

Annual Report 2018

Thompson Rivers University Students' Union



About Us

About Us

The Thompson Rivers University Students' Union is the membership organization of the over 10,000 students studying at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops British Columbia. Governed by the BC Societies Act, the TRUSU Constitution and Bylaws, and the TRUSU Policy Manual, the Thompson Rivers University Students' Union seeks to ensure that students are engaged, valued, and supported in pursuing their educational aspirations.

The following report outlines of the activities of the Union from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018, spanning three semesters and two Board of Directors terms. For further background information on the nature of the advocacy, services, and entertainment reported in this document please visit the Union's website at trusu.ca.

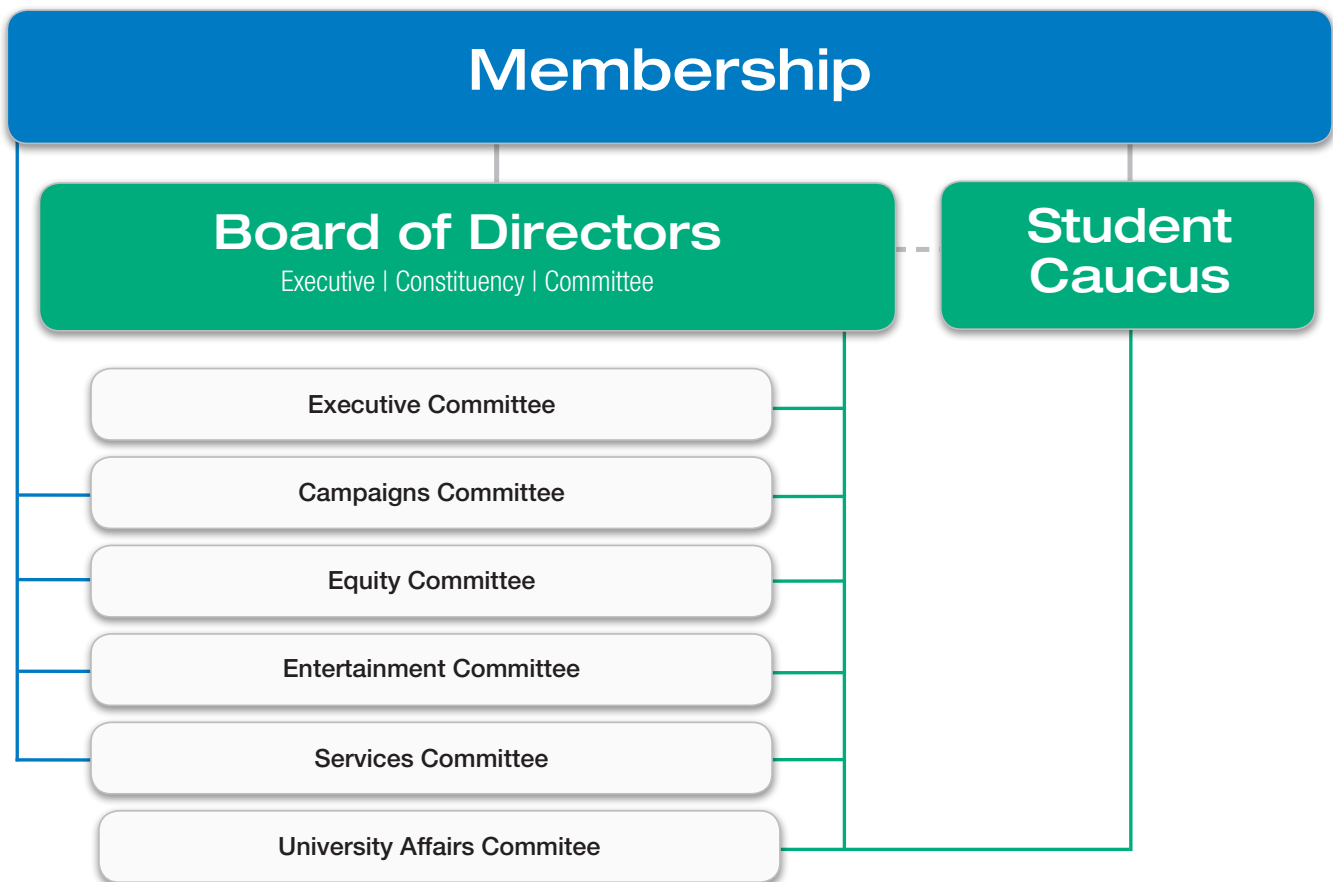


Table of Contents

About Us	2
University Affairs	4
University Affairs Committee	4
Student Caucus and Representation	5
Student Budget Consultation.....	7
University Issues.....	8
Campaigns	11
Fund the Future	11
Federal Budget Submission	12
2019 Provincial Budget Consultation.....	12
Electoral Reform Referendum	13
2019 Municipal Budget Consultation	14
Capacity Building on Post-Secondary Issues	14
Equity	15
Equity for Women	15
Equity for Visible Minorities/Racialized People	16
Equity for LGBTQ+ People	16
Equity for Other Systematically Marginalized Groups in Society	17
Coalition Partner Campaigns	18
Services	20
Students' Union Building	20
Housing Registry	20
Graduation Gowns	21
Extended Health and Dental Plan.....	21
Employment Centre	21
UPASS	21
Food Bank.....	22
Endowments and Bursaries	22
Members' Advocate Service	22
Entertainment.....	24
Back-to-School BBQ.....	24
Clubs Day.....	24
Outdoor Movie Night and Food Truck Festival	25
Common Voices Lecture Series	25
Awards of Excellence Social	25
Last Class Bash	25
Club Activities.....	26
Board of Directors	27

University Affairs



University Affairs

In 2018, the Union continued to advance student participation in university affairs through representation, consultation, and projects to address key issues.

The Union improved student representation in the university through more streamlined and rigorous recruiting of candidates, more interactive meeting activities, improved individual representative support, and increased representative engagement through strategic branding and formal recognition of service.

The Union built on the capacity of the Student Budget Consultation to provide participation and accurate representation. It secured commitments based on students' priorities, and provided focus and direction for university affairs projects.

The Union continued to tackle challenging projects that have the greatest impact on the student experience. Issues that students have prioritized have proven to require large-scale and contentious solutions built over multiple years, and the Union has adopted a community-building approach with increasing success. On food service, the Hungry for Choice campaign built on its previous success and empowered the campus community to drive their own improved experiences through a food service consultation. On textbook affordability, the Union's proposed grants program to support the creation and use of open textbooks was funded with the potential to save students \$250,000 a year. On campus parking, the Union applied important lessons from previous challenges. It secured remedies to immediate problems, but also focused on a larger goal of community-based decision-making to replace frustration and conflict with understanding and accountability.

Overall, the Union had another year of both successes and growth in university affairs.

The University Affairs Committee

As university affairs has become increasingly established as a function of the Union, how it is addressed has both evolved and been formalized. This has increased the capacity and focus on the work through the University Affairs Committee.

In 2018, changes to reflect and clarify the evolution of the university affairs portfolio were made at the Annual General Meeting. A special resolution changed the name of the Student Caucus Steering Committee to the "University Affairs Committee." This is more readily understandable and concise. It also better reflects the content of the committee's work. In addition to recruiting, supporting, and engaging the Student Caucus, the committee is mandated to plan and implement the Student Budget Consultation and work to address university issues arising from the consultation or otherwise identified as important. In 2018, this included intensive outreach and lobbying efforts on challenging issues such as campus food service, parking and transportation, and affordable course materials.

Student Caucus and Student Representation

As a model for supporting student representation, the Student Caucus has continued its success as it enters its eighth year. Efforts in this year were driven and guided by a new brand strategy that created a clear, consistent, and meaningful representation of the Student Caucus to its audiences. Under this framework,

University Affairs

the Student Caucus further improved upon its successful track record in the recruitment and nomination of a growing range of student representative positions across the university while enhancing its support and engagement through status tracking and troubleshooting by staff and the creation of a Certificate of Recognition.

Student Caucus Brand Strategy

In 2018, the Union undertook a strategic branding exercise for the Student Caucus. This was motivated by a recognition that the Student Caucus was not well understood and recognized in the campus community, and did not establish clear expectations and sense of belonging amongst its participants. A brand strategy was seen as a means to clearly set out a long-term Student Caucus purpose and to communicate that purpose effectively and attractively to the campus community.

The brand strategy was based on a review of the Student Caucus mandate and role in the Union's vision, mission, and values as well as its strengths and the needs of its target audiences. This led to the identification of a brand purpose or motivation, a brand promise or value proposition, a brand essence or how it delivers its promise, and brand attributes or how the Student Caucus should be described. In short, these elements combined as the following brand:

We believe that students should be authors in their own education.

Therefore, we deliver opportunities to grow through meaningful service to your university.

In everything we do, we build community, and, as a result, we are described as empowering, enriching, collaborative, and credible.

This brand was further developed through key messages – “Explore your leadership. Serve your community. Build our university.” – and common language. To launch this new expression of the Student Caucus, an updated logo and colour scheme were also developed.

The brand strategy shaped all further Student Caucus activities for the 2018/19 term from recruitment and orientation through engagement activities. All metrics for these activities have improved dramatically, indicating a broad success in creating a clear and meaningful connection to the Student Caucus amongst students.

Student Caucus Membership

The Union continued to successfully recruit student representatives

for university governance in 2018. It built on success in identifying sufficient nominees by further streamlining the recruitment process while being more selective and establishing clearer expectations of nominees. Results demonstrated increased success in measurable indicators of student representation.

