



University
of Manitoba
**STUDENTS'
UNION**

TO: UMSU Board of Directors
FROM: VP Advocacy, Liam Pittman
DATE: February 27, 2024
RE: **Report to the Board, February 29 2024**

New Updates

Student Leader Job Fair Attendance:

I participated in the Student Leader Job Fair, where I had the opportunity to interact with students and address inquiries related to my position. I took the opportunity to discuss the upcoming election and the introduction of new positions, providing clarity on the distribution of roles. Students were excited to understand the dynamics of these changes, I was able to engage with them to inform them on how they can get involved in UMSU and student leadership at the U of M and inform them of the changes with the current evolving student leadership structure.

Admission Appeals Committee

Another significant engagement involved participating in the Admissions Appeal Committee. The session revolved around determining the committee's jurisdiction over a student's appeal to enter a specific program. The committee engaged in thorough deliberation, considering all aspects of the appeal before reaching a unanimous conclusion. The decision ensured it was aligned with the committee's jurisdiction and its terms of reference.

Federal Advocacy

Tracy, Teresa, and I had the privilege of meeting with MP Terry Duguid and Federal Minister Marc Miller, who oversees Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship. We are



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happy to have had the pleasure of being one of the first teams to bring a Federal Minister to an UMSU specific meeting, in recent years.

The main-purpose of our meeting was to address and discuss the recently announced international student cap imposed by the federal government. Our conversation was not only productive but also crucial in advocating for the interests of international students and their role in the Canadian post-secondary education landscape.

One of the focal points of our discussion was highlighting the indispensable role that international students play in enriching the Canadian academic sphere. We emphasized to Minister Miller the importance of international students in contributing to the diversity, cultural roles, and academic richness of our post-secondary institutions.

The *Trusted Institutions Framework* was discussed, and we expressed our concern of ensuring that institutions do not reactively increase international student tuition costs. We stressed the importance of maintaining affordable education for international students, acknowledging the pivotal role they play in our educational ecosystem.

In response to the introduced cap on international students, we discussed the implementation and monitoring of a cap "Success" metric. This metric aims to ensure



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that the policy is not merely introduced blindly but has tangible, measurable outcomes.

We believe that tracking the success of the cap is essential to understanding its impact and making informed decisions regarding its effectiveness.

Furthermore, our discussion extended to the potential risk of institutions showing favoritism towards certain countries and regions, creating a sense of "undesirable" countries. We strongly urged Minister Miller to ensure equitable admissions and prevent the formation of biases that may negatively impact students from specific regions, including establishing a framework to encourage institutions to diversify their international-student admissions.

Our meeting with MP Terry Duguid and Minister Marc Miller was a proactive effort to advocate for the rights and well-being of international students. We remain committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse educational landscape in Canada, and we believe that our engagement with federal officials is paramount in shaping policies that reflect the best interests of domestic and international students, as well as Canadian post-secondary institutions.



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External Events & Meetings Attended

- Senate – Feb 07
- Student Leader Job Fair – Feb 08
- Red River College Meeting – Feb 12
- Card Making – Feb 13
- Student Advocacy Meeting – Feb 14
- Senate Executive committee – Feb 14
- Vice Provost meeting – Feb 15
- Student at large meeting – Feb 20
- Student Advocacy Meeting – Feb 21
- Meeting with Vice Provost – Feb 21
- Meeting with MP Duguid Min. Miller – Feb 21
- Student at Large meeting – Feb 21
- Presidential Forum – Feb 27
- OER Project Meeting – Feb 27