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University Council
October 2026 Report

September marked the official start of the academic year, and the USSU welcomed students back after months of planning with our executive team and USSU Centres. Our President addressed new students at USask Fall Welcome, and our team connected with students at our Welcome Week tables in Place Riel, the Gordon Oakes Indigenous Student Welcome, and the USask Residence Welcome. We also travelled to the Prince Albert Campus for their Welcome Week, introducing ourselves at orientation and opening a direct line of communication with students there. Throughout the month, our executives joined students at events such as Residence Fest, Homecoming, and the Good Breakfast.

Student affordability and reconciliation remain our two central priorities, aligned with UPlan 2035. We continue to advocate with senior leadership for increased scholarship and bursary funding, helped review fall award applications on the Scholarships and Awards Committee, and produced a video guiding students through the bursary application process. To build lasting capacity, the USSU is exploring an endowment whose returns would fund scholarships, bursaries, and emergency financial aid. uSave continued to grow, with 15 to 20 more local businesses joining in September, and its dedicated website is complete and ready to launch. uExchange is also complete, supported by printed flyers and promotional videos, with further outreach and possible incentives planned for October and November. We are also exploring a more flexible tuition payment plan with university administration.

Student safety and support remained foundational to our work. During the USSU Women's Centre Sexual Violence Awareness Week, we took part and joined the Take Back the Night march on campus. Following a search by the College of Law, space has been secured for a pro bono student-run clinic, with the goal of opening this academic year, and the USSU will promote the service ahead of its launch. Direct advocacy also continued, with 10 new student cases opened and 5 more in progress.

Reconciliation remained central to our work this term. Our executive stood together at the flag raising for residential school survivors at Saskatoon City Hall, filmed the USSU's National Day

for Truth and Reconciliation video, and attended the Saskatoon Tribal Council Annual Pow Wow. On Orange Shirt Day, our President completed a 10 km run to honour residential school survivors and remember the children who did not return home. We have also begun a community quilt project tied to Truth and Reconciliation, which will continue over the coming months.

Empowering student groups was another major focus. During Campus Group Week, clubs hosted tables in the Arts Tunnel and North Concourse over five days, and we delivered two workshops for group leaders: one on ratification and USSU funding, and one with the University Library on insurance, space bookings, and copyright for film screenings. The executive also approved 35 Projects and Initiatives requests totalling $7,566.25: $4,304.29 in cash sponsorship, $1,690.16 in XL Print and Design credit, and $1,571.80 in Louis' credit. Recipients included college societies, cultural and faith associations, engineering design teams, and charitable clubs.

Strong relationships with university leadership continued to guide our advocacy. At the President's Executive Committee, we raised student priorities directly with senior leadership, including scholarships, bursaries, and open educational resources. Our executives also represented students on the Board of Governors and its Audit and Finance Committee; the Council Governance, Academic Programs, and Planning and Priorities Committees; the Provost and Vice Provost Search Committee; and the Provost's Advisory Committees on Accessibility, the Scarborough Charter, and Gender and Sexual Diversity. We also reviewed the USSU's audited financial statements with KPMG to keep student fees accountable. To strengthen collaboration, we are establishing a monthly meeting of student union presidents from across Canada, beginning with the Capilano Students' Union, and launching a monthly meeting of the Association of Constituency Presidents.

In the coming weeks, the USSU will launch the uSave website, convene the first national meeting of student union presidents, and meet with the University Library on the ethical questions AI raises for students. On behalf of the USSU and University of Saskatchewan students, we are grateful to share our priorities, initiatives, and reflections with University Council, and we look forward to continued collaboration this term.

Reflections from VP Gonzalez Avila (she/her)



September marked the official start of the academic year, and it has been a full and meaningful month.

USSU Welcome Week was the highlight; after months of collaborative planning with the executive team and USSU Centres, we welcome students back to campus through a series of events, including our participation in the USask Welcome, the Gordon Oakes Indigenous Student Welcome, the USask Residence Welcome, and the Prince Albert Campus Welcome. Connecting with students in those first days of the year was incredibly rewarding and set a strong tone for the term ahead.