The membership strategy was reviewed to map successful paths through recruitment, application, selection, and onboarding. The recruitment drive in September built strong awareness and interest through outreach at key events and digital and campus promotions, all of which were driven by the new brand strategy. The contact information of 322 students interested in becoming involved in university governance was collected, an increase of more than a third from the previous year. These students were invited and reminded by email to complete online applications. This eliminated an invitation first to an Information Session, which had limited attendance in previous years. In this streamlined process from interest to application, eighty-seven (87) applications were received within two weeks. By the end of the year, 106 applications were received, more than double the previous year. For the first time, all applicants were required to schedule a mandatory interview. As part of the initial recruitment drive, fifty-two (52) interviews were conducted, narrowing the field to the most engaged candidates and providing an individual analysis of skills and interests that facilitated more selective and thoughtful nominations. It further established Student Caucus membership as a responsibility and privilege to be undertaken with diligence. Finally, it provided a stronger contact point to lead into notice of nominations and invitations to Orientation. This updated membership strategy has improved across all measures and will be continued in 2019.

In addition to a more effective membership strategy, the Student Caucus membership also expanded. The Student Caucus appointed seven representatives to the new Student Success Committee of Senate, which replaced a Student Engagement Committee that had been inactive in recent years. Two representatives were appointed to the First Nations and Aboriginal Affairs Committee of Senate, which had also been inactive. Two representatives were also appointed to the Business and Economics Faculty Council, which had previously managed its own student representation. Finally, the Marketing, Communications, and Institutional Relations Committee was dissolved, eliminating one student representative position.

Student Caucus membership in 2018 consisted of seventy-three representatives across seventy-two positions, and the Union filled 95% of student representative positions to which it nominates or appoints.

University Affairs

Orientation, Support, and Engagement

Student representatives in 2018 were well prepared, better supported, and engaged in more activity. The Union provided an interactive Student Caucus orientation and an ongoing communication and coordination platform. Support was enhanced through a member tracking system that allowed staff to identify and troubleshoot issues for each member. Finally, engagement in meetings and activities was incentivized through the introduction of a Student Caucus Certificate of Recognition.

The Student Caucus orientation for the 2018/19 cohort of student representatives was held on September 30, 2018. Participants gained an understanding of the Student Caucus, university governance, the Student Budget Consultation, and current issues on campus. They further gained practical skills for meeting participation. This was concluded with a social with food and refreshments to build a sense of camaraderie in the group.

Support following orientation was provided through regular contact on Basecamp and through staff assistance. Basecamp is an online team-working system that provides access to documents, a schedule, task lists, message forums, group chat, and individual messaging. The platform maintained a sense of community in the Student Caucus beyond orientation. Support was supplemented through a member tracking system overseen by staff to ensure integration with university committees and to identify and troubleshoot issues. Staff served as a primary point of contact and proactively checked in on progress, encouraged meeting attendance, and invited participation in activities according to availability. This system has addressed issues earlier and more quickly, and maintained wider participation with members who may have otherwise become disengaged when confronting obstacles.

The Student Caucus continued to provide consistent engagement through monthly meetings and periodic university activities. This engagement was further encouraged and rewarded through the introduction of Certificates of Recognition.

Student Caucus meetings focused on interaction. Presentations were organized to seek feedback, reports were minimized, and discussions took priority. A presentation was received from the Library regarding its 5-Year Strategic Plan, and generated fulsome feedback. Discussions were held at each meeting on updates from university committees. Further, the Caucus developed a format for actionable discussion on a current campus issue so all Caucus members could actively contribute on an issue of common relevance and create a tangible outcome. In 2018, the issue of discussion was internationalization due to the recent dramatic



Recruiting Students for the Caucus

increase in international enrolment, and the resulting impacts on both the domestic and international student experience. The discussion, over two meetings, gathered opinions and experiences of internationalization strategy, issues of finance and basic needs, academic issues, and cultural and social issues. In 2019, the Student Caucus will work with the Campaigns Committee to gather further feedback from faculty and staff, to present these findings to the campus community in a brief, and to call for an internationalization plan at TRU. This is expected to provide Student Caucus members with a sense of collective impact in addition to their individual service on university committees. Overall, meetings have been more engaging, with an average attendance of forty (40) members, an increase of more than fifty percent (50%) over the previous term.

Student Caucus members were also engaged between meetings. In previous years, Caucus members were encouraged to join in university affairs projects. However, this expectation proved both too onerous and insufficiently related to other responsibilities as participants in university governance. As a result, the expectation was dropped, with the expanded University Affairs Committee ably taking full responsibility for this work. Instead, Student Caucus members were encouraged to participate in activities more closely related to their other responsibilities. This included participating in a Food Services Consultation Information Session, observing a meeting of the Senate, and participating in an Open Governance Town Hall. These singular events have both facilitated greater engagement by Student Caucus members based on their availability, and more closely reinforced their understanding of university decision-making.

Finally, to encourage and reward engagement, the Student Caucus introduced Certificates of Recognition. To earn a certificate, a

University Affairs

Student Caucus member must attend an orientation, two thirds of their university committee meetings, two thirds of Student Caucus meetings, the Student Budget Consultation Town Hall, and at least one other designated university activity. By achieving a higher set of participation requirements, a member can also earn a distinction. This set clear expectations at the outset of a term to ensure better representation of students, and to meaningfully reward the volunteer service provided. Thus far, engagement has increased across all identified activities, and certificates will be awarded in April 2019.

In 2019, the Student Caucus will continue to ensure members are supported in their representative responsibilities and engaged in a range of meaningful activities beyond their committees. A survey of members concluding their term will also be conducted to identify further opportunities to improve the experience.

Student Budget Consultation

The Student Budget Consultation provides the most influential role for students in any university budget model in Canada, and provides critical direction from the student body in selecting university affairs projects and issues to address.

In 2018, the Union continued to improve participation in the Consultation. It continued to make progress toward having students' priorities reflected in university planning, including securing a response to every recommendation in the Student Budget Consultation Report 2019/20. For the first time, the Student Budget Consultation Report 2019/20 also included recognition of areas of excellence, improvement, and responsiveness in the university. This provided the opportunity to balance calls for change with celebration of success and appreciation of efforts.

Participation and Results

The Student Budget Consultation in 2018 provided an increasingly robust opportunity for students have their opinions accurately and effectively understood and reported to the university.

Students' budget priorities in 2018 were again identified through a comprehensive survey. The survey, held February 05-16, 2018, continued to allow students to identify priorities through three perspectives. A comparison of students' direct prioritization, a satisfaction-importance gap analysis, and a derived importance measure provided for the most reliable and useful selection of the top five items students want improved. Participants were recruited through electronic newsletters, social media, campus advertisement, and hand billing. The survey again achieved a greater participation rate than prior years with 391 respondents

completing the extensive questionnaire in full. The profile of the respondents again closely resembled the student population across age, faculty of study, gender, Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal identity, and domestic/international status. This continued improvement reflects both the growing familiarity with the process amongst the membership and improved promotion and incentive efforts.

A Town Hall was held on March 28, 2018 to gather details of service gaps and expectations for the five top priorities leading to focused and tangible recommendations. Facilitators led participants in semi-structured discussions in which a series of questions on each issue were posed to prompt dialogue and probing questions provided clarification or investigated emerging themes. Discussions were recorded and transcribed verbatim and provided opportunities for open-ended responses and those related to the top five priorities were also considered. Qualitative data from all sources were analyzed using a grounded theory approach. A process of coding based on a close reading of the data lead to the iterative development and focusing of concepts that were then grouped thematically.

The five priorities identified in Student Budget Consultation Report 2019/20 were parking, food services, study space, academic advising, and course materials. The Report made twenty recommendations to improve those priority areas. Because the top five priorities were recurring from previous years, the Report provided, for each priority, a background and context outlining previous recommendations, commitments, and actions, as well as external and anticipated changes, and recommendations were formulated in that context.

For the first time, opportunity provided by the Student Budget Consultation was taken to also recognize and celebrate the ways in which Thompson Rivers University excels, improves, and responds to the needs of students. Areas of excellence as represented by significantly above average levels of student satisfaction included Library Services, Study Abroad, and the Writing Centre. Areas of improvement in student satisfaction, particularly as a result of responses to previous Student Budget Consultations, included Academic Advising, course offerings, and classroom technology and equipment. Finally, areas undertaking initiatives that respond to previous Student Budget Consultations and that may be expected to improve student satisfaction going forward include food services, course materials, and Student Awards and Financial Support. The Union offered appreciation and congratulations to all those involved in these areas.

Securing Responses to Students' Priorities

Securing responses to Student Budget Consultation priorities and related recommendations is a critical aspect of making the

University Affairs

process meaningful to participants and impactful for the student experience. This aspect has been a challenge since the conception of the consultation. Responses improved in 2018 in terms of speed and consistency, but greater collaboration remains desirable.

In 2018, the Union continued to ensure that students' input would be widely received and understood, and that more timely and collaborative responses to specific issues would be provided and published.

This work began with the solicitation of responses to the recommendations of the Student Budget Consultation Report 2018/19, which had been submitted to TRU in October 2017. Responses were requested with a template to improve standardization, detail, and relevance, and with invitations for dialogue to improve collaboration. Responses to all thirteen recommendations were received by January 2018, a couple months earlier than in the previous year. This successfully provided more consistent and quick responses, but without discussion to ensure shared understanding and more effective outcomes.

