



COUNCIL REPORT

MARCH 2025



President

As we head into the last two months of our term as USSU executives, our team has been prioritizing the development of transition documents and strategies, while continuing to meet with critical units and teams across campus to advance student initiatives and projects. March is a busy time for the student body as Winter Term classes are almost over and final exam season is quickly approaching. However, students continue to amplify community and engage in events and opportunities to further their learning, connection, and identity.

Sexual Violence Prevention Policy

Since May, the USSU has been consistently advocating for changes and updates to the USask Sexual Violence Response Policy. This policy is 10 years out of date, possessing numerous broken links and past position portfolios. Across Canada, other provinces have been mandated by their provincial governments to ensure that the University revisits its institutional sexual violence prevention policies every 3-5 years. While working closely with Dr. Marjorie Delbaere to provide feedback and perspectives before the turn over of our USSU executive team, the USSU has also reached out to the Minister of Advanced Education to request that the Government considers implementing a similar policy to those across other Canadian Provinces to ensure that the University of Saskatchewan Sexual Violence Policy does not go another 10 years without changes to language and updates. Although the policy is only one way in which to discuss increased safety and security on campus, it remains a critical piece of the larger puzzle in supporting survivors and holding perpetrators accountable. As the USSU has communicated, the policy also remains an essential resource for students, staff, and faculty, and its accessibility and accuracy are necessary to ensure that members of the university community who wish to make a discourse are able.

As a result of changing leadership within student governance from year-to-year, it is easy for student actions and advocacy on topics such as policy updates to get lost in transition. It is exceptionally important to the USSU that the University of Saskatchewan Sexual Violence Prevention Policy is updated and that sexual and gender-based violence prevention remains a priority of the institution. The USSU have been reassured that active discussion and consultation with students and the university community will take place in the fall to ensure that stakeholders, knowledge providers, and those with lived experience can influence the language of the policy. As a space which holds institutional memory, the USSU asks members of University Council to remain aware of updates and discussions to the Sexual Violence Prevention Policy in the near future. It is the responsibility of the university to believe survivors and uplift ways to actively contribute to sexual and gender-based violence prevention. The USSU is optimistic that updates to this policy will be approved by December 2026. Although this timeline spans beyond our current terms, updates and consultation for the policy must remain a priority of the university. Additionally, beyond cameras and lights, the university must do a better job at demonstrating its

commitment to sexual and gender-based violence prevention. This means investing in prevention practices, education, and support for survivors.

Indigenous Achievement Week

The USSU would like to acknowledge that, earlier this month from March 9-13, the University celebrated Indigenous Achievement Week. Celebrating the success of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, staff, faculty, and alumni across the community, this week is incredibly important to honour and uplift. The USSU is extremely grateful to the work and dedication of Indigenous students at USask. This past year the USSU has been privileged to work with and alongside Indigenous student leaders to build connections, relationships, and community, as well as learn from one another.

International Women's Day

On March 9, 2026, the USSU and USSU Women's Centre, in partnership with the USask Menstrual Project, celebrated International Women's Day (March 8). Bringing together students and members of the community, this Gala centred on action, justice, and rights for women and feminists internationally. It is important to acknowledge that International Women's Day is not just about women. It is about gender-diverse people, trans folks, it is about intersectional feminism, celebrating people of colour, and folks with disabilities. International Women's Day is about recognizing the feminist fight for equity, liberation, and access to rights. It is about justice and most importantly action. It is a time for us to focus on reproductive rights, as well as to not only remember but to name the violence and oppression that is perpetuated daily around the world. International Women's Day is about recognizing that our history does not repeat itself as much as it rhymes. International Women's Day is about acknowledging that feminism is not just about waves of change, from this arbitrary idea of the first, second, and third wave, until now. And although it is important to look to the past, and respect the many shoulders of women and feminists for whom we now stand upon, it is ever more important to realize that there are histories of Indigenous women, trans women, women of colour, and disabled women that have been lost to time, intentionally erased, and that remain untold.

It is extremely important that amidst a world where rights are being rolled back and programs which encourage critical engagement with social justice topics are being devalued that events and gatherings like International Women's Day Galas continue to exist and are supported.

Respectfully submitted,



Emma Wintermute

President

University of Saskatchewan Students' Union

Vice-President Operations & Finance

Summary:

With the winter term in full swing, our tenures as USSU executives are nearly complete. Although the rapid progress of my term has caught me somewhat off guard, I remain engaged with my portfolio—campus groups, finances, policies, and Transit.

