



TO: UMSU Annual General Meeting
FROM: President, Jaron Rykiss
DATE: March 30, 2023
RE: **Report to the AGM, March 2023**

AGM 2022 - First half of the term:

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



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- 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



University
of Manitoba
STUDENTS'
UNION

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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-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 the international student rep, and 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
 - 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



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- 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:
 - o Tracy and I reached out individually to every community representative to invite them for an appointment with us to discuss individual community support
 - o 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!
 - o 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)
 - o 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!
 - o In response to feedback from our meeting with UMSUs 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.
 - o 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
 - o 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!



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- 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!
- o So far I have met with ASBC, CSA, UISC, NSA, SWSA, SPCSA, and more!
- o These meetings are a great way to ensure accountability for UMSU and ensure supports for our groups on campus!

Mental Health:

- MyStudentWellbeing – MSW Partnership
 - o 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!
 - o 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
 - o Struck over the summer
 - o Aims to provide recommendations for student mental health services and support
 - o 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
 - o 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



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- 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



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- 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 UMSUs 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



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- 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
 - 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 Grydpark – 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



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- o 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!
- o According to [@cbcmantoba](#), "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!

AGM 2023 – Second half of the term:

- **Advocacy:**

- o International student healthcare
 - Released an open letter to Premier Stefanson – asking for help with providing international students healthcare
 - Find it here:
https://www.instagram.com/reel/CpDmMYmJVdF/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
 - Had a meeting with Adam Topp, CEO of Shared Health MB
 - He seemed to be in support of healthcare for international students, mainly because providing it will keep more international students in the med programs in the province!
 - Waiting for a response and follow up.
- o Period Product Pilot program
 - Victoria, Christine, Myself and Laurie Schnarr. Have the official confirmation that the university is starting to provide period products to students in roughly 10 bathrooms across the Fort Garry, Bannatyne and William Norie UM Campuses.
 - UMSU has been advocating for this advancement for the last several years, and we are so excited to know that we are able to provide this service to students!
 - It is a pilot program, but we are hoping that it can continue past next year and be a resource for students to come!
- o OERs and student financial aid
 - From UMSUs Pre-Budget submission, it has been tentatively confirmed that the university is going to be providing roughly an additional \$3



Million for Bursaries, and \$450,000 for OERs! (Open educational resources)

- This is a HUGE win!!
- Dietetics program @ UM
 - During my office hours, a student named Graeme came to me to discuss an issue regarding the Dietician program being removed
 - I brought up these issues surrounding this program not being created, with Laurie Schnarr, and we evaluated potential ways to repair the problem.
 - In the end, we worked with NECO, and the UM Admin, and the program has since been greenlit by the provincial government! This is a huge win for those students!
-
- Digital Strategy committee
 - New committee
 - Discussing the plan to continue advancing the UM online and digital strategy
 - Chaired by Mark Torchia
 - I brought up OERs as well as started a discussion on the modernization of Aurora
- Indigenous Language Courses
 - Sent letters to President Benarroch, Laurie Schnarr, Carrie Miller and Catherine Cooke
 - Looking to get them moved to a more accessible time, and look to increase funding for the program
 - Met with Ishkode, Carla Loewen, Carry Miller, and others
 - Discussed the Indigenous Language Courses at UM and proposed the solution of moving those dates and times so that it works better for students
 - They said that they are going to work on it internally and ask for support from UMSU when needed for consultation!
- UM Strategic planning committee
 - Showed an environmental scan of the country, seeking areas where the UM succeeds, and where it could do better
 - Concerns of DEI were brought up, looking to have them be incorporated as well
 - Conversation surrounding micro-credential implementation at the university
- UM Budget Advisory Committee