In September 2018, the Student Budget Consultation Report 2019/20 was submitted to senior administration, and in October 2018 was further distributed directly to the heads of all academic and administrative units for consideration in unit planning, and presented to the Budget Committee of Senate to prepare its members to review unit services plans and ensure consideration of students' priorities. The university was even more prompt this year, providing responses to all sixteen recommendations from the Student Budget Consultation Report 2018/19 by October 2018. This provided immediate indications of how students' priorities would be addressed, but again did not facilitate a cooperative approach to developing the best solutions. Fortunately, more consultative practices are developing. In particular, the Facilities Department has been both proactive and responsive in working with the Union to implement its response to concerns regarding study space.

In 2019, the Union will continue to ensure students' concerns are responded to, and will increasingly work to identify partners throughout the university who are willing to engage in consultative and collaborative approaches to making those responses effective and community-building.

University Issues

In 2018, the Union continued to work on long-standing student priorities including food services, course materials, and parking and transportation. Important progress has been made across all three issues, particularly through community engagement and community building.

Food Service - Hungry for Choice

The Hungry for Choice campaign built on previous progress and acted on a critical opportunity in 2018 to secure and encourage participation in a campus food service consultation. This advanced an important recognition of the relationship between food and community in terms of health, success, diversity, and social activity. Over three years, the campaign has fundamentally changed the way food services are delivered on campus, and has built the foundation for the campus community to shape its food into the future.

Students have prioritized food services improvements in the Student Budget Consultation for the last three years. Students reported a need for increased variety and nutritional and dietary options; better value and quality per dollar; extended hours and responsive catering to support campus activity; and reduced lines and wait times. More broadly, students identified a desire to rethink the way food service is delivered on campus as a whole.



Talking to CBC about Open Textbooks

In 2018, the Union worked to ensure the food service consultation won in the previous year was meaningful and achieved strong campus participation.

In February, the university administration struck a Food Services Review Committee to develop and oversee the consultation. The committee included representation of students, faculty, staff, and administration. The main task was to set the scope of work for an external firm to manage the consultation, and to select that firm. Student representatives worked to ensure the scope of the consultation was inclusive, provided multiple opportunities for participation, and explored a wide range of possible food service operations. Based on this scope, a Request for Proposals was released for firms to respond to. The committee selected Porter

University Affairs

Khouw Consulting (PKC), a firm with many years of experience in university food service.

In September, the Union relaunched the Hungry for Choice campaign for the third and final time with the goal of encouraging wide participation in the food service consultation. This was done through building a list of interested individuals and groups. This list was created from the base of past Hungry for Choice petition signatories and campus group endorsers. Invitations were then sent to all other campus groups and all student representatives. Finally, outreach was conducted on campus and in classroom presentations, and at the Back-to-School Barbecue, Clubs Day, and the Movie Night. Over 2,600 interested community members were added to the list for regular updates on how to participate in the consultation. Throughout the fall, PKC conducted a site visit, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and a survey. The Union successfully activated its list of participants throughout the process. For example, an overwhelming 2,815 survey responses were received.

After considering all the data and feedback, PKC provided a final report to university administration with a series of short, medium, and long-term recommendations. Short-term recommendations, to be implemented immediately, reflect many of the desires students had expressed and build on past successes of the Hungry for Choice campaign. This includes expanding the number and variety of food trucks, improving existing food outlets by adding seating and increasing variety, identifying spaces for additional retail outlets (including independent owners/companies), expanding operating hours at one or more central outlet(s), and adding breakfast options. Medium and long-term recommendations, to be implemented over two or more years, focus on creating a central dining hall as part of an existing or new building on campus, and offering “anytime dining” with amenities and meal plan options.

In 2019, the Union will continue to work to ensure the recommendations are implemented. The current food service provider has been requested to present its responses to the recommendations to the Food Services Review Committee in January. Importantly, student representatives have also successfully secured an ongoing food services committee to ensure improvements continue to reflect campus needs beyond this consultation.

Affordable Course Materials - Open Textbooks

The Union continued its initiative to address the growing crisis in the affordability of textbooks through open copyright course materials, which are available to students and instructors free of

charge. Efforts have paid off with the creation of a new program to support the creation of free textbooks at TRU.

Students have prioritized course materials in the Student Budget Consultation for the last three years. Students identified the price and affordability of textbooks and other course materials as their primary concern. Textbooks constitute a significant and growing proportion of the rising cost of post-secondary education. Students are increasingly frustrated that, at the same time that they are paying more and more each year in tuition fees, textbook prices have also risen 88% between 2006 and 2016 – more than four times the rate of inflation during the same period. This creates frustration with the textbook industry and a desire for the university to more actively and effectively pursue alternatives.

The Union identified the potential of open educational resources (OER) to address these concerns. OER are course materials created with an open copyright license that gives more rights to end users like students and instructors. That means that OER are available to students free of charge, and can be customized by instructors to suit their courses better.

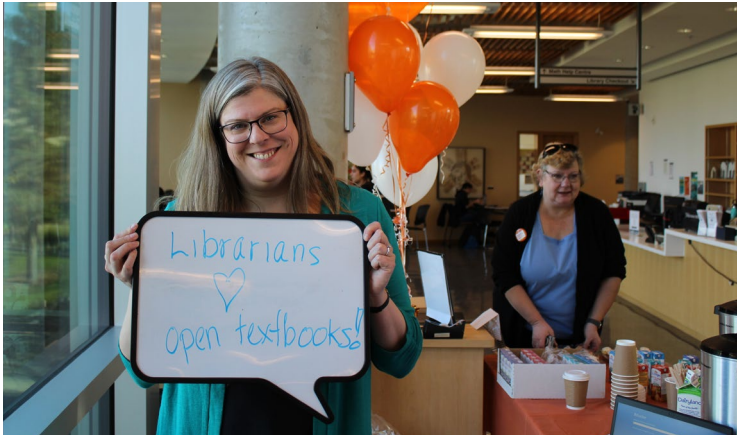
In 2018, a funding request for an OER Development Grant Program was submitted to the TRU budgeting process. Fortunately, the request was granted and \$45,500 was made available. Eight faculty members were awarded grants this year to create new open education resources. When used in TRU courses, these are expected to impact 2,200 students and save them \$250,000 per year. The program also received so many worthy applications that it was expanded for this year and will receive funding for even more projects over the next two years.

The Union has also built on this success and the campus partnership that made it possible. It has become a member of a new Open Education Working Group that will promote further growth of open education culture, practices, and programs at TRU. The Union will continue to work within this partnership to advance affordable course materials in 2019.

Campus Parking and Transportation

The Union continued challenging work in 2018 to make campus parking more affordable, flexible, and convenient. This work has been undertaken in two ways. First, the Union has continued to raise concerns with university administration. Second, the Union has sought to build community and a collaborative approach to future transportation decisions. These approaches have been informed by lessons learned from the experience of recent parking changes, which have created enormous disruption and frustration in the campus community.

University Affairs



Open Access Week

Students have prioritized parking in the Student Budget Consultation for the last four years, and their concerns have been largely shared with faculty and staff. Students have identified unaffordability; poor value for service; the need to reinvest parking revenue; the need for demand management; the lack of rate options; the lack of viable transportation alternatives; and a growing space shortage.

The Union began advocating for parking changes in 2015. It attempted a good faith negotiation with university administration by proposing a new parking system within a revenue-neutral requirement from administration. It offered concessions that students would not otherwise support to generate revenue for other benefits. The proposal was submitted to administration, but then directed to the Parking Appeals and Advisory Committee for consideration. The committee made recommendations in May 2016, but the administration did not release its final decisions in the Sustainable Parking Framework for another nine months in February 2017. The Framework was developed without consultation with campus stakeholders, and as a result it addressed only some requests and raised more concerns. It was implemented in September 2017 at the same time as considerable construction on campus, creating confusion and difficulty accessing campus.

The Union learned from this experience that open and collaborative decision-making is necessary to successfully address complex public issues such as parking and transportation. As a result, the Union has made community involvement a keystone of its campaigns. This has been successful with the Hungry for Choice campaign to improve food service, and has been applied to parking in 2018 as well.

In 2018, the Union continued to raise students' parking concerns as identified in the Student Budget Consultation. Recommendations focused on the effects of recent changes in order to rectify

negative experiences. There has been some success with this approach, including the cancellation of proposed rate increases for 2018/19 and 2019/20 as recommended, and the creation of additional parking lots to address the shortage created by construction. Going forward, TRU has also committed to launch a TRU Transportation website to help the community make informed decisions about their commute to and from campus. This website will provide information about parking fees and real-time availability, transit routes and expected arrival times, and the Zip Car and Rideshare alternatives. Finally, it will demonstrate progress toward sustainability through single occupancy vehicle counts versus use of the UPASS, Zip Car, and Rideshare.

The Union also recognized that improvements to campus transportation are not likely unless the fundamental need of community involvement in decisions is addressed. It has pursued this goal by partnering with other campus stakeholders. A Parking and Transportation Working Group was formed in August with representation from the Union, the TRU Faculty Association, and the Canadian Union of Public Employees – Local 4879. The Group was established with the goal of overseeing a project to engage the campus community in determining its vision, values, and outcomes for transportation to and from campus. It focuses on foundational work of informed public deliberation to build shared understanding and intention amongst community members and to bridge gaps of accountability and communication with decision-makers and service providers. The Group has determined that the project will only be successful with the participation of the university administration.

In 2019, the Union will continue to work with its partners to seek an agreement with university administration to engage in a community-building project on parking and transportation.

