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## **USSU Report to University Council**

November 2022

Respected members of the University Council, October was a busy month for USSU both in terms of advocacy and engagement. We meet with different stakeholder groups across campus to talk about student wellness and support. Additionally, we partnered with stakeholders across campus and the community to partner in various student engagement activities.

For updated information, videos and pictures, I encourage everyone to visit the USSU Instagram [@ussuexec](https://www.instagram.com/ussuexec) and the USSU website.

### **USSU Communications**

To enhance student engagement throughout the campus, the USSU collaborated with different stakeholders to create communication channels. We have been sharing our events with the USASK community through our section in the Student Newsletter and sending major events & initiatives to the ISSAC and Residence newsletters. We also are looking to collaborate with USask Residence with continuous communication channels.

### **Academic Advocacy**

As the mid-term season continued there were increased regular academic concerns. Our office continued to provide resources to our students for mental health resources, Empower Me, academic advising, Student Wellness Centre, academic policies, and others. Student concerns were surrounding override requests, missing midterms and the process to contact professors and rectify situations of concern, instructor-student interactions, and needing a student

advocate. We continue to provide support for our students and share resources for their academic rights and responsibility.

## Walking with Domestic Violence Survivors: Stories, Prevention and Healing

President Goswami and VP Storey-Gamble worked with the office of Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement, Kathy Walker, Elder Sharon O'Keeweehow, Racheal Fidler, Susan, and Darylen to organize a forum for “Walking with Domestic Violence Survivors: Stories, Prevention and Healing.” The forum was hosted by President Goswami, VP Storey-Gamble, and Tasnim Jaisee. We had great panelists who shared their stories, wisdom, and effort to educate people about sexual violence. Some of our panelists were Kimlee Wong, Jerrilee Okemaysim, Dale Apesis, Kren Wood, Camay Coghlan, Mary Culbertson, Jo-Anne Dusel, and Conrad Burns. After the forum, we attended Dinner with featured speaker Michelle Good. The author of Five Little Indians chronicles the desperate quest of residential school survivors to come to terms with their past.

USSU executives have completed USask's sexual violence and prevention module, Nexolone training, and mental first aid training, and recently USSU staff and executives have also completed Anti-racism and Anti-Oppression Training.

## Events

October is the month for midterms and a stressful environment for our students. The USSU organized various de-stress events throughout the month to help students to take small health breaks from exams.

- **Therapy Dogs:** We welcomed therapy dogs at North Concourse. This initiative was a great way for students to de-stress before the exams. The event saw a footfall of close to 235 students with 3 dogs.
- The USSU Centres saw a big increase in their numbers during this month as this marks all their major weeks, and the number of volunteers has also increased.

- The Food Centre has consistently run the Fresh Farmers Market with some amazing numbers. The centre also just ran its annual Trick or Eat event, which saw a lot of donations and engagement from students.
- The Pride Centre was the most visited centre for students this month, with their flagship event Queerpalooza happening mid-October. The centre saw 705+ visits. For Queerpalooza, the Fruit salad event saw 25+ students. The Drag story time in the library had 2 separate events with around 50 people. The biggest of them all was the Drag Show on the weekend which had over just 200 tickets sold and was a huge success. The centre would do something similar next term as well. They have regular Gaymer Nights, and now the volunteers are running two more events called Stitch and Bitch and Lego and Let go!
- The Women's Centre had Sexual Violence and Awareness week, which saw regular tabling and resource sharing, discussion groups, and a self-defense class. They are also running Who Needs Feminism which is involving regular discussion groups. They saw 250+ centre visits and approximately 40-50 people stopping by the tables for resources. Women Centre organized discussion groups, weekly desi women's night, women in stem nights, and self-defense classes, which are well attended by students. They also had a movie night hosted.
- The Help Centre had its Mental Health Awareness Week, where they organized and paid for 30 students to take their Mental Health and First Aid CPR. They also did a resource fair within the centre that had over 20 drop-ins. The centre saw over 103 visits and 1022 exam files sent.
- Safewalk is struggling to find volunteers, although they still are running a couple of walks per week. Safewalk is heavily promoted on all platforms and in different constituencies to get more traction and more volunteers. Student Crew on the other hand has been booming, and covering night events and late-night study hours. They were recently involved in taking care of the Imagnus poster sale.
- Networking Social: The Student and City of Saskatoon Connection Committee between Usask, the city and the students recently hosted a networking social to build connections and strengthen the connection with the city. This committee is looking forward to various collaborations ahead.

## **Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly**

President Goswami was invited for the Thrones Speech by the speaker for the opening of the Legislative Assembly. President Goswami and VP Storey-Gamble attended the ceremony and met with the Honourable Minister of Advance Education, Mayor Charlie Clark, the NDP caucus, and other delegates. During our visit to Regina, we met with the First Nations University and the University of Regina of Students' Union. TheUSSU is looking forward to collaborating with other post-secondary institutions across the province.

## **Bike workstations**

Student well-being is one of the priorities for the USSU. Bike workstations have been envisioned as a long-term project to enhance students' physical and mental well-being and serve as a new learning and de-stressing pathway. These workstations have been proven to enhance one's learning and adapting capabilities, increase the oxygen that reaches the brain as there is passive exercising involved and provide a medium to take a break from long sitting studying hours.

We have currently purchased three bike workstations located in Place Riel. They are a great investment for students and allow for a wholesome learning approach. VP Miglani is working with the University library to extend the project to the library to support diverse learning approaches.

## University Student Council

USC continues to advocate for students and create recommendations for the USSU executives to implement. This month, USC is working on identifying the areas where the student needs additional support and services. We plan to send these recommendations to the Provost's Office and the Dean's Offices across the campus. President Goswami will share the report with the campus community in the upcoming months.

Sincere thank you from the USSU team. Kindly reach out to Abhineet Goswami at [president@ussu.ca](mailto:president@ussu.ca) or (306) 966-6965 for any questions or suggestions.

With respect,

Abhineet Goswami, President

Sharon Jacob, VP Academic Affairs

Lia Storey-Gamble, VP Operations and Finance

Punya Miglani, VP Student Affairs