Campus Groups

At the time of writing, there are 178 fully ratified campus groups, with one provisionally ratified, pending payment of its ratification fees. This represents a large increase in the number of groups.

February and March have been extraordinarily busy for grants. We approved a total of **\$30,556.96** in group funding. The breakdown is as follows:

- **\$1,000.00** in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion funding
- **\$1,175.26** in Executive Sponsorship
- **\$1,900.00** in Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression funding
- **\$26,481.70** in Projects & Initiatives grants

Small policy changes were made in the past two months to provide clearer instructions on grant reimbursements and terms and conditions.

USSU Operations

Much of my time in February and March has been spent on preparing our annual operating budget for the 2026-27 year. We have carefully planned our budget to reflect evolving student needs and to manage the economic challenges facing the USSU. As our annual audit revealed, we have strong accounting practices, responsible investments, and an effective long-term debt management plan that allows us to continue serving our members at the same level we currently do.

The budget will be presented to the University Students' Council on March 26, 2026. This meeting is open to all undergraduate students if they wish to attend.

Meetings and Advocacy

Our Advanced Education Lobbying Document is now completed. This document compiles a list of recommendations to the Ministry of Advanced Education from the USSU to improve conditions for students in Saskatchewan's post-secondary institutions.

The document is available online on our [website](#) for viewing, and has been provided to the Minister and Opposition Critic for Advanced Education.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Owen Deis".

Owen Deis
Vice-President (Operations & Finance)
University of Saskatchewan Students' Union

Vice-President Academic Affairs

Throughout March, my office has continued to focus on several key priorities related to academic advocacy, transparency, and student support within the University of Saskatchewan community.

The past month has involved continued progress on initiatives related to academic transparency, policy review, and academic integrity processes. At the same time, a significant portion of the work undertaken in this portfolio continues to involve direct casework with students. These conversations often provide important insights into how institutional policies and procedures function in practice and help identify areas where additional clarity or support may be needed.

March has also been a time to celebrate and recognize excellence within the university community. Several important academic and recognition events have taken place over the past month, highlighting the achievements of undergraduate researchers and the many individuals across campus who contribute significantly to the student experience. Recognizing these accomplishments is an important part of fostering a strong academic culture and reinforcing the collaborative nature of the university environment.

Undergraduate Research Symposium

One of the major academic events that took place near the end of February was the Undergraduate Research Symposium, which was held on February 25. The symposium offered undergraduate students the opportunity to present their research and creative work to members of the university community. Events such as this are an integral part of the university's academic culture, as they provide students with a platform to showcase the work they have developed through coursework, independent research projects, and collaborations with faculty members.

The symposium included presentations from students across a wide range of academic disciplines. This interdisciplinary representation highlights the diversity of research taking place at the undergraduate level and demonstrates the breadth of intellectual engagement among students at the University of Saskatchewan. Students presented projects that reflected a variety of research methods and scholarly approaches, ranging from scientific investigation and data analysis to qualitative research and creative scholarship.

Undergraduate research opportunities continue to play an important role in strengthening the academic experience at the university. Engaging in research allows students to move beyond the passive consumption of knowledge and instead participate actively in the process of discovery and inquiry. Through research experiences, students develop skills in critical thinking, problem

solving, collaboration, and independent learning. These skills are widely recognized as essential components of a high-quality university education.

Project Symposium Awards Ceremony

Following the symposium, the Project Symposium Awards Ceremony took place on March 2. The awards ceremony recognized students whose work demonstrated exceptional academic quality, creativity, and impact. Celebrating these accomplishments is an important way of acknowledging the dedication and effort students invest in their research and scholarly projects.

The awards also serve as a reminder of the remarkable work that undergraduate students are capable of producing when they are provided with opportunities to engage deeply with their academic interests. Recognizing student achievements helps reinforce the value that the university places on undergraduate scholarship and highlights the important role that research and experiential learning play within the undergraduate curriculum.

From a broader institutional perspective, events such as the symposium and the associated awards ceremony contribute to building a strong culture of research engagement across the university. They also provide an opportunity for the wider campus community to witness the innovative work being conducted by students and to celebrate the intellectual contributions of undergraduate scholars.

USSU Excellence Awards Ceremony

Another significant event taking place this month is the USSU Excellence Awards Ceremony, scheduled for March 21. The Excellence Awards are an annual initiative that recognizes individuals within the University of Saskatchewan community whose work has significantly enhanced the undergraduate student experience. The awards are grounded in the idea that an “Experience in Excellence” is realized through recognizing individuals whose leadership and commitment improve both the academic and non-academic environments for undergraduate students.

