

Fall Semester Work Report
Chardaye Bueckert, SFSS President

Board Outreach

I conducted student outreach in a number of ways in the Fall Semester. I wrote an article which was published in the Peak welcoming new students to SFU and encouraging them to get involved with the SFSS. I participated in Fall Club Days at the Burnaby and Surrey Campuses, delivered speeches on behalf of the SFSS to over 1,000 new undergraduates during Fall Welcome Day as well as new approximately 500 new students living in Residence. I was personally unable to attend the opening of the new Indigenous Student Centre on September 2, 2014 as it conflicted with a class, but I arranged for an SFSS representative to attend. Alongside Arts Representative Brady Wallace, I coordinated mass student outreach through the SFSS Open Textbook Campaign petitioning initiative, where we were volunteers spoke with over 1,500 students waiting in line at the Bookstore, at SFSS Pancake Breakfast during the first week of classes, and at SFSS Club Days and encouraged them to sign our petition encouraging SFU to get involved with the BC Open Textbook Program. I also held regular office hours where many students came to raise concerns or ask for assistance.

I did external outreach on behalf of the Board in a number of ways. I attended the Burnaby Excellence in Business Awards on behalf of the SFSS where our organization was commended for our contribution to Burnaby. I also represented the SFSS at the Burnaby Board of Trade Holiday Lunch, the SFU Fair Trade Award, the Simon Fraser University Season Gala, and the SFU Diwali Gala, and internationally in Washington, D.C. at OpenCon 2014 (more details below).

Committee Involvement

I attended many active committees of the SFSS as an ex-officio member in the Fall. My main involvement was in the Advocacy Committee, the Accessibility Fund Advisory Committee, and the Executive Committee (which I chair), although I attended meetings of the following committees: Financial and Administrative Services, Events, Granting, Faculty and At Large Member, and Constitution and Policy Review. I also attempted to call a meeting of the Remuneration Advisory Committee to discuss changes to policy around childcare reimbursement for SFSS volunteers, but the committee did not have an adequate number of seats filled to call a quorate meeting.

I continued to represent the SFSS on a number of committees involving SFU. An important such committee is the Joint Operations Group (JOG), which I co-chair. This is a joint committee of the Graduate Student Society, SFU Student Services, and the SFSS. In the Fall Term, I raised several important issues, including the issues in SFU Residences, the inavailability of child care at the Surrey and Vancouver campuses, plans for childcare in the proposed Surrey Campus Expansion, the expansion of the SFSS Emergency Food Bank

Program to Surrey and Vancouver, collaborating to encourage students to vote in the 2014 Lower Mainland Municipal Elections and the 2015 Federal Elections, and the University's stance on gender-exclusive fraternities and sororities at SFU. I also requested a special meeting with the Executive Directors of the Surrey and Vancouver campuses to discuss issues specific to the Surrey and Vancouver campuses, such as lack of study space. Additionally, I continued to sit on the SFU 50th Anniversary Steering Committee as well as the SFU Sustainability Mobility Advisory Committee in the Fall Term. Although not a formal committee, I also continued to have monthly meetings between SFU President Andrew Petter, the Associate Vice President, Students, and the Coordinating and External Relations Officer of the Graduate Student Society.

Working Groups/Projects/Initiatives

Advocacy:

- Open Textbook Campaign - Alongside Arts Representative Brady Wallace, I continued to lead the Open Textbook Campaign Working Group. The Fall saw a great deal of activity, including the aforementioned petitioning outreach, meetings and follow up with the SFU Faculty Association regarding ways to encourage faculty members to utilize free open textbooks, meeting with the SFU Teaching and Learning Centre about integrating open textbooks into the Canvas learning management system, meeting with the Dean of Libraries about raising awareness of open textbooks amongst librarians, and drafting and delivering a question at the SFU Senate regarding SFU's low involvement in the BC Open Textbook Program. Brady and I delivered a presentation to SFSS Council and the SFSS Faculty and At Large Committee about the Open Textbook Campaign and prepared Open Textbook Information Kits which we asked representatives to present to Department and Faculty Curriculum Committees. I also spoke at a very well attended panel event about Open Textbooks as part of Open Access Week, which raised awareness of the cost of traditional textbooks and the benefits of open textbooks amongst approximately 40 teachers, librarians, and administrators. Sustained or increased funding for the BC Open Textbook Program was also an important portion of the Provincial Budget Submission I prepared on behalf of the SFSS. This work has translated into over 2,000 student signatures on our Open Textbook Petition (a strong indication of raised student awareness of the program), strong relationship with important stakeholders across SFU who now support our campaign, and discussion of the BC Open Textbook Program at the Arts, Science, and Communications, Arts, and Technology Faculty Curriculum Committees. These are important accomplishments, but the one I am most excited about is that the Spring 2015 semester saw the first known uses of open textbooks at SFU (indicated by students printing open textbooks through SFU Document Solutions), a major milestone and an early goal of our working group.
- OpenCon 2014 - I had the honour and privilege of attending OpenCon 2014 on behalf of the SFSS alongside Brady from November 14-18, 2014. This exclusive conference

brought together open education, open access, and open data proponents from across the globe together to learn and collaborate. I learned a great deal from OpenCon and both Brady and I made valuable connections that can support future advocacy work of the Society. More details can be found in my full conference report at:

<https://docs.google.com/a/sfss.ca/document/d/1Rb4uUpxVmLpC1J-ODR85adF3KOT6Ud1Y0jWORR40ZWQ/edit>

- Provincial Budget Submission - I initiated, researched, prepared, and presented a report to the Select Standing Committee on Government Finances and Services on behalf of the SFSS. This is a committee that makes recommendations to the provincial Ministry of Finance, government, which determines the majority of funding for SFU, and therefore has great importance to students. I addressed 4 main issues: core institutional funding at SFU, funding for the BC Open Textbook Program, deferred maintenance at SFU, and improved funding for transit, including the Burnaby Mountain Gondola. I put a great deal of time and effort into this report, conducting extensive research, meeting and coordinating with the SFU External Relations Office as well as meeting with Facilities regarding deferred maintenance. This presentation was well-received, and our recommendations about transit funding and core institutional funding were accepted by the committee. Even the recommendations that were not accepted are now part of the Legislative record and were heard by important provincial decision makers. I am grateful to the SFSS Campaigns, Policy, and Research Coordinator Pierre Cassidy for providing comments on drafts of this report, graphing data, and attending the presentation. The full report I prepared can be found at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B68NNQau_ZTcUjRwSlpOWHVuVThqN0FTNVhVbVo0VTRKMVhR/view?usp=sharing
- International Student Anti-Tuition Increase Campaign - I continued to make efforts to oppose the proposed 10% increase to international undergraduate student tuition fees. I organized a townhall event, researched, reviewed, and presented a statement of opposition on behalf of the SFSS, attending a public budget consultation session, and attended the specific SFSS and GSS meeting with the Vice President Academic to discuss concerns about the budget. The University denied all requests we made, however, we had a very successful joint townhall event alongside Council where over 100 students were in attendance. These fee increases will not be subject to approval until March 2015, so time remains to look for solutions that can possibly reduce the impact of these proposed increases on students
- Kinder Morgan Pipeline - In the Fall Term, Kinder Morgan proposed a new route for their proposed Trans Mountain pipeline that would intersect SFU's Burnaby Campus. I researched this, presented reasons for the SFSS to take a formal stance of opposition against the new route (which the Board accepted and voted to approve) and attended an event coordinated by SFPIRG where I spoke about the SFSS stance. I also researched and successfully motivated for the SFSS to apply as an intervener in the National Energy Board Hearing Process. After obtaining Board approval, I researched and prepared an application which was accepted by the National Energy Board. As a

result of this work, the SFSS is now an intervenor who is privy to all hearing documents, able to ask questions of Kinder Morgan, and can make a submission that will be considered in the final decision about approving the proposed pipeline. I also successfully motivated for the Advocacy Committee to provide funding to support lawful protests, as well as drafted and successfully motivated for an open letter of support for the lawful protests against the proposed pipeline.

- Transit - I worked with Sustainable SFU and the Graduate Student Society late in the Fall Term to prepare a proposal for a campaign to promote the upcoming regional transit referendum.
- SFU Votes - As part of a joint campaign with the Political Science Student Union, I helped to coordinate a municipal election awareness campaign. This involved meeting with several prospective candidates, fielding their questions about logistics of an outreach event, drafting invitations, booking space for outreach events, working with the Communications Office to develop social media as well as print outreach materials, and attending an interview with CJSF about municipal elections
- Freedom Square Plaque - As part of an outstanding initiative from Spring 2014, I continued to follow up on the missing Freedom Square Plaque (an important memorial for protests about academic freedom that took place early in SFU's history). Fall 2014 saw the return and remounting of the Plaque, which now is displayed in SFU's Freedom Square.
- Residence Issues Working Group - In response to ongoing issues in the Residences at SFU, I organized several meetings of interested volunteers and stakeholders. This work continues.