Campaigns



Campaigns

In 2018, the Union continued to deliver on and expand the scope of its community and government facing campaigns work. This included continuing to engage a large number of residents in Kamloops in a dialogue about the problematic areas of provincial government funding to TRU, working with all levels of government to recommend budget priorities that meet students' needs, encouraging students to vote in favour of proportional representation in the provincial electoral reform referendum, and work in other areas as well. Through these campaign actions the Union continued to engage students and community members on important political issues facing our university and broader community, as well as working to influence decision makers to make policy changes that will improve the daily lived experience of students at TRU.

Fund the Future

The provincial government consistently underfunds TRU, adding up to over \$80 million of underfunding in the last five years alone. This is a serious problem for not only the students, faculty, and staff at TRU, but also for the entire Thompson-Nicola Region. In just over a decade TRU has fallen from being the 4th highest funded institution in the province to being 20th today. The average institution in BC receives \$11,000 in funding per student while TRU only receives \$7600 per student. And this inequity only seems to be growing, with some other universities in this province receiving more than double the per student funding of TRU.

It is time for our region to get a fair share. To this end, in 2018 the Union continued to focus on talking to residents and organizations in the Kamloops region about this problem in order to build broad understanding and support for change in how provincial government funding for post-secondary education is allocated.

Outreach

In 2018 the Union continued to expand its work to talk with the broader Kamloops community about funding problems at TRU. The two primary strategies used by the Campaigns Committee were to give in depth presentations to organizations in the winter 2018 semester and to talk to community members one-on-one at community events and at their doors over the summer semester. The goal of these strategies was to ensure that it is common knowledge across the community that TRU is underfunded.

From January through May 2018 the Union gave 20 community presentations across the Kamloops community and surrounding regions. This included presentations to every city council in the region including Lillooet, Lytton, Chase, Kamloops, Sunpeaks, Williams Lake, and many others. The Union also presented to a variety of large and small organizations such as Kamloops Pride, the North Shore Business Association, the BCNU, and other important community organizations. The presentation included data on funding levels for universities and colleges across British Columbia, the history of funding at TRU specifically, the impact this has on the community, and tools for how organizations can help push the provincial government to re-evaluate TRU's funding formula.

Over the summer semesters the Union continued to talk to

Campaigns

thousands of people about TRU's funding level through directly talking to community members at events throughout the city and knocking on doors in a variety of neighbourhoods. Community events that the Union participated in over the summer semester included Ribfest, the Kamloops Farmers Market, the Kamloops Pride Parade, Overlanders Day, and others. In total the Union set up eight community tables in the summer and talked to individuals and families of all ages. In the month of August the Union also knocked directly on residents doors across the city, including in neighbourhoods such as Sagebrush, Lower Sahali, the North Shore, and Westsyde. As a result the Union knocked on over 1000 doors in the month of August to have conversations with residents about the impacts of TRU being underfunded.

In order to reach community members more broadly the Union also sent a postcard with information about TRU's funding level and the impacts this has on the community to over 10,000 households in the Kamloops region. Specifically, the card talked about the ways that TRU is contributing to our region socially and economically, yet is underfunded compared the majority of post-secondary institutions across the province and that this practice will be increasingly unsustainable looking to the future.

Government Relations

In April 2018 the Union wrote a letter to the Ministry of Advanced Education requesting that they re-evaluate how Thompson Rivers University is funded to ensure that the funding level matches how the institution has grown since becoming a full university. Included with this request were 26 letters of support from organizations across the Kamloops region that also called on the provincial government to start a process of re-evaluation for TRU's funding level.

In June 2018 the Union received a response from the Ministry of Advanced Education that they were not planning to re-evaluate funding levels for Thompson Rivers University at this time unfortunately. Below average funding levels have been a longstanding issue at TRU and will continue to be an issue of importance to the Union. This is a large scale problem that the Union expects to continue to work to raise the profile of in upcoming years leading up to the next provincial election.

Federal Budget Submission

Each year the federal Standing Committee on Finance (FINA) hosts a pre-budget consultation to hear from organizations across the country on their priorities for the upcoming federal budget. In July 2018 the Union made a written submission to FINA on recommended changes to federal post-secondary student



Provincial Budget Consultation Presentation

assistance programs to increase their effectiveness in helping students access post-secondary, complete their studies, and successfully transition to the job market.

The Union's recommendation was to expand the Canada Student Grant program by consolidating the Tuition Tax Credit and Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) expenditures into the grants program.

The federal RESP program primarily benefits wealthier families who already save for their children's education without a matching grant from the federal government. This means that the program is a poor measure for improving outcomes because it isn't targeted at students who are facing financial barriers to post-secondary.

The Tuition Tax Credit program is problematic because it is often transferred to a family member or used in a future year, not helping students with financial difficulty. As stated in the 2016 federal budget regarding post-secondary related tax credits, "These credits are not targeted based on income and often provide little direct support to students at the time they need it most."

On August 7, 2018 the Union met with the local member of parliament for Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo Cathy McLeod to provide her with an overview of the submission to FINA. This meeting was helpful for the Union to get to know the local MP as well as have discussions with her about issues that students are facing.

Unfortunately these recommendations were not reflected in the FINA Committee's final report released on December 10, 2018. The Union will continue to look for ways to push the federal government to improve federal students financial aid programs in the future.

2019 Provincial Budget Consultation

On September 26, 2018 the Union presented its priorities for the 2019 provincial budget to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services. Along with the presentation the Union also produced a research brief that outlined its recommendations.

The Union's first recommendation was to eliminate the public investment in provincial RESP savings programs, education tax credits, and loan remission programs, and to re-invest these resources into the creation of an upfront need-based grants program. The Union made this recommendation because effective financial aid increases participation rates in the post-secondary system, helps students complete their education, and helps students successfully transition from education into the workforce after completion. A need-based grants system is much more effective at all three of these measures primarily because it is targeted to students with the greatest need.

The Union's second recommendation was for a full re-evaluation of the TRU funding formula to reflect how the institution has changed and grown since 2005. For background, Thompson Rivers University has been underfunded by approximately \$80 million in the last five years compared to the average level of per student funding in BC. This level of underfunding has a significant impact on both the campus and broader community. The Union raised this issue with the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services in order to ensure that the provincial government is aware of this issue in their upcoming budget cycle.

The Union's third recommendation was for the creation of a province wide strategy for international education within BC. The number of international students in BC has increased by 61% from 2011 to 2016, representing \$4.2 billion in tax revenue in 2016 alone. Despite this rapid growth, regulation on international education recruitment is largely left up to individual post-secondary institutions. A province wide strategy could help to provide a significantly better experience for international students in BC, while at the same time ensuring that post-secondary institutions and communities continue to benefit from internationalization.

On November 15, 2018 the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services released their final report with recommendations for the 2019 provincial budget. Their report included recommendations that were in line with two of the Union's recommendations for the budget.

"Form a broad stakeholder group to investigate and discuss all aspects of fairness for international students, and consider a new strategic approach to international education, including access

to educational and social supports, the impacts of international education on the post-secondary system, educator workloads, and costs of attending post-secondary for international and domestic students."

"Review and evaluate "completion grant" and "up-front needs-based grant" models with the aim of ensuring post-secondary students have access to the most beneficial and impactful support."

The final report from the committee also included a recommendation to increase operating funding to post-secondary institutions in BC. This only partially reflects the request made by the Union, which focused specifically on re-evaluating the system by which funding is allocated for post-secondary education instead of increasing funding.

Electoral Reform Referendum

From October 22, 2018 to December 7, 2018 BC residents had the opportunity to vote in a province wide mail-in referendum to consider changing the provincial electoral system. The Union's priority for the referendum was to encourage students to submit their ballots in favour of proportional representation. Changing our provincial electoral system could have significant impacts on the long term public policy direction of British Columbia, and as a result this referendum was one of the more important voting opportunities for students at TRU to take part in.

Electoral reform is a fairly complex issue to fully understand and be able to explain to others so the Union started work on this project internally over the summer to prepare all necessary materials and to conduct internal training. This included comprehensive reviews of our current electoral system as well as the three proposed systems that voters could choose from on their ballots of Dual Member Proportional, Mixed Member Proportional, and Rural-Urban Proportional.

From the beginning of September to early December the Union started talking with students directly about the referendum and asking them to sign up with their contact information to be reminded to vote in late October and November. In talking with students the Union focused on having longer, more in-depth conversations to help students have a deeper understanding of why the referendum is important rather than signing up as many students as possible. In total 917 students signed up to receive more information about the referendum over the fall semester. This was accomplished through ten days of campus tabling, 48 classroom talks, and many additional hours of talking to students out on campus.

Campaigns

In early to mid-November the Union set up five evenings of phonebanking and called all of the students who had signed up to learn more about the referendum. The focus with calling students was to help them get a new ballot if they had not received one in the mail, let them know where to drop off their ballots on campus, and answer any questions they still had about the referendum. In addition to calling students the Union also sent five emails in October and November to students who had signed up to send them links to Elections BC's website to request a new ballot, remind the vote, and let them know where to drop off their ballots on campus or at Service BC.

The Union also created web and social media content to help students understand the referendum and the importance of voting. This included developing a website with information on the options on the ballot as well as information on when, where, and how to vote. In terms of social media the committee developed two videos and release them on Facebook and Twitter. The first video focused on the content of the referendum and encouraged students to vote in favour of proportional representation. The second video was primarily focused on the process of the referendum through letting students know about deadlines for voting and where to drop off their ballot on campus. Throughout the semester the Union also shared a variety of pieces of content produced by Elections BC and other groups. In total the Union reached over 25,000 people through social media over the fall semester.