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- It has been announced that the UM will be receiving an increase of 10.8% to its budget for the year
- This comes at a time when the PC, MB government is potentially looking to secure favour for the coming election
- Regardless, this is welcome news
- Tuition is going to be capped at 2.75% across the board, with no variance or discrepancy between the different university groups (be it: International students, part-time students, etc.)
- UMs budget going forward will hopefully account for any discrepancies in enrollment
- **CASA**
 - National Advocacy:
 - In the CASA National Advocacy Committee, we created a campaign called #HalfYourCSG in which we discuss the potential slashing of CSGs that students will face if the federal government does not change their current path.
 - More information is available here: https://www.casa-acae.com/casa_launches_halfyourcsg_campaign
 - We had put in an official bid for UMSU to host the AGM for CASA in April 2024, however, unfortunately, the University of Alberta was voted in. I hope that in the future, UMSU is able to host a conference and show off Winnipeg and Manitoba as a whole.
 - Advocacy week 2022
 - Meetings:
 - MP Terry Duguid
 - Discussed Reconciliation, Mental Health, and overall student health
 - Asked for a formal invite to meet with UMSU. I have drafted a letter to send him
 - MP Larry Maguire
 - Met with his staffer as he was sick
 - Discussed International student work hours, work permits and more.
 - He mentioned the immigration committee and how we can look towards creating a better pathway for international students
 - MP Lea Gazan



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- Discussed Mental Health, PSSSP and Grad student asks
 - Minister Mona Fortier
 - Discussed Mental Health, PSSSP, International student work hours, etc. And Canada student grants
- Senator Mary McCallum
 - I had the opportunity to sit down with Senator Mary McCallum and chat about some student issues.
 - We were supposed to chat during CASAs advocacy week; however, we ended up not being able to, due to her being sick at the time.
 - We talked about mental health supports, access to education for Indigenous learners, and more funding for student grants.
- Had additional meetings with non-Manitoba members.
 - Overall, Advo week was a smashing success and showed the true power of the student movement. The ability to get in the room with federal leaders means that we can make changes.
 - Fantastic once in a lifetime opportunity!!
- Pre Budget-Submission
 - We submitted our Pre-budget submission to the university to request additional funding in certain areas. Based on results from our annual member survey, as well as general student questions and concerns.
 - We want to make sure that we don't just ask for funding without proper understanding of where that funding goes
 - I sat in on the Budget committee meetings and made sure to note my concern that they seem to be looking at the university as a business. Our pre-budget submission should be an accurate representation of where we need funding to go in order to ensure that this does not continue.
 - Areas of focus: Student mental health supports, waste management on campus, security services, Food bank and student supports, and potentially some work on international student aid
- Operations and maintenance - (formerly physical plant)
 - had a meeting with Steve Cumpsty, the head of the department, and brought up the issues that student associations have been having. He seemed extremely receptive and ready to support us.
 - I told him that wait times need to be addressed, and that there is a lack of respect.



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- He told me that if anyone notes any issues, that they should tell him directly. If you hear anything, please let me know.
- We also talked about snow clearing across campus. He told me that he would investigate that as well. Looking to increase the amount of clearing that is done.
- Grad Photos concern
 - A student had reached out to me a couple of months ago concerned that the University hires a contractor from Vancouver with poor ratings online to take grad photos at convocation
 - I sat down with Jeff Adams from the registrar's office to have a conversation about this
 - The university does not pay any money to hire this contractor, the only money exchanged is by students purchasing their photos
 - The photographers hired by this company are usually local, meaning that even though it is a Vancouver based company, that the support stays in Manitoba as well!
 - Suggested that we should ask students what they want to see, potentially survey them after this spring graduation
 - If they are happy, great! If students want a change, then Jeff agreed to look for a new provider.
- BOG – Southwood Development
 - Update from UM Board of governors
 - Passed motion to begin investigating contractors to create the Southwood development
 - In the next roughly 40 years, the development will turn land next to the university into around 10,000 living spaces, stores, relaxation areas, and access points for transportation.
 - This is incredibly exciting!
- Earthquake statement and relief – MSA
 - I had a meeting with Tracy and MSA, in which we discussed some steps that UMSU could take to support students in the wake of the earthquakes earlier this month.
 - We put out a statement and drafted a pre-written letter that students can provide their instructors regarding taking some time off because of the stress of the situation
 - It is all available here: <https://umsu.ca/news/earthquake-statement/>



