

SU Soapbox SU Soapbox

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Mike Walker, President

Students must be firmly in control of the Students' Union if it is to provide the services they want and the voice they need. The Students' Union has begun to lose sight of its primary purpose, serving students, and has turned into a bureaucracy isolated from them.

The financial health of the Students' Union has improved substantially in the past year, but services to students have been sacrificed - some services have been closed, others allowed to deteriorate. The Walker executive believes it is possible to control the Students' Union finances without ignoring student needs, and we will work to achieve that goal.

In addition, the Students' Union has fired two general managers in one year, and this shows there are serious structural problems that must be addressed. Ultimately, Students' Council and the executive should make the important decisions in consultation with the paid managers, and managers should not work in isolation from students.

Of course, a Students' Union must do more than sell beer and records to serve students in this time of government underfunding. Both the provincial and federal governments are cutting their support for all social services, including education. At the University of Alberta, we have seen, and will see, increasing evidence of the harmful effects of underfunding.

If we are to maintain educational standards at the U of A, we must have a strong voice at government levels and on campus. The university administration has been weak in its lobby for better funding and administrators are all too inclined to ask for what the government will find acceptable, rather than what the U of A needs to maintain the quality of this institution.

A strong Students' Union executive can pressure the administration into communicating to the government the real needs of the U of A. The Walker executive will provide the independent leadership to represent students on all issues.



David Vincent, VP Finance and Administration

The Students' Union is still experiencing financial difficulties and these difficulties must be addressed by the Vice-President Finance.

Financial decision makers must start to be responsive to, and responsible to, students. As v.p. finance, I will make financial decisions in consultation with the other vice-presidents and with student councillors to ensure student's needs are met and student input is maximized.

To achieve this, a reorganization of the Students' Union executive-management relationship is needed. Increasing student control and manager accountability will increase the information input from businesses to Students' Union executives and will facilitate good management decisions.

The Students' Union's financial position needs careful supervision and firm guidance, but the time for panic solutions has passed. Students should not have to suffer short-term service cuts when long term solutions are more farsighted and feasible. The Walker executive's financial policies will revitalize students services such as the exam registry that have suffered from hasty cuts. We will work towards responsibly controlling the debt, while maintaining a high level of services that genuinely serve students.



Dawn Noyes, VP Internal Affairs

Students' Union services should provide more than money to clubs and popcorn to students. It is important that strong links are formed between the clubs and the Students' Union, and these links are possible only if concerted, organized, efforts are made by the Vice-President Internal.

For example, clubs should be given assistance in planning activities, adequate

office space, and a club resource centre/workroom. These support services are all well within the tight financial resources of the Students' Union, and they will be a high priority for the Walker Executive.

Many other services are offered by the Students' Union, but unnecessary administrative complications have diminished the effectiveness of these areas. The Exam Registry and Student Advocate are both in need of major overhauls. The Information Desk should be reorganized to provide more than chewing gum to students, and the list of potential improvements goes on. The emphasis of the Walker Executive will be on cutting down the bureaucracy and providing accessible services catering to student needs.

Finally, the present ALCB regulations curtailing 3:00 p.m. socials are unreasonable and unacceptable. As Vice-President Internal, I will begin to pressure the university and the ALCB to reconsider their regulations.

Internal services are the most visible and direct benefits provided to students by the Students' Union. The Walker executive will give these services the increased attention they deserve.



Amanda LeRougetel, VP External

One of the Students' Union's main service functions is to represent students on the various decision making bodies on and off campus. These include the Board of Governors, General Faculties Council, and the provincial and federal governments. The Walker executive will provide students with a stronger voice on the issues of tuition indexing, government funding of the university and the student aid system.

The Walker executive strongly disagrees with the Board of Governor's recent policy to index tuition fees. We will lobby the government to freeze tuition fees until an independent study examining the effects of tuition fees on accessibility has been done.

The provincial government has consistently underfunded the university, and the result has been the deterioration of the quality of our education. The Walker executive will co-operate with the Federation of Alberta Students and the Canadian Federation of Students in lobby efforts at both the provincial and federal level for adequate funding of post-secondary education.

Alberta's student aid system must also be adapted to meet the financial needs of worthy students. The present loan/remission system has three basic flaws: it does not deal with the problem of students' debt load; does not meet the needs of students with limited resources; and does not help students who are not yet considered financially independent of their parents.

These and many other external issues

must be addressed clearly and forcefully. The Walker executive will give students that stronger voice.



Mark Hoye, VP Academic

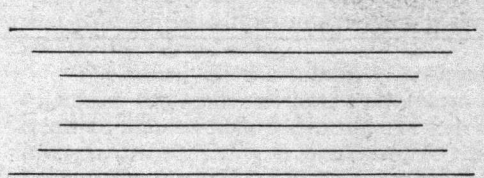
Students can and should have direct input into university decisions affecting them. As Vice President Academic with the Walker Executive I will ensure that the Students' Union helps students have an impact on these university policies.

Through strong Faculty Associations and Departmental Clubs, students will have solid representation on the various decision making councils. As well, strong Faculty Associations can provide vital student representation on General Faculties Council, the dominant academic policy body on campus.

Larger class sized, a shortage of computer facilities and shrinking library funding affects all students. Strong representation is important at all levels because students participate in the decisions that affect their future.

The Walker Executive will provide the various student groups with the support, encouragement and information they need to effectively represent students. We will also work to increase Students' Union academic services. Specifically, we will increase the efficiency and scope of the exam registry, strengthen the Student Advocate's position, and improve copying services. These changes will assist students in their academic work.

Students attend university to get an education, and the Walker executive will work to ensure that students' academic needs are met by the university and the Students' Union.



Another SU president rides into the sunset as another executive election draws to a close.

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