Food Bank Working Group:

I continued to participate in the SFSS Food Bank Working Group in the Fall 2014 term. My initiatives included:

- Obtaining a \$16 000 donation from SFU Student Services to support the program. This amount will be renewed annually. This major accomplishment was due in no small part to the hard work of FCAT Representative Shirin Escarcha who prepared a fantastic proposal
- Supporting ongoing efforts to expand the program to the SFU Surrey Campus

Accessibility Fund Advisory Committee (AFAC)

I continued to regularly attend meetings of the Accessibility Fund Advisory Committee. My work/initiatives included:

- Organizing free de-stressing massages at the Surrey, Burnaby, and Vancouver campuses
- Working with SFU Health and Counselling for puppy therapy at the Burnaby, Surrey, and Vancouver campuses
- Working with the Executive Director and DSU Organizer for a proposal for an accessibility audit project worker. This proposal was recommended by AFAC but subsequently rejected by the SFSS Executive Committee on Dec. 2014

CPR/Remuneration

- The proposal I prepared to amend SFSS Administrative Policy 11 - Child Care Funding continued to be reviewed over the Fall Term.

Build SFU

- I worked in the Fall Term to try to reduce the cost of the Build SFU Project to students by lobbying the provincial government to accept several proposals we have provided to allow SFU to support financing despite provincial restrictions. This involved a meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Advanced Education on September 29, 2014 as well as a meeting with the Advanced Education Critic.

Collective Bargaining

- The agreement between the SFSS and CUPE 3338-5, representing the SFSS Administrative Staff, expired in August 2014. As such, in the Fall Term I initiated and prepared for collective bargaining. Details of this work are confidential. Notice of the Employer's intention to negotiate was served in November 2014.

Miscellaneous

- The First Nation's Student Association has been having challenges obtaining permission to bring Indigenous catering on campus for events. I have been assisting a representative to try to get a permanent agreement to allow the FNSEA to bring Indigenous catering without having to gain approval from the SFSS and SFU Meeting, Events, and Conference Services
- I ordered and prepared holiday cards for various external individuals and groups as well as university administrators
- I researched, coordinated, and prepared (in consultation with legal council) a submission regarding proposed changes to the BC Society Act, which is a major piece of legislation that established legal rules for the SFSS.
- I conducted outreach and prepared to chair the SFSS Annual General Meeting
- I prepared and updated a procedural manual for the SFSS President
- There has been a good deal of activity on campus about mental health improvement. In the Fall Term, I made some small efforts to support this. For instance, the Hi-Five Movement for Mental Health has been having challenges with funding and space booking given their lack of SFSS club status. I arranged a meeting with their Executives and the SFSS to discuss these problems and find solutions. I also attended a stakeholder's meeting about mental health, met with Health and Counseling to discuss the SFSS' efforts, and met with the SFU Ombudsperson and the Director of SFU Health and Counseling to discuss issues with current policy regarding mental health.
- The SFSS will be holding a special general meeting in January 2015. My support of this decision involved research into issues that occurred at the 2014 AGM and into what questions could be placed on the agenda.

Liaison Work

A major component of my duties involve acting as staff liaison officer for the Board. This work used to constitute the role of an entire Executive Officer (the Internal Relations Officer). The majority of my work is confidential given it involves human resources and legal matters. The fall term was especially busy given. Non-sensitive work includes weekly with the Executive Directors to discuss human resource matters, reviewing staff time off requests, approving time off for the Executive Director, attending working conditions meetings, upholding adherence to collective agreements, and attending staff meetings and check ins.

Looking Ahead

The Spring 2015 term will involve a variety of ongoing initiatives, including:

- Motivating for my proposed changes to AP 11 to be accepted
- Resolving the outstanding FNSA catering issue
- Collective bargaining
- Leading the BC Open Textbook Campaign
- Addressing residence issues through the newly formed working group
- Participating in the Food Bank Working Group and overseeing the finalization of the Surrey program expansion
- Leading SFSS efforts to see improved transit by pushing for a successful result in the regional transit referendum
- Opposing the proposed international student tuition increase
- Working with the SFSS Environmental Representative Tessica Truong to draft a submission to the National Energy Board about the Kinder Morgan Pipeline
- Preparing to chair the SFSS Special General Meeting
- Committee involvement
- Supporting the SFSS Board's strategic plans and priorities
- Finalizing outstanding campaign promises, including preparing a proposal for a part-time student bursary

Contact Information

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Office Hours* for Spring 2015 Semester (MBC 2220.7):

- Mondays, 12:30pm - 1:30 pm
- Tuesdays, 12:30pm - 2:30 pm
- Wednesdays, 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm

*Please note that in order to use my time efficiently, I may need to step out during these times. I will be near by and reachable by 778-683-1233. I will return immediately if called.

Link to Timesheet

https://docs.google.com/a/sfss.ca/spreadsheets/d/1wPrBvyDapBqwTDp_T7SkoPiZObyNCvRWiX6fOTpaw-U/edit#gid=1953107290