- **BOD and Accountability:**

- Community rep room issue – Accessibility center
 - After discussing the issue with Caleigh, we decided that the accessibility center would move in order to ensure that the room was large enough to account for the student population and that it was accessible.
 - We are currently evaluating spaces, and we will hopefully provide them a new space by the end of year.
- BOD appointee removal process
 - When I ran, I promised to make it easier to remove an executive who isn't doing their job, Sophie and I began working on that process.
 - I asked for consultation from many schools around the country, to learn what they do and what works for them
 - Looking to bring this through the governance committee and then to the board for approval as soon as it is ready!
- Annual survey completed
 - We have created a final report to show students some of the key findings we noted in the survey! It should be published on the UMSU website, but if not yet, it will be soon.
- Transition
 - Now that the election is over, I will begin meeting with the newly elected team of UMSU executives to discuss transition
 - I have been preparing a document for a while now with information and important things that the president needs to know, and I hope to finish it in time to transition Tracy – The document is currently (as of March 23rd) roughly 30 pages long, and I am continuing to update it.
 - My goal is to attempt to create some institutional knowledge for the office of the president
- UMSU Governance work:
 - After the emergency Board meeting on Monday, March. 13th, Governance committee will be looking at the requests made by the BOD
 - I look forward to sharing the points of interest with the Governance committee and working to implement the proper changes to strengthen our UMSU elections process!

- **Mental Health**

- Mental Health Working Group
 - The mental health working group will be looking to create a list of recommendations for UMSU and the administration to work on for the



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next year. This will help with transitioning the next UMSU team and ensuring that people feel properly supported.

- UMSU put out our Mental health survey, which will help to inform the next UMSU team and our UM admin on the current state of student mental health on campus. Thank you for all of our responses!
- Student Wellness Center Consultation
 - I attended a consultation meeting with the team working on the new Student Wellness Center
 - At this meeting, we discussed the goals and objectives of the new space, and some concerns that folks have
 - It is funded by Bell Let's Talk, and the \$100,000 that they have provided will be used for upkeep of the program for a couple of years.
 - They have not found a space just yet
 - I noted that the space needs to not just be an index, it needs to have internal resources
 - Ex. Don't just say "go to the SCC"
 - We also noted that the space should be holistic! Not just for Mental health. We should be bringing in nutritionists, people from community health, kin-rec, and more!
 - Make sure students are supported from all angles
 - Even the idea of tackling lack of sleep by evaluating Nap Pods!
- Console 3.0
 - Laurie had mentioned an issue with Console creating backlog at the counseling center
 - Alluding to a prior in person possibility with EmpowerMe
 - I spoke to Alex, our Rep from StudentCare, and he noted that there was no in-person section of EmpowerMe, meaning that this issue couldn't be caused by the switch to console.
 - Furthermore, I believe that this is a simple miscommunication. Throughout covid, our counseling center provided an excellent service and methodology, however, the return to in-person classes has increased the need for in-person counseling, which means that the backlog which exists all over is now hitting our counseling center.
 - We are looking into potential ways to solve this; however, I believe that the best way, is for the federal government to follow through on its promise to provide \$500 Million to PSEs across Canada to create over 1200 mental health counselor positions.



- Important to note that there is now one new counselor at the SCC coming from a racialized background, which will hopefully provide some students a more comfortable experience through counselling.

- **Community work and EDI**

- UMSU Student Guide
 - Renamed international student guide
 - The reason for this is that while the guide is focused on international students, it also has information that could be valuable for domestic students.
 - Continuing to focus on ensuring as much information is available to help new students to the province/university
 - First draft has been completed as of March 23rd, and the final copy should be out by the end the semester
 - Going through documents and editing them
 - Connected with UMISO to gain perspective on what else needs to be included
 - This is a huuuuge project and one that I am so happy to finally finish up
- DEI Training
 - Met with Dana Connolly from Ka Ni Kanichihk.
 - She provided our full-time staff with DEI training and reconciliatory training as well
 - The goal is to have 3-4 meetings per year with her where she can help provide us more insight into DEI, as well as help us on our goal of making UMSU more accessible and community focused
 - Note: She had also mentioned that there is someone who evaluates their Bylaws with a lens of DEI, we are going to be in touch with that person too. Hoping that they will evaluate ours!
 - I want to ensure that we have a group investigate our bylaws to ensure that they are inclusive and support the wider community
 - Thomas and Sophie are helping me to evaluate potenital organizations to help evaluate the bylaws. More updates to come soon
- Security services
 - Discussed cameras on campus – Gordon noted that there is not much room in the budget
 - He did however note that he would increase security presence in specific dangerous locations on campus