There is no way to measure how many students voted in the referendum because of the work of the Union over the fall semester. What we can measure though is that through this campaign the Union had thousands of positive interactions with students at TRU about what our democracy looks like and how it might be improved.

2019 Municipal Budget Consultation

On November 28, 2018 the City of Kamloops hosted their annual public budget consultation meeting at McArthur Island. This event was open to the public and was hosted in order to give attendees an overview of major budgetary items that are upcoming while also giving citizens the opportunity to ask questions and provide input on priorities.

The Union organized a delegation of students to attend the event because decisions made at the municipal level have a significant impact on students lives in areas such as economic development, transit, public infrastructure, waste disposal, safety, and other issues. Twelve students from a variety of disciplines participated in the event with the Union. This included meeting on campus in advance of the budget consultation to talk about municipal issues that students care about.

2018 Municipal Election

The 2018 City of Kamloops municipal election was held on October 20, 2018. Twenty-one candidates entered the race for eight City Council seats and two candidates competed for Mayor. The Union aimed to encourage students to participate in the election by providing accessible information on the candidates and the process to vote, as well as facilitating an on-campus polling station.

To make voting accessible for students the Union partnered with the City of Kamloops to host a Special Voting Opportunity on the TRU campus on Wednesday, October 17, 2018 from 11am-3pm. Approximately 180 students, faculty, and staff voted at this polling station for the mayor and councilors of their choice. In addition to the polling station the Union also launched a website with information on who is eligible to vote, what ID is accepted, and when and where to vote.

With the large number of candidates running in the election the Union also wanted to ensure that students had access to relevant information on each candidate. To this end the Union invited every candidate to participate in a video interview to share their background, priorities, and talk about issues relevant to students. The Union published a video interview with all but one candidate for mayor and council on its website and through social media in the weeks leading up to the election.

Capacity Building on Post-Secondary Issues

The Union also works to build capacity amongst members to better understand fundamental post-secondary issues such as tuition fees, student financial aid, and post-secondary funding outside of specific campaign projects. In March 2018 the Union engaged in targeted outreach on student financial aid both online and in person.

During IDAYS 2018 the Union set up a table in the International Building with a series of questions about the cost of education around the world. These questions specifically highlighted that there are many countries that have free post-secondary education. If members answered all five questions printed on the banners they were entered to win a prize.

In this same week the Union also released four short videos on social media with tuition fee facts from around the world in order to help normalize the idea that it is possible to have free tuition fees.



Equity

In 2018, the Union's Equity Committee continued to address the systemic marginalization of Indigenous people, women, visible minorities/racialized people, LGBTQ+ people, poor/working class people, and other marginalized groups in society through both new and well-established activities. This included a series of events, participating in coalition partner equity campaigns, and working with TRU to address campus equity issues.

Equity for Women

Provincial Sexual Violence Policy Review

University campuses are not immune from widespread societal problems of sexual violence and misconduct, which is why the Provincial Government requires all public post-secondary institutions to have a policy and procedures for addressing and responding to incidents of sexual violence when they occur.

TRU's policy was finalized in early 2017 after a lengthy consultation process that the Union participated in. The policy sets out the institution's commitment to raising awareness about sexual violence, a definition for sexual violence, the types of supports that victims/survivors can access, the options for reporting incidences of sexual violence, how TRU will investigate formal reports of sexual violence, and the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved.

In January 2018, the Provincial Government announced a review of all institutional sexual violence policies to see what more can be done to ensure informed and safe post-secondary campuses. Through their public engagement website, they asked

that students, faculty, and staff familiarize themselves with their institutional sexual violence policy and then complete a brief feedback form to provide positive or negative feedback on their institution's policy.

The Union invited members to provide feedback to the government before the January 29th consultation deadline through the Union's website and other digital channels.

As a result of this consultation, the Provincial Government launched an information campaign in August 2018 to raise awareness and to help prevent sexual violence and misconduct on campuses across BC.

International Women's Day Discussion

On March 8, 2018 the Equity Committee hosted a panel discussion to mark International Women's Day about intersectional experiences of sexual violence in the Alpine Room in the Campus Activity Centre.

Sexual violence is a massive topic of mainstream debate, with movements like #MeToo and #TimesUp focusing attention on the issue. However, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, racialized folks, persons engaged in sex work, and other marginalized communities are often excluded from these societal conversations. We often have harmful stereotypes about who sexual violence victims/survivors or perpetrators are. This thinking limits us from protecting everyone who needs protection and from holding all perpetrators accountable for their actions.

Event participants heard from campus and community speakers with experience or expertise with different communities'

Equity

experiences of sexual violence including: Natalie Clark (TRU Social Work Faculty), Raj Chahal (TRU, Education Faculty), Andrei Ouspenski (TRU, Human Service Program), Jillian Watson (ASK Wellness, SHOP Program) and Sam Dewitt (ASK Wellness, SHOP Program). They addressed the ways in which the experiences of these communities are left out of sexual violence conversations, and discussed what we can do to embrace intersectionality and include everyone in important conversations about sexual violence.

At the end of the event, the Committee collected feedback surveys to gauge participant's thoughts. Results were very positive with 97% of respondents answering 'Yes' that their awareness of sexual violence was raised by this discussion and 94% of respondents answering that they felt the discussion was 'Excellent.'

Equity for Visible Minorities/Racialized People

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Outreach

On March 21, 2018 the Equity Committee hosted a day of outreach in Old Main, Student Street to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and promote the United Nation's Let's Fight Racism campaign to raise awareness about the unconscious racial biases that influence how we all perceive and treat different races of people.

The Committee engaged over 200 students, faculty, and staff and distributed a takeaway material that answered some frequently asked questions about racial stereotyping and provided opportunities for the campus community to get involved in addressing these societal problems.

Equity for LGBTQ+ People

End the Ban Campaign Response

In 2017 the Equity Committee campaigned across campus to raise awareness of the federal governments 2015 election promise to "end the discriminatory ban that prevents men who have sex with men (MSM) from donating blood," and collected hundreds of petitions from the campus community calling on the Health Minister to fulfill this promise.

On February 14, 2018 the Federal Health Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor responded to the Committee's petitions with a letter to campaign participants addressing a variety of blood donation issues. While the Minister said that the Government is "developing a long-term vision for blood services that ensure safety and non-

discrimination in donation policies," and that Canadian Blood Services is "looking at ways to allow more MSM to donate blood," the Equity Committee is disappointed that the Government had no genuine plans at the time to fulfill their stark election promise to end the MSM blood donation ban.

In 2019, the Equity Committee plans to continue to monitor this issue, to call on the Government to fulfill their promise, and to hold the Minister accountable to her pledge to ensure non-discrimination in blood donation.

Trans Inclusive Washrooms

In 2017 the Union conducted a consultation and introduced new Trans inclusive signage for the single-stall accessible washroom in the student's union building. Starting in June 2018 the Equity Committee has worked with TRU to expand the availability of Trans inclusive washrooms to other areas of campus through two strategies: to have TRU commit to including Trans inclusive washrooms in the development of new campus space, and to have TRU introduce new signage for existing single-stall accessible washrooms on campus to make them Trans inclusive.

In July 2018 the Committee was pleased to see the TRU library introduce Trans inclusive washroom signage in the main library and to see Student Services work with Facilities to introduce new Trans inclusive washroom signage for spaces in Old Main, the House of Learning, and the Gathering Place.

In 2019 the Committee will continue working with TRU to introduce additional Trans inclusive washroom spaces and to secure a long-term commitment to have a minimum number of designated Trans inclusive washrooms in new campus buildings and development.

7th Annual TRUSU Pride Parade

On September 13, 2018 the Equity Committee hosted the 7th Annual TRUSU Pride Parade outside Old Main to celebrate the diversity of the LGBTQ+ community and publically claim TRU as a safe space to study, work, and live no matter your sexual orientation or gender identity.

The event opened with welcoming remarks from the Union, the TRU President, the TRUFA Faculty Association President, and the President of Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 4879 and concluded with a colourful pride parade circling campus.

The Committee was pleased to see hundreds of students, faculty, staff, and community members participate in the event and looks forward to hosting the 8th Annual TRUSU Pride Parade in 2019.

Equity for Other Systemically Marginalized



Volunteers for the Student Refugee Program

Groups in Society

“The Muslims Are Coming” Film Screening

On February 1, 2018 the Equity Committee hosted a film screening of comedy-documentary “The Muslims Are Coming” in IB 1020 to debunk Islamophobia and the irrational fear and hatred of the Muslim community. The film focused on the power of comedy to challenge and overcome the scope of bigotry and allowed participants to learn through laughing that Muslims are not the boogeyman to be afraid of, but are regular people with the same values, hopes, and dreams, as everyone else.

The Committee distributed a takeaway material that answered frequently asked questions about Islamophobia, provided opportunities for folks to get involved and take action to challenge Islamophobia, and connected folks with campus and community Islamic organizations for more information and resources.

At the end of the event, the Committee collected feedback surveys to gauge participant's thoughts. Results were very positive with 83% of respondents answering ‘Yes’ that their awareness of Islamophobia was raised by this discussion and 84% of respondents answering that they felt the discussion was ‘Excellent.’

Provincial Residential Tenancy Act Review

In April 2018, the Provincial Government created a Rental Housing Task Force to advise on how to improve security and fairness for renters and rental housing providers throughout the province. On June 28, 2018 the Union made a submission to the task force asking that students living in housing owned by post-secondary institutions are protected by the BC Residential Tenancy Act.

