarily lifting the 20-hour-per-week cap on the number of hours post-



TO: UMSU Membership
FROM: President, Jaron Rykiss
DATE: December 2022
RE: **AGM Report, Fall 2022**

secondary students are allowed to work off-campus, they continue to face financial hardships with limited access to financial aid, which can create many challenges during their course of study. Removing access to free provincial healthcare coverage has only added to their financial burden. Furthermore, it creates a patchwork of plans for these students with no guarantee their coverage will remain affordable or comparable with what Manitobans receive. This results in confusion among international students and impacts the perception of our sector and province.

Reinstating all international students into the provincial healthcare plan would ensure that they are treated as valued members of our society, and that Manitoba remains a welcoming, attractive, and affordable destination for international students in highly competitive market, for years to come.

Sincerely,

Michael Benarroch and Laurie Schnarr”

- Performance Based Funding/Post-Secondary Accountability Framework
 - UMSU is vehemently against any form of PBF
 - We participated in a consultation over the summer with the government, and told them that we do not support the measure
 - Recently, in an interview after the Throne Speech, Premier Steffanson mentioned that they would be looking to take a step back from the initiative, even though she mentioned that she supported it.
- CASA:
 - Attended 3 conferences for CASA
 - Foundations – where we learned about the organization and set priorities for the year
 - Policy and Strategy – Where we developed policy asks and strategized our campaign for the year
 - Advocacy Week – Where our team, along with over 90 student delegates from around the country, met with over 130 politicians to discuss asks from Mental health, to Canada Student Grants!
- Iran
 - The executive team, as well as Kunal - our international student rep, Christine – our Womens rep and several Iranian students, all worked together to create a statement in support of students affected by the murder of Zhina Amini in Iran



TO: UMSU Membership
FROM: President, Jaron Rykiss
DATE: December 2022
RE: **AGM Report, Fall 2022**

- However, statements are often not enough, so in addition to a statement, we created a letter that students were able to send to their professors, explaining why they would be taking advantage of the UM Student Absence Policy, and provided it to students
- We also connected with the UM administration to ask for fee extensions, this has been formally approved and any student who is experiencing financial stress due to the events in **Iran has been automatically approved for a deferral on their tuition and student fees!!**
- Also, at the request of Kunal, I connected with UMFA to urge them to send you a letter to their members asking them to be compassionate towards Iranian and international students right now.
 - They sent out an email recently and they included that message!! This is another great step towards supporting our Iranian student community through this tough time!

BOD and Accountability:

- Exec Accountability
 - Met with Ria, Judicial Board Chair to talk about accountability
 - Discussed increasing the amount of board evaluations to 3 times per year
 - 1 at the end of summer, 1 at the end of fall, and one at the end of winter (just before elections)
 - Instead of the regular written executive evaluations, we will be switching to an interview style evaluation. Each exec will sit with the Judicial Chair and the Vice Chair to discuss all of their questions about the team
- EDI and Community Reps:
 - Tracy and I reached out individually to every community representative to invite them for an appointment with us to discuss individual community support
 - The only way that we can continue to make UMSU more equitable and supportive of individual communities, is if we hear directly from those communities on what we can be doing better to support them!
 - If anyone on the board has additional concerns that their faculty or community would like to provide, I would love for you to email me!! I would love to arrange a meeting to discuss what we can do to better advocate and support you! (pres@umsu.ca)
 - To anyone I have already spoken to, Carly will be looking to schedule these meetings! All that I ask is that you come prepared with some issues you would like UMSU to tackle and we can work together to find good solutions or efforts we can take!
 - In response to feedback from our meeting with UMSU's Indigenous Students representative and Some members of UMISA, I have given our team the directive of mandating EDI training every single year for UMSU Staff and Executives
 - We are also evaluating how to effectively implement this for our BOD!
 - This is a great step towards true EDI, but we need to continue working!



