



COUNCIL REPORT

APRIL 2026

PLACE RIEL
STUDENT CENTRE

1 Campus Drive

President

Although April marks the end of our term as USSU Executives, the work, initiatives, and advocacy of the Students' Union as a whole are far from over. From academic to non-academic, and everything in between, prioritizing student governance, advocacy, and community has been the focus of our work throughout the 2025-2026 year. Within the Presidents portfolio, I have dedicated my year to focusing on bringing attention to the University of Saskatchewan's Sexual Violence Policy, and the need for consistent, proactive, and survivor centered responses on campus, bringing in student voices from Prince Albert Campus, as well as building relationships with Indigenous students, and speaking up about the ways which the globe impacts our student experiences.

The USSU looks forward to collaborative consultation and formal updates to the sexual violence policy, as well as ongoing discussion regarding safety and security on campus. Since May, the USSU has pushed for long-overdue updates to USask's Sexual Violence Prevention Policy, working with senior leadership to share feedback and lived experience. The USSU is also calling for mandatory policy reviews every 3–5 years, expanded prevention, survivor support, and stronger accountability. We hope to see this advocacy continue beyond the current USSU executive term. Sexual and gender-based violence prevention must remain a priority for the university community.

Additionally, moving forward and building on the relationships created and strengthened throughout this year, the USSU hopes to continue to uplift student voices at the University of Saskatchewan Prince Albert Campus. Mobilizing resources, student supports, and university resources, it is necessary to actively address the needs of all USask students. Increasingly, this must include Indigenous, northern, rural and remote student communities to ensure the success of a multitude of learners. Furthermore, as the world continues to change rapidly, the USSU encourages brave, bold conversations and collaborative dialogue to ensure that student communities feel seen, heard, and valued. Fostering these spaces is necessary to harbour empathy rather than animosity and fear.

Recently, the USSU welcomed the 2026-2027 team, USSU President, Abtin Safaeian, VP Operations and Finance, Elmer Vincent, VP Academic Affairs, Ashley Mendez, and VP Student Affairs, Azul Gonzalez Avila. Their term will begin on May 1st. We trust that this incoming team will continue to advance the USSU's initiatives, working courageously and collaboratively while remaining accountable to a diverse range of student concerns. Ultimately, on behalf of the USSU Executive team, I want to sincerely thank all members of University Council for their support, guidance, and collaborative partnerships throughout the year. We are all so grateful to have had this opportunity to critically question the world around us, advocate, engage with, and explore student governance alongside the University of Saskatchewan community.

Respectfully submitted,



Emma Wintermute

President

University of Saskatchewan Students' Union

Vice-President Operations & Finance

Campus Groups

At the time of writing, there are 183 fully ratified campus groups. This is a notable increase from last year's total of 149. With ratification expiring at the end of April, it is unlikely that any further groups that complete the process.

With so many groups, many of them brand new, I want to highlight the diversity of their interests, missions, and goals. USSU campus groups provide vital programming, resources, and support for the student body. They help students meet the challenges of academic and non-academic life, providing space and a sense of belonging. Especially in a time of increased pressure worldwide and across all areas of life, campus groups continue to be an integral part of the university experience, and we look forward to supporting them, their events/projects/initiatives, fundraisers, volunteer opportunities, and more, in years to come

Regarding campus groups, over the last 12 months, the USSU has approved **\$96,776.36** in grants to directly support them. The breakdown for these grants is as follows:

- **\$86,239.53** in Projects & Initiatives grants
- **\$4,861.57** in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion funding
- **\$3,650.00** in Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression funding
- **\$2,025.26** in Executive Sponsorship

This is nearly \$100,000 of direct financial support to campus groups. If one includes the sharp increase in in-kind services we provide to groups, the amount of support we provide is substantially higher.

Over sixty extensions of the USSU's Commercial General Liability Insurance have been provided to groups throughout the year. This enables them to host events off campus and/or with alcohol, with the reassurance that the union is here for them should something go wrong.

USSU Operations

In March, I presented the USSU's 2026-27 operating budget to the University Students' Council. Highlights are as follows:

- A \$188,817 surplus.
- Over \$80,000 in directly allocated grant funding for campus groups and students
- Over \$50,000 in in-kind services to groups and students
- Capital purchases to update Louis' to improve efficiency and service

- Updated lines freeing funding from specific initiatives to be used for projects pursued by the Executive Committee and the University Students' Council

The budget passed unanimously at Students' Council, reflecting the strong trust in the USSU's budgetary and financial management. Transparency initiatives regarding the budget are underway now that it has been approved. These have included videos, social media posts, posters, and more.