Currently, the Act states that “living accommodation owned

or operated by an educational institution and provided by that institution to its students or employees” is exempted and the Act does not apply to these facilities. This means that the tenant's protections provided by the Act, including minimum standards for security deposits, rental increases, evictions, entry into rental units, repairs and maintenance, etc., are not extended to students in residences.

Unfortunately, this means that residence housing providers may have business practices and behaviour that would otherwise be illegal if they were providing housing to non-students.

The Union's submission argued that students should have the same protections and responsibilities under the law as everyone else, and that applying the Residential Tenancy Act to post-secondary residences is critical to achieve that goal.

Multi-faith Prayer Space Feedback

In 2015 TRU opened a multi-faith prayer space in Old Main 2494/4296 to serve the spiritual needs of the campus community. Since that time the space has been well-used by a variety of student, faculty, and staff faith and meditation groups.

In May 2018, the Equity Committee was notified of concerns that student faith groups had about the space. Therefore, the Committee decided to host a consultation to identify what works about the space, what doesn't work, other concerns, and opportunities for improvement.

From June 11 – 27, the Committee solicited online feedback about the prayer space by emailing stakeholders, posting on social media, and poster. On June 21 the Committee hosted an in-person feedback session in the prayer space for students, faculty, and staff. The Committee was pleased to receive a diversity of feedback from different faiths, from student groups, from faculty groups, and from the Chaplaincy office.

After the consultation completed, the Committee submitted the feedback of stakeholders and several recommendations to the Dean of Students who manages the space. The most prominent recommendation was introducing a new, larger, and reorganized prayer space to better serve the needs of faith communities. This space should have a dedicated space for Muslim prayer and be co-located and integrated with the Chaplaincy office to improve management, programming, and service delivery.

While working towards a new space, stakeholders also recommended a number of changes to the existing space including: removing unnecessary furniture to maximize space, providing more shoe racks, providing a new bookshelf to hold religious texts, providing storage cubbies or lockers for backpacks

Equity

and bags, brightening the space with wall colouring or abstract design, soundproofing the space, and introducing an online room booking service like the library to allow groups to see when the space is in use.

Student Refugee Program Referendum

Over the past few years there has been a movement of students considering the implementation of the World University Service of Canada's Student Refugee Program at TRU. A TRUSU club was formed in 2017 to fundraise and organize to implement the SRP, but was unable to secure long-term funding and maintain a viable program for student refugees.

In January 2018 this club of students approached the Union and asked that the Union assume responsibility of the program moving forward and that a referendum be scheduled in fall 2018 to propose a dedicated fee to support the program. The Board of Directors approved this request and the Equity Committee took leadership for educating Members about the program and asking them if they would like to invest in, and bring the program to TRU.

The Committee raised awareness about the program and how it works from September to November with in-person outreach, classroom talks, and digital outreach. Members were invited to sign up to a contact list to receive more information about the program and receive a reminder to vote once the referendum voting opened. The Union provided notice of the referendum to members starting in September, including the referendum question of: "Are you in favour of the Union collecting a fee of \$0.85 per credit to be used to support the operation of the World University Services of Canada Student Refugee Program at TRU."

From November 21 – 23, 2018 the Committee encouraged Members to participate in the referendum voting taking place in the Student Union Building and asked Members to vote Yes to help save lives, bring new international perspectives to TRU, and to join the national movement of Canadian universities taking action against the global refugee crisis.

Unfortunately, less than 20% of the members of the Union cast a ballot making this an invalid referendum. Voter turn-out was 15.3% with 82% of voters selecting Yes and 18% selecting No.

The Union would like to thank everyone who came out to make their voices heard in this referendum process.

Coalition Partner Equity Campaigns

Kamloops Women's March



Wolfpack Pride Game

On January 20, 2018 the Equity Committee joined several hundred community members in a march around downtown Kamloops to demonstrate public support for gender equality, and show our support for international feminist movements. The Kamloops event has grown out of the international movement sparked by the Women's March on Washington originally held in January 2016. The Committee displayed some of the Unions flags and signage to show our support.

Mental Health Awareness: "Let's Talk Day"

On January 31, 2018 the Union participated in Bell's Let's Talk Day to raise awareness about, and combat stigma against, mental health issues in Canada. TRUSU Board members and staff wore blue and engaged in a series of campus activities organized by TRU in Old Main to promote conversations around mental health and accessing mental health support s on campus or in the community. The Union also engaged in the national Let's Talk social media campaign to help raise funds for mental health services by sharing digital posts which activated donations by Bell Canada to these services.

Sexual Violence Workshop

On February 15, 2018 the Equity Committee participated in a workshop hosted by the West Coast Women's Legal Education and Action Fund to raise awareness about how the law interacts with consent, sexual violence, and social justice. This free workshop explored the legal and ethical responsibility to get consent for all sexual activity, how the law defines sexual assault and consent including situations where alcohol or drugs are involved, systems and steps in the justice system from police report to trial, and the legal and non-legal options and supports available to survivors.

KIS Diversity Walk Participation

On June 14, 2018 the Equity Committee joined dozens of community members in participating in Kamloops Immigrant Services annual “Walk to Embrace Cultural Diversity” to demonstrate appreciation for the diverse cultures that make up Kamloops. The Committee displayed some of the Unions flags and signage to show our support.

Second Annual Kamloops Pride Parade

On August 26, 2018 the Union sponsored and participated in the second annual Kamloops Pride Parade in downtown Kamloops hosted by Kamloops Pride. The Parade celebrated the LGBTQ+ community and claimed Kamloops as a safe and welcoming place for Queer folks. The Committee displayed some of the Unions flags and signage to show our support and distributed some pride buttons and fans to parade watchers.

TRU Wolfpack Pride Game

On September 29, 2018 the Equity Committee participated in the TRU Wolfpack’s Women’s Soccer Pride Game at Hillside Stadium. The game served as the launch of TRU joining the “You Can Play” initiative which promotes the equal participation of the LGBGQ+ community in sports. The Committee distributed pride buttons, swag, and a takeaway material to game attendees raising awareness about the LGBTQ+ community and the history of Pride. The Union was presented with a TRU Wolfpack Pride shirt at halftime in recognition of the LGBTQ+ equity work it does on campus and in the community.

Sexually Transmitted Infection Testing Promotion

In October 2018, the Equity Committee joined community health agencies to promote the Men’s Health Initiative’s “Prick” STI testing program. PRICK! is a private & confidential full STI testing event for all ‘guys who like guys.’ This includes but is not limited to bisexual, cis, curious, gay, guy, male, non-binary, queer, questioning, straight, trans, two-spirit and all other ‘guys who like guys’. PRICK! is a project that was created from the LGBTQ+ community, expressing the need for testing options specifically for ‘guys who like guys’ in a safe and supportive environment. Currently there are no other STI testing options in the interior of BC that cater specifically to the needs and concerns of men who have sex with men (MSM). The Committee promotes and advertises upcoming Prick testing events on campus to better serve the sexual health needs of Members.

Amnesty International Write for Rights

On December 10, 2018 the Equity Committee participated in Amnesty International’s “Write for Rights” event in Arts and Education to call attention to, and pressure governments to stop, human rights abuses around the world. Committee members joined other campus community members in writing letters to the governments of Iran, Venezuela, India, the USA, Kenya, and Kyrgyzstan to request they intervene in cases of abuse against women human rights activists. “Write for Rights” is a long-standing initiative of Amnesty International and has a proven track record of focusing public attention on government malfeasance and inaction to protect human rights.

Amnesty International Urgent Actions

The Equity Committee continued to participate in Amnesty International’s Urgent Action network in 2018 to combat injustice and inequity around the world and advance our vision of a world where everyone is treated fairly regardless of who you are, what you look like, or what you believe.

Amnesty International is a non-partisan human rights organization that conducts research and generates action to prevent and end human rights abuses, and demands justice for those whose rights have been violated around the world.

The Urgent Action Network is a group of 165,000+ volunteers in 55 countries who expose and pressure human rights violators to change their illegal and unethical behaviors including torture, extrajudicial executions, genocide, depriving equity groups of food/water/other necessities, etc. After Amnesty verifies that these types of illegal activity are happening, they distribute an Urgent Action notice to the network and ask folks to send letters, faxes, emails, and other messages to the government or organization committing these crimes to inform them that the world is watching and pressure them to stop their illegal activity immediately.

The Equity Committee reviews each urgent action notice from Amnesty, discusses the alleged rights violation, and decides if they want to participate or not. After approving participation, Committee members meet to draft a letter fulfilling the requirements of the request, have the letter signed by the Union’s President and Vice President Equity, and email, fax, or mail the letter off to the intended recipients as soon as possible.

In 2018 the Committee participated in 18 urgent actions and mailed, faxed, or emailed, 18 letters to various governments around the world requesting they investigate allegations of serious human rights abuses and take action against any illegal or unethical behavior.

Services



Services

Throughout 2018, the Union continued to deliver a consistent and comprehensive range of services, saving members both time and money, creating a community, and supporting and encouraging academic success.

Students Union Building

The Students' Union Building, now in the ninth full year since the completion of its revitalization project, continues to be a very important service for the membership and campus community. The space continues to meet the needs of members, campus faculty and staff, and the broader community by providing space for social gatherings, club gatherings, studying, food services, and as the hub for members' services.

In 2018, the Union experienced a significant increase in the volume of traffic in the building with public spaces operating at capacity and bookable rooms continuing to be well used by campus and community groups in high numbers. Formal bookable rooms experienced 8,661 hours of use in 2018 in 3,230 bookings. Incorporating anecdotal evidence with the statistical data provided by the online booking service indicates the overall room usage in the Students' Union Building continues to meet desired daily usage capacity.