- We are also looking into doing an EDI audit of our Bylaws to ensure that they do not create any additional barriers to engagement for any students.
 - The goal of this would be to create a relationship between UMSU and Ka Ni Kanichihk to hold more meetings, continue learning, and strengthen the bedrock of our knowledge.
- Student association supports
 - I have reached out to almost every single student association on campus in order to schedule meetings to discuss supports.
 - If you have received an email from me, please respond right away so that we can schedule a meeting to discuss how UMSU can better support you
 - If people don't respond, then we won't be able to schedule these meetings and it will be hard for UMSU to properly listen to the concerns that your associations might have!
 - Even if you do not have any major concerns, I would still love to sit down to discuss what we can be doing better, worse, or even something new!
 - If you have not been reached out to, please let me know and I will send an email to your association ASAP!
 - So far I have met with ASBC, CSA, U1SC, NSA, SWSA, SPCSA, and more!
 - These meetings are a great way to ensure accountability for UMSU and ensure supports for our groups on campus!

Mental Health:

- MyStudentWellbeing – MSW Partnership
 - Sat down with MyStudentWellbeing which specializes in providing virtual mental health counseling in order to reduce the wait times that exist in the SCC on campus.
 - Completely covered by Health and Dental plan
 - Super simple to use
 - Direct billing – provides student numbers and they take care of the rest
 - Manitoba based and founded by a UM Alum!
 - Provides virtual counselling by accessing the fund that each student is entitled to through Student Care – No extra cost (unless you go over the allotted amount)
- Mental Health Working Group - MHWG
 - Struck over the summer
 - Aims to provide recommendations for student mental health services and support
 - A couple projects being worked on are:
 - Creating a comprehensive list of all Mental Health resources on campus and in our community
 - Creating a Module for UM Learn that helps to ensure students and professors are understanding mental health problems properly
 - More events surrounding mental health



- More understanding and accessibility surrounding mental health at the university
 - And more!
- Student Counselling Center - SCC
 - Sat down with David Ness, and he had highlighted that only 4 counsellors at the SCC can offer documentation for SAS, met with Carolyn Christie from SAS and we are looking into the process of changing that
 - Since, we have learned that they have started the process of onboarding a racialized counsellor to help ensure that students can feel more comfortable talking to a counselor at the Center.
- Carolyn Christie – SAS Director
 - Discussed how we can approach increasing the number of counsellors who can offer mental health related documentation to students
 - Also discussed how we can increase test-center capabilities
 - Still in the process of evaluating both of these
- Compass Mental Health
 - Met with them a couple of times
 - We decided not to partner with them
 - Don't offer counselling with registered mental health professionals – more of a holistic approach, might be helpful but Console (studentCare) offers better options and a similar pitch (also cheaper for students)
- Movember Campaign
 - Created a campaign for November surrounding those who Identify as Male and their mental health, prostate and Testicular cancer
 - Looked to raise money for the official Movember foundation, which provides a large amount of funding for research surrounding these three areas of development
 - Three out of every four suicides in Canada are male, meaning 75% of all Canadian suicides are by men.
 - Worked with Tracy to create a campaign throughout november
 - moustache/beard updates, Cookies to raise money and more
- ADHD interview
 - Did an interview with some Nursing students to talk about their campaign they are working on surrounding mental health and learning disabilities.
 - I spoke about my experiences with ADHD and provided some insight into what it looks like for me and many people in the community.

Community work:

- Indigenous Students Art Program - ISAP:
 - I wanted to create an initiative to commission Indigenous Student artists to create work to hang around UC. This project was started over the summer, and the form went out recently