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FROM: President, Jaron Rykiss
DATE: March 30, 2023
RE: **Report to the AGM, March 2023**

- Talked about winter orientation and how we can make it even safer for students
- Potential partnership with risk management and security services
- Indigenous Students Art Program - ISAP:
 - We hosted the first round of applications to the Indigenous Students' Art Program
 - I have created a bunch of documentation that we are going to hand down to the next team, and hopefully, they will start ISAP even earlier and ensure that it is more and more successful as time goes on!
- Land Acknowledgement Plaque
 - I had a meeting with Elder Norman Meade to ask for some guidance on creating a plaque for UC with the UMSU Land Acknowledgement on it
 - I passed him tobacco, and he accepted the offer, letting me know that he is more than happy to help out!
 - I am working on this with Amanda and Thomas and getting some perspective from Ishkode and Raven from UMISA!
 - Currently waiting on responses from local Indigenous artists who can help us to create the plaque.
- Bisons Walkathon for Childhood Cancer
 - SSA is working on their second annual walkathon for Childhood cancer, UMSU is hoping to partner and sponsor the event!
 - A preliminary meeting was held, and we are discussing internally what ways we can best support the event
 - I believe that the plan of eventually making it an UMSU event altogether is on the table, but for now, we want to support SSA in hosting their event as best we can!
- Hire A Bison
 - Proposal in the works
 - Finalizing details
 - We are going to provide it to the next Executive team, with hopes that they will carry on with the project!
 - the results of the annual survey showed that a high percentage of students would use the platform
 - We now need to evaluate implementation!

- **Meetings with Student Associations:**



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- Meetings with Student Associations
 - NSA:
 - No main issues might need support with coordinating events, but otherwise, very happy.
 - UMES:
 - Is happy about the Mandatory SV prevention training requirement but is concerned about the lack of sessions available for organizations and clubs. Tracy and her team are looking into solutions
 - Noted that we might need mandatory DEI training as well, we are evaluating this implementation, but I am hesitant to make any mandatory training without accounting for the great number of sessions that clubs and associations would need.
 - Admin support is huge, noting that CC and PP have been having issues with responding to students
 - Brought up the mask mandate, I noted that our survey will be out in January and that is the place for people to provide their feedback so that we will have data on the topic to bring to the administration
 - Asked for me to attend their Board meeting!
 - NOTE: if anyone wants myself or the team to attend a meeting for your council, please let us know! Email Cfrey@umsu.ca with dates!
 - ASBC:
 - Attended their Council meeting on Dec. 5th
 - SWSA
 - Continuing to work with them on strengthening the relationship between them and their faculty administration
 - Issues with physical plant and conference and catering. I connected with all involved parties and we are looking into how to solve the issues. This is not just a SWSA issue, I have heard it from many associations
 - UMISA
 - Met with UMISA and Elder Carl Stone to discuss the relationship between UMISA and UMSU.
 - We are looking to bolster the relationship and support UMISA properly.



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- Consultations are still on-going, and we will be looking to potentially change some of our bylaws to ensure proper support for the UM Indigenous Student community.
 - CHSA
 - Discussed governance, senate, opportunities for partnership, and working together to inform students in the next year
- **Sustainability:**
- Direct Trade certification
 - After months of waiting for a response, we learned that the university cannot make their services fair trade, as there are complications with Aramark. However, I have connected with Aramark to ensure that they start the process of looking at direct trade certification.
 - I had said that the process of looking into fair trade/direct trade certification was on hold, however, I had a meeting with Christie nairn from sustainability as well as a representative from Aramark to discuss this.
 - Aramark seemed interested in looking at how to implement the changes
 - Project isn't dead yet!
 - Manitoban Paper Waste:
 - Each week, I have noticed that hundreds upon thousands of papers from the Manitoban are not picked up, this is a huge sustainability concern. I emailed the Editor in Chief as well as Christie nairn and we are looking to have a meeting to figure out what UMSU can do to help cut down on this paper waste!
 - Potential solutions
 - Promotion of the Manitoban
 - Supports to help recycle the paper waste
 - Etc.
 - We had a meeting with the Manitoban and are hoping to schedule another one soon to continue the conversation surrounding sustainability. It is critical that we don't just leave everything to "recycling", because it does not actually solve the problems of sustainability we are experiencing. Cutting down is the most important first step.