Common Grounds

Common Grounds remains a successful student owned and operated food service outlet, as it continued to lead the campus industry in promoting ethical business practices that meet the

Union's principles. Traffic at Common Grounds continued to remain strong in 2018.

In 2018, Common Grounds continued to deflate the notion that it is not possible to offer an ethical product at a reasonable price as a successful business operation in the campus environment and was able to cover all of its own expenses continuing to be a self-sustaining enterprise.

Further, in 2018, the TRUSU Services Committee started the process of reviewing the Common Grounds Coffee Shop. The review consisted of a campus wide survey that was designed to get an understanding of where folks eat on campus, how often they eat on campus, and if they visited the Common Grounds Coffee Shop what was their experience like. The TRUSU Services Committee will be finalizing a report in 2019 and making recommendations to the Board on any changes that might happen. In 2018, Common Grounds has proved to be a successful service offered to the campus, and the Union will continue to monitor progress in the future.

Housing Registry

As housing in Kamloops has become increasingly difficult to secure, in 2018 the TRU Students' Union created the housing registry to make that process easier for students. Through this service, we hope to connect landlords with renters and students with their peers to facilitate housing opportunities for our members.

Only published in September 2018, the housing registry has continued to have significant traffic. Since publication it has seen an estimated 134 people create a TRUSU Housing Registry Account to post a listing. The TRU Students' Union hopes to see

continual growth in the housing registry, and for it to be able to be a reliable resource for new and existing members to secure housing in Kamloops.

Graduation Gown Rentals

In 2018, the Union maintained a graduation gown rental service that is free of charge to the membership with usage by approximately 50 individual members. Continuing from 2014, independent photography companies utilized the service and rented gowns in conjunction with offering their services on campus. Given the low input costs and relative popularity amongst a number of constituencies the Union will continue to offer the service in 2019.

Extended Health and Dental Plan

In 2018, the Union's Extended Health and Dental Plan continued to provide exceptional coverage to members.

The plan continued to feature 100% drug coverage; 80% coverage on professional services, such as chiropractors or podiatrists; 100% coverage of optical exams and glasses; 80% coverage on basic dental services; accidental death and dismemberment insurance; and travel insurance. In conjunction with offering comprehensive coverage to our members, reasonable co-payment amounts and annual benefit maximums have ensured that premiums paid by the fees collected have remained sustainable. The fee charged to members to be active on the plan is \$248 per year, and is automatically applied to members who are eligible. A similar plan on the private market would cost individual members upwards of \$2,000 a year!

In 2018, we saw significant growth in the health and dental plan with approximately 5640 members enrolled on the plan, and an additional 143 student opt ins, 29 single dependent opt ins, and 25 family opt ins.

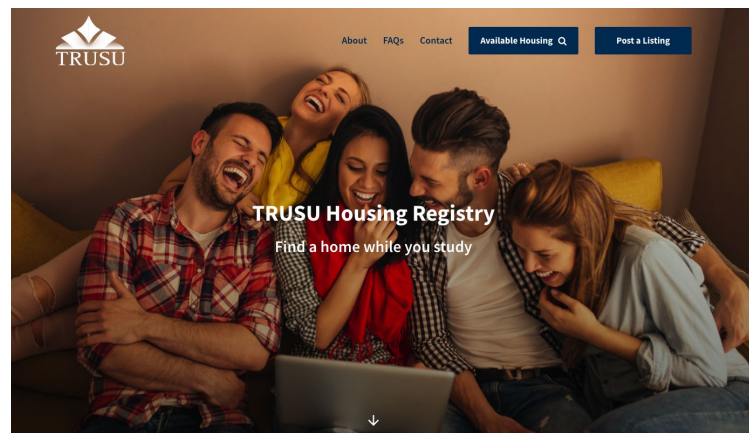
The TRUSU Services Committee also developed the first "Welcome to the Plan" newsletter email that was sent out to all students on the TRUSU Extended Health and Dental Plan. The newsletter email was sent out to 5,302 members, opened by 3,372 members resulting in an open rate of 63.6%. This promotion strategy proved to be successful in terms of the volume of health and dental inquiries through the TRUSU website, Services Coordinator, and the Members Services Desk.

The Services Committee has also continued hosting Health and Dental Information Sessions, for students to get hands on knowledge about how to access and use their student health and dental plans. The Union plans to continue hosting Health and

Dental Information Sessions, to ensure students have information point of access on campus

In addition to promoting the health and dental plan, this year the TRU Students' Union made changes to the health and dental plan in terms of coverage. Every May, the Students Union reviews the current health and dental plan in terms of coverage offered by Greenshield. In May 2018, during contract negotiations with Greenshield Canada, the TRU Students' Union expanded the contraceptive options for women on the plan, adding IUD's to the TRUSU Extended Health and Dental Plan. This change comes from 2017's Annual General Meeting when students raised the lack of contraceptive options on the plan.

The Services Committee will continue to have a presence on campus to promote the health and dental plan, as well as a digital communications presence in order to ensure students have multiple sources of information about their health and dental plan.



Housing Registry Website Launch

Employment Centre

The TRU Employment Centre has continued to provide excellent service to the membership, and has, overall, maintained its program offering. While the service continued to be of value to the membership, most are not aware of the Union's contribution to the Centre, and the relationship between the Union and the Centre has not involved a satisfactory level of reporting and collaboration.

In 2018, the Union continued to work to ensure that the Centre was more closely integrated into the Union, including both regular reporting and the development of joint initiatives.

Services

UPASS

In 2018, the UPASS continued to offer each member savings of over \$120 in monthly transit fares and further savings of over \$108 in gym membership fees at the Tournament Capital Centre per semester! Not including the free use of the aquatic centre, and reduced gas, parking, maintenance, and insurance expenses for private vehicles that are a product of using the UPASS.

The Union worked with the institution to extend the tracking process to create an online system to track different data from activated cards. This data included eligible head counts, opt outs, and cards encoded. This year the Students Union has seen a greater increase in the total amounts for students eligible for a UPASS and the approximate total of students with an active UPASS.

In 2018, the Union had 19,427 students eligible for a UPASS after opting out 219 students who fit the criteria for the process. With the 447 students opting in to the UPASS, the Union had an activation rate of 86.6% or an approximate annual total of 17, 209 students with an active UPASS.

UPASS Opt Out Provision Amendments

In 2018, the Services Committee began research to implement changes to UPASS Opt Out Provisions. Research conducted was to help get a sense of the length of time a student has to walk to the bus stop, the length of time a student spends on the bus, and the frequency rate of which the bus comes to their nearest bus stop. Currently, students are eligible to opt out of the UPASS under 4 of the following categories:

You spend the majority of the semester (seven weeks) off campus

You are enrolled in a program that is less than six weeks

Your primary residence is outside of the Kamloops Transit Area

You have a disability services bus pass that is issued by the province

The TRUSU Services Committee is still finalizing details of the Bus Route Research to serve to the Board of Directors to approve possible amendments to the UPASS Opt Out Provisions. Finally, the TRUSU Services Committee will approach the City of Kamloops to negotiate changes to the UPASS opt out provisions. The Services Committee hopes to see changes implemented in Fall 2019.

Food Bank

The Union has continued to implement a variety of donations, collections, and other strategies to ensure the demand by students in need of food was met. In 2018, usage of the Union's Food Bank continued to remain strong.

In January 2018, the TRUSU Services Committee established a partnership with McGill Housing and TRU Residence hosting a donation bin table at the end of the Winter Semester for students to donate all leftover non-perishable food items to the TRUSU Food Bank. The TRUSU Services Committee will be reaching out to McGill Housing and TRU Residence in 2019 to continue this partnership.

The TRUSU Services Committee also hosted a campus wide food drive in the Fall 2018 semester hosting several donation bins in various departments across campus. Departments that participated were: Student Services, TRU IT Services, Writing Centre, Wellness Centre, and Career and Education. The Services Committee was able to collect over 8 full bins of food over the course of the fall 2018 semester, leaving the food bank storage fully stocked at the beginning of the winter 2019 semester.

Finally, the Services Committee hosted an event on World Hunger Day, talking to students about post-secondary hunger that many university students experience, to raise awareness of the TRUSU Food Bank on campus. The TRUSU Services Committee will continue to make a presence on campus in terms of raising awareness of the service and soliciting donations.



Residence Food Bank Drive

Endowments and Bursaries

In 2018, the Union continued its annual contribution of \$15,000 to the Students' Union Endowment Fund. The fund is developing each year and its capacity to provide financial aid to students is growing. This growth allowed students to continue to access the Endowment Fund, and in 2018, the Endowment distributed \$15,531.97 to 19 students.

Emergency Bursary Program

In 2014, the Union recognized there was a deficiency in funding for students who faced unforeseen barriers while studying at Thompson Rivers University. To help members overcome these obstacles the Union, the Office of Student Awards & Financial Support worked to offer a TRUSU Emergency Bursary. This form of non-repayable, short time relief for members disbursed \$8,750.00 helping 15 students in 2018. Monies received by members were and will continue to be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Members Advocate Service

The Members Advocate provides students with support in order to ensure that all students have the opportunity to attain their educational and professional aspirations. The Members Advocate provides services based on the needs of its students. Whether it's about being on academic probation to experiencing discrimination on campus; the service exists to make sure that members are valued and supported along the journey.