The ceremony highlights contributions from across the university community, including faculty members, staff, and students. By celebrating these achievements, the awards help reinforce a culture that values mentorship, leadership, service, and dedication to student success.

A central component of the Excellence Awards is the Teaching Excellence Awards, which recognize professors and teaching assistants who demonstrate exceptional dedication to teaching and learning. These awards are particularly meaningful because they are based on student nominations and evaluations. Students frequently identify several key qualities that define

outstanding instructors, including enthusiasm for teaching, strong organization of course materials and expectations, and fairness in evaluation practices. When these elements come together effectively, they create learning environments where students feel supported in their academic development and encouraged to explore ideas critically.

In addition to recognizing excellence in teaching, the awards also acknowledge the contributions of staff members who play important roles in supporting the student experience. The Instructional Support Award recognizes individuals who provide outstanding support in the delivery of instructional resources and academic programming. Staff members working in these roles often contribute significantly to the functioning of courses and programs, helping ensure that students have access to the tools and resources they need to succeed academically.

The awards also recognize staff members whose work contributes to the broader student experience across campus. The Doug Favell U of S Staff Spirit Award celebrates non-academic university staff who demonstrate exceptional dedication to supporting students, while the Freda Salikin USSU Staff Spirit Award recognizes the important contributions of USSU staff members who help facilitate student services and campus initiatives.

Student leadership and volunteerism are also important components of the Excellence Awards. Several awards recognize students who have made meaningful contributions to the university community through leadership, service, and engagement. The Walter Murray Leadership Award celebrates students who have demonstrated leadership beyond the call of duty in enhancing the student experience, while the Vera Pezer Award for Student Enhancement recognizes students who have contributed significantly to improving the non-academic aspects of campus life through volunteer work and community engagement.

The ceremony also includes recognition for individuals who demonstrate leadership and compassion through their involvement with the USSU Centres. The USSU Centre Awards highlight individuals who have contributed to supporting students who may be facing significant challenges and who help create inclusive and supportive communities across campus.

Overall, the USSU Excellence Awards Ceremony represents an important opportunity to celebrate the individuals who contribute to making the University of Saskatchewan a vibrant and supportive learning environment. Faculty, staff, and students each play a vital role in shaping the campus community, and recognizing these contributions helps reinforce the collaborative spirit that defines the university experience.

Academic Transparency Initiatives

Another area of focus during the past month has involved ongoing work related to academic transparency for students. Students frequently express a desire for clearer and more accessible information about their academic experiences, including information that can help them make informed decisions about courses, instructors, and academic pathways.

My office has continued to participate in discussions surrounding initiatives that aim to improve transparency within the academic system. While some of these initiatives are still under development and involve collaboration with multiple stakeholders across the university, the overarching goal is to ensure that students have access to meaningful academic information in ways that support informed decision-making.

Improving transparency can help students feel more empowered in navigating their academic journeys and can strengthen trust between students and the institution. When students have access to clear information about course expectations, teaching environments, and evaluation practices, they are better positioned to engage fully with their academic experiences.

Related discussions have also taken place regarding broader assessment policies and practices. Assessment plays a central role in the academic experience, and ensuring that evaluation methods are communicated clearly and applied consistently is an important component of supporting student success. Conversations around assessment policy often focus on improving clarity in evaluation expectations and ensuring that assessment practices align with principles of fairness and transparency.

These discussions remain ongoing and involve collaboration across multiple governance bodies and administrative units. Ensuring that student perspectives are represented in these conversations continues to be an important priority for my office.

Academic Misconduct Regulations and Sanctions Guidelines

Another significant area of work this month has involved discussions related to academic misconduct processes and the broader regulatory framework governing academic integrity cases. Academic integrity policies play an important role in maintaining fairness and trust within the academic environment, but it is equally important that the processes used to address misconduct concerns are clear, consistent, and accessible to students.

Recent conversations have focused on potential updates to the academic misconduct regulations. These discussions involve reviewing how existing policies operate in practice and identifying areas where improvements could strengthen clarity and procedural fairness.

One topic that has received particular attention is the potential development of sanctions guidelines that could assist hearing boards when determining outcomes in academic misconduct cases. Hearing boards currently exercise significant discretion when determining appropriate sanctions, which allows them to consider the unique circumstances of each case. However, without clear reference points, it can sometimes be difficult to ensure consistency across cases.