- Met with Breanna from SOFASA to discuss perspective as well as gain information about artwork metrics and benchmarks as well as cost per painting
- I reached out to many UM stakeholders to receive consultation and advice on how to proceed
- Emailed Tannis Campbell to discuss where we could hang the artwork in UC in addition to UMSU businesses.
- Spoke to all UMSU business managers in order to figure out where we could hang artwork in our own spaces
- International Student Guide - ISG:
 - The international student guide is being worked on. If you have any ideas for things we should include, or if you have any ideas for questions that would help us to gain the international student perspective, feel free to email me, pres@umsu.ca.
 - Met with UMSU's Marketing team to discuss how to create it, and we have already drafted over 20 pages of resources for international students (as well as domestic) to use as a resource
 - Sent out a survey to international students discussing what they would want to see from this guide
 - Received lots of responses, and implemented many new pages in the guide
- Womens only time @ Joyce Fromson Pool
 - Sent an email to ensure that Women's only time was continuing, and discussed the opportunity to institute that at the pool as well as the ALC
 - Myself and Tracy had a meeting with the team over at the Joyce Fromson pool and the ALC to figure out ways that we can increase Womens only time at these facilities
 - This was recently confirmed at the Joyce Fromson pool! More information is available on @studentsofumsu on Instagram
- Hire A Bison – HAB:
 - Currently in the process of evaluating what way we can implement Hire A Bison into our current processes, also discussing what we could do to make it a stand-alone app or website. More info coming soon
 - Including questions about this in the Annual Member Survey to gauge student interest before investing money into the platform
- Annual member survey
 - We have drafted a survey that we are looking to send out to our general membership in January, it covers everything from events coordination to spiritual spaces on Bannatyne campus.
 - We will be looking to tie in some giveaways as per in the past, to ensure that students fill it out. It will be super crucial that you all push this! UMSU cannot properly support its student body if we don't have the data that comes from this survey
 - In the meanwhile, if you think of anything important that you would like to see included in the survey, please let us know!
- Bison Bash – Fall Orientation
 - Huge hit
 - Thousands of students engaged



TO: UMSU Membership
FROM: President, Jaron Rykiss
DATE: December 2022
RE: **AGM Report, Fall 2022**

- All thanks to Elishia and Annelies, our Marketing manager
- All of the events were a massive success.
- Canadian Federation of Students Referendum:
 - Since 2018, the UMSU Board of Directors had voted to take steps to leave the CFS every two years, as outlined in the UMSU Act (a piece of MB Provincial legislation)
 - For the first time, we held a referendum on continued membership in the CFS and Students voted to leave the organization
 - Our referendum had started, but due to CFS filing an injunction to prevent us going any further, we had to halt operations. However, CFS lost the case and then tried to appeal it, they lost a second time and the referendum was allowed to proceed.

Sustainability:

- Carpool parking stalls
 - Spoke to Cameron Neufeld from parking services
 - Created 40 new stalls for the fall semester
 - They are working wonderfully!
- Fairtrade Certification for Fort Garry campus
 - Spoke to Sustainability services on campus to start the process of getting campus fairtrade certified
 - UM Dining was closed for summer so we couldn't start the process until fall
 - UMSU businesses are Direct trade, so we are all good here.
 - This was something that the Uni was looking into before the pandemic and had to put a stop to due to online learning.
 - I reached out and we are in the process of implementing this change.
- Bannatyne parking options
 - Spoke to Grydypark – an option that rents out spaces and sells them back to people at a discounted rate, about setting up shop near Bannatyne for students
 - This partnership is tabled at the moment, as the UM Parking team wants to ensure that before they enter into something, that it is properly established
- SEUM Community Cleanup Event
 - We spent an afternoon cleaning up everywhere from Lakeshore Park, to Bison drive. Picking up everything from empty Tim's cups, to shopping receipts and plastic bags!
 - According to [@cbcmantoba](https://www.cbcmanitoba.com), "The City of Winnipeg website notes that between 2011 and 2016, waste collection on a per capita basis decreased by 22 per cent, while recycling and composting had both increased, with composting statistics rising by 221 per cent." We cannot be complacent about our city! Trash on the side of the road can suffocate natural plant and animal life, destroying the environment of our city!

CONCLUSION:



University
of Manitoba
STUDENTS'
UNION

TO: UMSU Membership
FROM: President, Jaron Rykiss
DATE: December 2022
RE: **AGM Report, Fall 2022**

- Our term is not over and we are going to continue fighting hard for students! This job is the most wonderful thing, and on behalf of the executive committee, I want to thank all students for allowing us to support you in this way.
- If you have any questions, please email me pres@umsu.ca, shoot me a message on instagram @jaronrykiss or even call my office line +1-204-474-6519