The Members' Advocate is your source of information regarding your rights and responsibilities as a student, tenant, worker, and individual. Whatever issue you confront, the Advocate will help you find a solution.

TRUSU Grants Program

In 2018, the Union continued to administer the TRUSU Grants program design to assist students in attending conferences, hosting events, and hosting Educational Activities on campus. This program has continued to grow with each year of operation and 2018 was no exception.

In 2018, the Board of Directors allocated \$181,962.80 to seventy seven conference grant applications sending 498 students to conferences from Williams Lake, BC to Auckland New Zealand.

In 2018 the Board of Directors allocated \$28,954.91 to thirty seven clubs events attended by more than 4,000 students, staff, faculty, and community members.

Finally the Board of Directors allocated \$65,886.86 to twenty-two Educational Activities and Guest Lectures attended by more than three thousand students, faculty, staff, and community members.

Entertainment



Entertainment

The Union's Entertainment Committee continued to deliver safe and high quality events throughout 2018. These events served to develop a sense of community amongst members and enhance the unions' engagement with its membership. Regardless of the event, the Union continues to place safety and security of attendees as its first priority for all its events.

Back to School BBQ

The Back-to-School BBQ provides an opportunity to welcome new and returning members to campus and to connect them to campus and community services. It also serves to provide students an opportunity to participate in activities that foster social cohesion.

On September 7, 2018, the Entertainment Committee hosted the 31st Annual Back-to-School BBQ in the Campus Commons. The Back-to-School BBQ had more than 150 vendors participating in the event. The 2018 Back-to-School BBQ had a diverse range of entertainment opportunities and activities for members to participate in, including over 150 interactive tables, a main stage including 5 musical acts, and lunch provided by TRU. The event was co-hosted by the Vice President Internal and local radio personality Rich Woods. The BBQ provided more than 300 students an opportunity to make new friends and social connections. Music and Entertainment from the stage was well received from members and the Entertainment Committee will continue to explore additional entertainment opportunities at the event in the future.

The Back-to-School BBQ remains the largest and the most anticipated event of the year and the Union looks forward to hosting another successful Back-to-School BBQ in 2019.

Clubs Day

Clubs Day is an annual event hosted by the Entertainment Committee to create and foster opportunities for students to connect with each other around shared interests or perspectives.

On September 12, 2018, the Entertainment Committee hosted the annual Clubs Day on the basketball court outside of Old Main. Over 600 students and 50 groups including clubs and local non-profit organizations participated in the event. The Union continues to receive interest from campus clubs and community organizations to participate in Clubs Day. The Clubs Day continued to provide members with an introduction to student groups on campus, and non-profit organizations, and an opportunity to get involved through their interests at the beginning of the 2018/19 academic year. The Union also set up a small stage, had music, and gave away Shaved Ice to members throughout the day. The Shaved Ice station was very well received from students. The Union also set up tables for its Equity Committee, Campaigns Committee, and University Affairs Committee to promote their respective upcoming activities.

Members, student clubs and community groups expressed positive feedback about the event.

Outdoor Movie Night and Food Truck Festival

The Outdoor Movie Night is an annual event hosted to engage members, provide an opportunity to connect with their peers, and to promote the Union. This year, the committee decided to add the Food Truck Festival as part of the event. In previous years, the food trucks were hosted as part of Hungry for Choice campaign by Student Caucus.

On September 20, 2018, the Entertainment Committee started the event by hosting the Food Truck Festival followed by the Movie Screening. The event was hosted in the Campus Commons outside the Campus Activity Centre. The Food Truck Festival included five local food trucks, inflatables, and games. It was followed by an



Volunteers at the Back-to-School BBQ

Outdoor Movie Night screened on a 50 foot blow up screen with stadium surround sound, featuring Avengers – Infinity War.

The event was attended by more than 900 members. The Union and the committee is encouraged by the positive feedback regarding the addition of the Food Truck Festival to the Outdoor Movie Night and will continue to explore opportunities to provide additional entertainment opportunities at the event.

Common Voices Lecture Series

The Union hosts the Common Voices Lecture series to provide a high quality extra-curricular learning opportunity for students, faculty, staff and the broader community.

On February 7, 2018, the Union hosted its annual Common Voices Lecture Series with the keynote speaker Terry O'Reilly, the

award-winning host of the popular CBC Radio show, "Under the Influence". Terry O'Reilly spoke on the topic of "Jump the Fence: The Power of Counterintuitive Thinking".

This year, the union also provided a unique and personal experience for campus club leaders, who share interests that were aligned with O'Reilly's expertise to meet and have a conversation before the event.

The Common Voices Lecture Series is the Union's most established and well-branded event in the community.

Awards of Excellence Social

Established in 2017-18 the Unions' Awards of Excellence seeks to recognize those individuals who have gone above and beyond in service to our community and whose everyday actions demonstrate the values and commitment that makes Thompson Rivers University a worldwide destination.

On March 27, 2018, the Entertainment Committee, hosted the first annual Award of Excellence Social. The social brought together Club leaders, Student Caucus members, TRUFA representatives, CUPE 4879 representatives, and colleagues from TRUSU for an evening filled with fun, games, and a chance to recognize those who went above and beyond to make Thompson Rivers University a great place to study and work.

At the social, the Union presented 8 Awards of Excellence to students and staff who have gone above and beyond in service to our community and whose actions exemplify the Union's Mission, Vision, and Values.

The Union is encouraged by the feedback regarding the Awards of Excellence and looks forward to continuing to recognize students and staff who make positive and long-lasting impact on students.

Last Class Bash

The Union's Last Class Bash serves as a way of celebrating the end of classes and highlighting the activities of the Union through the year.

On April 13, 2018, the Entertainment Committee hosted a beverage garden, two local food trucks, and a DJ for the Annual Last Class Bash held in the Campus Commons outside the Campus Activity Centre. More than 500 members attended the event throughout the day. The event included a licensed bar provided by TRU Ancillary Services. The Union also partnered with Red Collar and Iron Roads Brewing to provide members with offerings from local Kamloops breweries.

Entertainment



Terry O'Reilly at Common Voices

The Union worked diligently to ensure that this event was held to high standards of safety and security to ensure the wellbeing of their members as well as the longevity of the event on campus.

Clubs Activities

A significant part of the Union's entertainment consists of smaller events that are supported by the Union and hosted by campus clubs recognized by the Students Union. A vibrant network of social, academic, common interest, and cultural clubs on campus allows members to connect to each other and the Union. The Union supports campus clubs by providing wide range of services and assistance to clubs.

In 2018, the Union resourced a wide variety of clubs. At the end of last year there were 85 clubs recognized by the Union, including 26 newly formed clubs. In 2018, the Union printed over 10,000 pages of event posters, leaflets, and other Club materials, and over 75 banners advertising club events with club branding. Club ticket sales from the Member Services Desk have also enhanced

the administrative process for ticket sales. The Union sold over 450 tickets from member services desk in 2018. Events included Nurses Ball, Bengali New Year, Spring Festival Gala, and more!

The Union also hosted its first ever all Club Leaders Meeting on October 13, 2018. At the meeting, campus club leaders received information about the legal and financial responsibilities of the signing authorities, club insurance coverage, how to access club services, club funding, everything else to run the club successfully during the upcoming year. This meeting also served as the opportunity to meet and network with other Club Leaders.

The Union continues to produce certificates for clubs, helping them recognize participation, work and dedication of Club participants. In 2018, the Union produced more than 300 certificates for more than 40 clubs.

In the future, the Union will investigate other options for creating a review of the year's activities and more engaging activities while maintaining a safe environment for members attending the event.



Madison Olds at the Back-to-School BBQ

Board of Directors

Board of Directors January 2018 to May 2018

President	Tatiana Gilbert
Vice President Equity	Caitlin Orteza
Vice President External.....	Cole Hickson
Vice President Internal	Janelle Lapointe
Vice President Services	Gagandeep Singh
Aboriginal Representative.....	James-Dean Aleck
Graduate Representative	Gunveet Singh
LGBTQ+ Representative.....	Dale Drozda
International Representative	Simranjit Singh
Visible Minorities Representative	Inayat Ur-Rehman
Women's Representative	Saprina Chandi
Campaigns Committee Representative.....	Aanchal Mogla
Campaigns Committee Representative.....	Brandon Hayashi
Entertainment Committee Representative	Tarranum
Entertainment Committee Representative	Richard Abankwa
Services Committee Representative	Arjun Gill
Services Committee Representative	Inderpreet Bains
University Affairs Committee Representative	Mwansa Kaunda
University Affairs Committee Representative	Mico Meige-Moffat

Board of Directors May 2018 to December 2018

President	Tatiana Gilbert
Vice President Equity	Sierra Rae
Vice President External.....	Cole Hickson
Vice President Internal	Simranjit Singh
Vice President Services	Samantha Baker
Aboriginal Representative.....	James-Dean Aleck
Graduate Representative	Fatimah Abdullahi
LGBTQ+ Representative.....	Beckham Evans
International Representative	Giriraj Ojha
Visible Minorities Representative (May-Aug)	Ibrahim Mussa
Visible Minorities Representative (Sep-Dec)	Brandon Hayashi
Women's Representative	Elycia Finch
Campaigns Committee Representative.....	Aria Kornas
Campaigns Committee Representative.....	Nicholas Warner
Entertainment Committee Representative	Christian Andrews
Entertainment Committee Representative	Arman Gill
Services Committee Representative	Swagatam Majumder
Services Committee Representative	Abu Taj
University Affairs Committee Representative	Mattias Eriksson
University Affairs Committee Representative	Mico Meige-Moffat