The development of sanctions guidelines could provide hearing boards with an additional framework that supports greater consistency while still allowing flexibility to account for individual circumstances. Such guidelines could also help improve transparency for students by providing clearer expectations regarding how misconduct cases are typically addressed.

These discussions remain ongoing and involve collaboration between students, faculty members, and administrative leaders involved in academic governance. Ensuring that student perspectives are considered throughout this process continues to be a central priority.

Student Advocacy and Individual Casework

A significant portion of the VP Academic role continues to involve working directly with students who are navigating individual academic concerns. Throughout the past month, my office has met with students seeking support on a wide range of issues, including academic misconduct allegations, appeals processes, grading disputes, and concerns related to course administration or communication with instructors.

Supporting students in these situations often involves helping them understand relevant university policies, preparing them for meetings or hearings, and ensuring that they are aware of the resources available to them within the university system. In some cases, my role also involves communicating with instructors or administrators to clarify procedural issues or help facilitate constructive dialogue.

Many of these individual cases also highlight broader systemic issues that may warrant further discussion at the policy level. When patterns emerge, for example, recurring concerns related to course structures, departmental practices, or communication challenges, these observations can inform broader advocacy efforts within governance spaces.

Ensuring that student voices are heard within these conversations remains an essential aspect of the VP Academic portfolio. By connecting individual student experiences with institutional policy discussions, it becomes possible to identify opportunities for improvements that benefit the broader student community.

Conclusion

Overall, March has been a month characterized by both celebration and continued advocacy work. Events such as the Undergraduate Research Symposium and the upcoming USSU Excellence Awards highlight the many accomplishments of students, faculty, and staff who contribute to the academic vitality of the University of Saskatchewan. At the same time, ongoing discussions surrounding transparency initiatives, assessment policies, and academic integrity processes reflect the continued efforts to strengthen the academic environment for students.

My office remains committed to representing student perspectives within University Council and other governance spaces. By continuing to engage with students, faculty, and administrators, we can work collaboratively to ensure that the university's academic systems remain fair, transparent, and supportive of student success.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Norah Jacob". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Norah Jacob

Vice-President (Academic Affairs)

University of Saskatchewan Students' Union

Vice-President Student Affairs

Events

The last few months of the current executive's term has not meant slowing down! We have had many events in the past few months, and more to come. Since January, we have hosted our USSU Talent Show, two Skate Nights at the Brunskill Outdoor Rink, A Valentine's Day Sustainable Craft Day in partnership with the Office of Sustainability, A Space for You with the USask Faith Leaders, our final Style Swap of the year, also with the Office of Sustainability, Inter-College Family Feud, and a Mugging event to give students free reusable travel mugs to use at coffee shops on campus. We have seen more engagement than ever in the last few months and have generated significant student interest in our recurring events, such as the Style Swap, which we hope to keep up into next year. We have a few more events planned throughout March that students can look forward to.

Student Support During Global Unrest

A prominent student concern that has come forth over the past few months has been student concern over safety, belonging, and recognition on campus with ongoing uncertainty and conflict around the world. Students, while grateful for mental health and wellness resources on campus, consistently come forward saying they feel undersupported by the university community as a whole. The USSU is working to amplify these concerns and hold space for students to share their perspectives and personal experiences. It is important to the USSU that human rights are not politicized and that, as a space for education and critical questioning, students are supported in discussing and communicating fears and perspectives about the ongoing violence, genocide, and human rights abuses taking place across our world.

University Students' Council

The two University Students' Council committees, chaired by the VP Student Affairs position, have been more active than ever. The Student Life and Sustainability has been a fantastic resource for many of our event ideas throughout the year. To date, this committee has approved over \$4500 in Sustainable Grant Funding for student initiatives on campus.

The International Student Advisory Committee has been focused on student belonging and preparation this semester. We partnered with USask Career Services to host International student focused drop-in support for resumes and job search strategies. We are planning a campaign for April to provide students encouraging messages in a variety of languages to promote belonging and wellbeing as we head into finals.

USSU Centres

Since the last University Council, the USSU Centres have been hard at work hosting multiple theme weeks to promote health, safety, and wellbeing on campus. The USSU Women's Centre

hosted Pro-Choice Awareness Week (January 26-30), the Help Centre hosted Mental Health Awareness Week (February 2-6), and the Pride Centre hosted Sex Week (February 9-13). The USSU Executive also brought EDI Week back for the first time in several years, with events such as the Women in STEM Social, and Circle of Voices with OVPIE.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily Hubick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Emily Hubick
Vice-President (Student Affairs)
University of Saskatchewan Students' Union