A significant focus this month was Sexual Violence Awareness Week, where I worked closely with the Women's Centre. Together, we created a poster in support of survivors, and I participated in Take Back the Night, a march against sexual and gender-based violence. This was a meaningful opportunity to show up for students and stand alongside the campus community on an issue that matters deeply.

September also marked our first University Student Council meeting, where we came together to align on priorities and plan upcoming initiatives for the fall term. On the advocacy side, I have continued exploring the possibility of implementing a more flexible tuition payment plan for students, maintaining ongoing conversations with relevant university staff to understand what options may be feasible.

I also continued attending Provost's Advisory Committee meetings on Accessibility, the Scarborough Charter, and Gender & Sexual Diversity, bringing the student perspective to those ongoing institutional conversations.

Finally, I have begun work on a community quilt project tied to Truth and Reconciliation; a collaborative, community-centred initiative that will continue into the coming months. I look forward to sharing more updates on this as it develops.

Reflections from VP Mendez Rosales (she/her)



September was a busy start to the academic year, focused on welcoming students and finishing our major projects. We helped with Welcome Week swag, the New Indigenous Student Welcome, the USask Welcome, and USSU Welcome Week. The team and I also travelled to our Prince Albert Campus to take part in their Welcome Week Festivities. We spoke with everyone at their orientation meeting, introduced ourselves, handed out free items, and opened a line of communication with students there. Academic Awareness Week wrapped up after a lot of preparation.

I'm also happy to report that uExchange is finished, with flyers printed for marketing and a promotional video with Abtin Safaeian. We expect this to bring more attention to the website and encourage students to use it. As September slows down, so does the traffic to the site, this was anticipated in the planning phase. In October and November, we will plan more promotion and possible incentives to encourage students to list their textbooks and visit uExchange.

On the governance side, I attended the University Students' Council (USC), its pre-meetings, and a session on USC expectations. I also sat on the Academic Programs Committee (APC) and the Provost and Vice Provost Search Committee, and attended the PEC Student Executives monthly meeting. I look forward to my upcoming meeting with Elena Geller from the Library about AI and the ethical issues students may face.

Student advocacy remained a priority. I opened 10 new student cases and had 5 more in progress, in addition to those handled by the Academic and Governance Assistant. Overall, September was a great time to meet new students and connect with them. We opened lots of lines of communication with USASK staff and admin for possible future collaborations.

Reflections from VP Vincent (he/him)



September brought the campus back to life, and as Vice-President of Operations and Finance, I focused on two areas: supporting the student groups and further helping students financially through our discount partnership program.

The highlight of the month was Campus Group Week. Over five days, clubs set up tables in the Arts Tunnel and North Concourse, giving students an easy way to find communities that match their interests. I also delivered two workshops for group leaders: one walking through ratification and USSU funding, and a second, run in partnership with the University Library, covering insurance, space bookings, and copyright rules for film screenings. The week closed with a social that brought leaders from across campus together.

Investing directly in student-led programming is one of the clearest ways the USSU supports campus life. This month, the executive approved 35 Projects and Initiatives requests, totalling $7,566.25 in support: $4,304.29 in cash sponsorship, $1,690.16 in XL Print and Design credit, and $1,571.80 in Louis' credit. Recipients included college societies, cultural and faith-based associations, engineering design teams, and charitable clubs.

uSave, our student discount program, kept growing, with another 15 to 20 local businesses signing on in September. Rather than keep adding to a static PDF list, we briefly held off on new partners while I worked with President Safaeian, our IT Manager, and our design team to finish a dedicated website that lets students browse every offer in one spot. The Website is now complete and ready for launch.

On the governance and finance side, I completed orientation for the University Students' Council and the Fee Review Committee, and attended the President's Executive Committee meetings, the Planning and Priorities Committee, and September's University Council meeting. I also joined

our accounting team to review the USSU's audited financial statements with KPMG, an important step in keeping student fees accountable.