Transit

Since starting my term, I have maintained regular communication with Saskatoon Transit to ensure students receive updates on bus service quickly and efficiently. Especially with the Link corridor beginning construction on College Drive soon, and the already effective closure of University Bridge, students deserve and need to know what will be happening.

Along with the Student & City Connections Committee, I heard directly from the Link team about planned construction and its substantial impact on students' commutes to and from campus. Although not all of our concerns have been addressed, we look forward to working with both the university and the City on communicating construction plans and Transit updates.

In Closing

It is a distinct privilege to have served as Vice-President (Operations & Finance) over the past year. I am proud of this year's accomplishments, none of which could have been done without our amazing staff, student councillors, volunteers, and community partners.

Respectfully submitted,



Owen Deis

Vice-President (Operations & Finance)

Vice-President Academic

As the academic year comes to a close, this report offers an opportunity to reflect on the work undertaken throughout my term as Vice-President Academic Affairs and the priorities that have shaped my advocacy. Over the past year, my focus has been on improving transparency, accessibility, and fairness within the academic experience, while ensuring that student voices are meaningfully represented in institutional decision-making. Much of this work has been long-term and systemic in nature, grounded in the understanding that meaningful academic change requires sustained collaboration among students, faculty, and administration.

A central priority of my term has been increasing the accessibility and usefulness of academic information for students. This is most clearly reflected in my work on Student Learning Experience Questionnaires (SLEQs), where I spent a significant portion of the year advocating for more transparent access to evaluation data. Through ongoing discussions at TLARC and participation in a dedicated subcommittee, I worked to explore models that would allow students to view aggregated results in a way that is both meaningful and responsible. This work has required careful navigation of concerns around context, interpretation, and faculty autonomy, but I have been encouraged by a growing openness to the idea that students should have greater insight into course experiences. While this initiative is still in progress, there is clear momentum toward a more transparent and student-informed system.

Closely connected to this has been a broader effort to make academic systems and policies more understandable and accessible. This became particularly important in the context of the updated Assessment Policy, which was passed at University Council in March following several years of development. My focus throughout this process was not only on supporting the policy itself, but on thinking critically about how it would be implemented and communicated. Policies are only as effective as students' ability to understand and engage with them, and much of my work involved identifying potential areas of confusion and considering how information could be shared more clearly. This has reinforced my belief that accessibility must be embedded not only in policy design, but in how policies are communicated in practice.

Another significant area of focus has been academic integrity and the systems that support it. Early in my term, I contributed to ongoing revisions of the Academic Misconduct Regulations. In parallel, I spent considerable time examining the hearing system more broadly, with the goal of making it more transparent, consistent, and student-friendly. Many students encounter these processes under stressful circumstances and with limited prior knowledge, which can make an already difficult situation more overwhelming. My work in this area has emphasized the need for clearer expectations, more accessible resources, and more consistent procedural standards.

This focus on consistency and fairness is also reflected in my work on the development of a sanctions guide for academic misconduct cases. This has been one of the most significant ongoing projects of my term, aimed at creating clearer and more predictable outcomes across colleges. Through extensive conversations with academic deans and administrators, I have seen strong support for the idea that students should have a better understanding of potential consequences and that decisions should be applied more consistently. While the guide is still in development, it represents an important step toward reducing uncertainty and improving trust in the academic integrity process.

Beyond policy work, I have also been deeply engaged in addressing the structural and experiential challenges students face. This has included working with the Colleges of Nursing and Education to better understand ongoing issues related to practicums and clinical placements. These experiences are essential components of many programs, yet they often present logistical challenges and inconsistencies that can significantly impact students. Through collaboration with college leadership and ESS, we identified areas for improvement and began developing more coordinated approaches. This work highlighted the importance of cross-campus collaboration and the need to ensure that experiential learning opportunities are both high-quality and well-supported.

Improving student support systems has also been a key area of advocacy throughout my term. One of the most notable gaps at USask is the absence of a dedicated Ombudsperson, which limits access to independent, confidential support for students navigating academic challenges. While there are barriers to establishing this role, I believe it remains an important area for continued institutional consideration. At the same time, I worked extensively with the alternative approaches to strengthening support structures, including the Student Support Navigator and the Intake Officer. Expanding similar initiatives could play a significant role in improving how students access guidance and support across the university.

Affordability and accessibility in course materials have been another important focus, particularly through my advocacy for Open Educational Resources (OERs). Over the course of the year, I added to the USSU lobbying document, outlining the need for increased support for OER adoption and communicated directly with the provincial government to highlight this issue. This work aligns with broader efforts to expand OER availability through Pressbooks and reflects a commitment to reducing financial barriers for students. Increasing the use of OERs not only improves affordability but also encourages innovation in teaching and learning, making this an area with significant long-term potential.