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- **Wins of the year:**

○ **Work towards 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
- We have another meeting with the new Minister of Advanced Education, Sarah Guillimard, coming up, and we are looking forward to working with them to solve this issue!
- 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.



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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-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”

- Had a meeting with Adam Topp, CEO of Shared Health MB
 - He seemed to be in support of healthcare for international students, mainly because providing it will keep more international students in the med programs in the province!
- New Period Product Pilot program
 - Victoria, Christine, Myself and Laurie Schnarr, have the official confirmation that the university is starting to provide period products to students in roughly 10 bathrooms across the Fort Garry, Bannatyne and William Norie UM Campuses.



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- UMSU has been advocating for this advancement for the last several years, and we are so excited to know that we are able to provide this service to students!
- It is a pilot program, but we are hoping that it can continue past next year and be a resource for students to come!
- New OERs and student financial aid financial support
 - From UMSUs Pre-Budget submission, it has been tentatively confirmed that the university is going to be providing roughly an additional \$3 Million for Bursaries, and \$450,000 for OERs! (Open educational resources)
 - This is a HUGE win!!
- No Performance Based Funding/Post-Secondary Accountability Framework
 - We participated in a consultation over the summer with the government, and told them that we do not support the measure
 - 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.
 - Performance Based Funding is a problem for accessible and affordable post-secondary education, and we are happy to see it not implemented in Manitoba.
- Expansion of off campus International students working hours in Canada
 - International students will be able to work unlimited hours each week until the end of 2023.
 - More information here:
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/international-student-work-limit-ottawa-1.6614779>
 - This is a huge win, and it is one that CASA (The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations) was critical in achieving! Therefore, a win for them is a win for us and all students in Canada!
- New Dietetics program @ UM
 - I brought up these issues surrounding this program not being created, with Laurie Schnarr, and we evaluated potential ways to repair the problem.
 - In the end, we worked with NECO, and the UM Admin, and the program has since been greenlit by the provincial government! This is a huge win for those students!
- New Racialized Students Supports at the UM Student Counselling Center - SCC
 - 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.



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- Huge Win for students!
- Hosting of Womens only time @ Joyce Fromson Pool
 - The Joyce fromson pool, after meeting with us, announced that they are going to host Womens-Only-Time at the pool!
- Creation of additional carpool parking stalls on campus
 - Spoke to Cameron Neufeld from parking services
 - Created 40 new stalls for the fall semester
 - They are working wonderfully!
- Creation of the UMSU Student Guide
 - First draft has been completed as of March 23rd, and the final copy should be out by the end the semester
 - Going through documents and editing them
 - Connected with UMISO to gain perspective on what else needs to be included
 - This is a huuuuge project and one that I am so happy to finally finish up. My hope is that it will provide students for years to come with information about being a student at UM.
- Indigenous Students Art Program - ISAP:
 - We hosted the first round of applications to the Indigenous Students' Art Program
 - I have created a bunch of documentation that we are going to hand down to the next team, and hopefully, they will start ISAP even earlier and ensure that it is more and more successful as time goes on!
 - In the end, we will use this program to decorate our campus with wonderful, local, Treaty 1 artwork. And hopefully it will contribute to decolonizing UM and our community.
- Student Wellness Center Consultation
 - I attended a consultation meeting with the team working on the new Student Wellness Center
 - At this meeting, we discussed the goals and objectives of the new space, and some concerns that folks have
 - It is funded by Bell Let's Talk, and the \$100,000 that they have provided will be used for upkeep of the program for a couple of years. This money will help to create a holistic wellness space for students! Huge win!



University
of Manitoba
STUDENTS'
UNION

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Conclusion

- It's a bittersweet feeling submitting my second and final AGM report. However, I am so happy to announce all these wins and the amazing progress that our UMSU Board has achieved this year!!
- Thank you to all those who have helped get us to this point, and for all the hard work that everyone has put in.
- This isn't the last meeting for me as UMSU President, so I will hold my sentimentalities until then, but once again, wholeheartedly, thank you.