Throughout the month, I made a point of being present where students were. I greeted incoming students at USask Fall Welcome and at the USSU Welcome Week tables in Place Riel, helped run activities during Academic Awareness Week, and joined students at Homecoming, Take Back the Night, the ASSU Craft Night, and the USUSA Statue Gifting Celebration. I volunteered at the Good Breakfast with my fellow executives, attended several club events, and stood with the executive at the flag raising for residential school survivors at Saskatoon City Hall.

Heading into October, my focus is promoting the uSave website and guiding the remaining groups through ratification and funding, so that more students can get involved on campus and save money along the way.

Reflections from President Safaeian (he/him)



Since my last report to Council, the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union (USSU) has focused on two priorities to support student success: improving student affordability and advancing reconciliation and inclusion.

On affordability, I have continued to advocate with senior leadership for increased scholarship and bursary funding. To improve access to existing funding, I worked with the social media team to produce a video that guides and encourages students through the bursary application process.

Furthermore, I am exploring an endowment fund, with returns directed to scholarships, bursaries, and emergency financial aid. At a recent University Relations Development Team meeting, I shared my experience and encouraged a greater focus on fundraising for scholarships and bursaries for students in need.

The USSU's uSave discount program has expanded to more than 40 local business partners, and a dedicated website is in development through the work of VP Operations and Finance Elmer Vincent, the USSU's IT Manager, and our design team. For uExchange, we are now focused on marketing and outreach, including promotional videos produced with VP Academic Ashley Mendez Rosales to increase textbook listings and visibility.

Beyond affordability, reestablishing the student-led legal clinic is another main focus. Following a search by the College of Law, they secured space for a Pro Bono Clinic. The USSU is now focused on promoting the service ahead of its launch.

During Sexual Violence Awareness Week, the USSU partnered with the Women's Centre in support of survivors, and I joined the executive at Take Back the Night, a march against sexual violence.

As a member of the Board of Governors, I represented the student perspective at the Board's October 5 and 6 meeting. In preparation, I reviewed the Board materials, participated in the

Audit and Finance Committee meeting, and attended the Council Governance Committee meeting.

At the President's Executive Committee meeting with student executives and university leadership, we raised student priorities directly with senior leadership, including improving scholarships and bursaries and expanding open educational resources.

The USSU is also strengthening collaboration among student leaders. I am establishing a monthly meeting of student union presidents from across Canada to share approaches and bring effective solutions to USask, beginning with the Capilano Students' Union. On campus, I am working to start a monthly meeting of the Association of Constituency Presidents to give student leaders from every college a regular forum to collaborate with the USSU.

Reconciliation remained central to the USSU's work this term. Alongside the USSU executive, I participated in the flag raising for residential school survivors at Saskatoon City Hall, led the filming for the USSU's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation video, and attended the Saskatoon Tribal Council Annual Pow Wow. On Orange Shirt Day, I participated in a 10-kilometre run to honour residential school survivors and remember the children who did not return home. I am now working with ISU to explore adding a new vice president position to USSU to increase Indigenous student engagement on campus. The USSU remains committed to advancing reconciliation on campus.

Engagement with students remains a core part of my role. I welcomed new students with an address at Fall Welcome and have attended approximately 20 events this term, including Residence Fest, Homecoming, Spin to Give, and events hosted by the PSA, ASSU, and Gujarati Student Association. Alongside the USSU executive, I also took part in USSU Welcome Week, the Gordon Oakes Indigenous Student Welcome, and the Prince Albert Campus Welcome, where we met students at orientation and opened a direct line of communication with the campus.

In the coming weeks, the USSU will launch the uSave website and convene the first national meeting of student union presidents. Each initiative reflects the USSU's commitment to ensuring that cost, access, and belonging are not barriers to student success at USask.

Respectfully submitted,



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