In addition to these initiatives, I placed a strong emphasis on expanding undergraduate research opportunities. This was a particularly intentional focus of my term, as I sought to better understand how students engage with research and where barriers exist. Through extensive

conversations with campus partners, it became clear that many students are interested in research but lack clear pathways to get involved. In response, I worked on identifying strategies to improve visibility, accessibility, and mentorship in this space. This included developing a framework for an undergraduate-to-graduate mentorship program and integrating research-focused programming into USSU initiatives such as Academic Awareness Week. This work reinforced the importance of creating structured, supportive entry points for students and ensuring that research opportunities are accessible to a broader range of individuals.

As I reflect on this year, I am proud of the progress that has been made across these areas, while also recognizing that much of this work will continue beyond my term. Many of these initiatives are inherently long-term, requiring sustained advocacy and collaboration to fully realize their impact. I am confident, however, that strong foundations have been established and that there is meaningful momentum moving forward.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such dedicated and thoughtful individuals throughout this process! The collaboration between students, faculty, and administration has been instrumental in advancing these initiatives, and I have consistently been impressed by the willingness of individuals across the institution to engage in constructive and meaningful dialogue. This experience has been both professionally and personally rewarding, and I am endlessly thankful to have been part of this work.

Finally, I am very excited for the incoming team of student leaders! Their energy, creativity, and commitment to advocacy give me great confidence in the future of this portfolio. I look forward to seeing how they build on this work, continue to advance these initiatives, and bring new ideas to enhance the academic experience at USask.

It has been an honour to serve in this role and to contribute to the work of University Council, and I appreciate all the incredible work that has been done this year!

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

With the lead-up to finals for the Winter term, the last two months of my term have focused on student supports, engagement, and community-building events.

This past month, the USSU hosted our annual “muggings” in collaboration with the USask Office of Sustainability, where we handed out reusable mugs to students across campus with team members of the USask Women’s Soccer team. VP Jacob and I emceed Global Village alongside the GSA President, an event put on by the International Student and Study Abroad Center, featuring amazing student performances, music, and, of course, food. We also hosted our Year-End Party at Louis’ to wrap up the year, and it was great to see all the students who came out and made it a huge success. As we enter finals, we are looking forward to distributing our Finals Study Bags, which include resources to support students through the difficult academic period.

The USSU Centres are also wrapping up their year, and have done an absolutely terrific job. To date, the centres have had over 8,000 drop-ins, distributed over 4,000 menstrual products, given out over 1,100 resources, and provided peer support over 2,000 times. These Centres could not exist without the support of all of our amazing student volunteers. Our USSU Centre Coordinators, with the support of these amazing volunteers, have hosted a variety of discussion nights and events throughout the year, including Take Back the Night, Mental Health Awareness Week, Drag Shows, Trans Talk Tuesdays, Women’s Wellness, Paint Nights, and more. A highlight of these was the collaboration between the USSU Women’s and Pride Centres and the ASSU to fundraise for Saskatoon Sexual Health, raising \$2000. The new USSU Centres team has been hired for the 2026-2027 year and will be transitioning into their roles throughout April.

President Wintermute and I have continued to advocate for updates to the Sexual Violence Policy and Procedures, as well as a refreshed sexual and gender-based violence campaign on campus. This work has been a cornerstone of my position this year, and we appreciate all of the productive conversations we have had with the university regarding movement on this and their dedication to involving student voices in the process.

In addition, the USSU continues to encourage the university to continue seeking out and centering student perspectives in its communications related to ongoing global unrest and geopolitical distress. During periods of global uncertainty and conflict, institutional messaging significantly affects how students feel supported, represented, and informed. We have emphasized the importance of transparent, compassionate, and timely communication that recognizes the diverse backgrounds and lived experiences of our student community, particularly those directly affected by global events. Ensuring that student voices are meaningfully included in these conversations helps foster trust, a sense of belonging, and a campus environment that acknowledges the real-world contexts students bring with them into the classroom and broader university life.

I have been so grateful to work with so many amazing folks and campus units this year to improve non-academic student life. We appreciate every conversation we have had with staff,

faculty, and administration, and the emphasis on student voices that we came into our positions hoping to further this year.

We are currently in the process of transitioning the new 2026-2027 USSU Executive team and are very much looking forward to seeing what they will bring to the positions and achieve in their new roles. We wish them the best in their terms and know they will bring new perspectives, ideas, and initiatives to the roles that will continue to improve student life at the University of Saskatchewan.

It has been an absolute honour and privilege to serve in this role for the last year, and I am eternally grateful to every student, staff, and faculty member who has made all the work done this year possible.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily Hubick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Emily Hubick

Vice-President (Student Affairs)

University of Saskatchewan Students' Union