Room 110, 1 Campus Drive
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7N 5A3

University of Saskatchewan Students' Union

Telephone: (306) 966-6960
Fax: (306) 966-6978
E-mail: contactus@ussu.ca
Website: www.ussu.ca

University Council
November 2026 Report

Since our last report to Council, the USSU executive has continued its work on two priorities: improving student affordability and advancing reconciliation and inclusion. On affordability, the uSave website launched on October 19, bringing every partner discount into one place. We drafted a proposal to convert the USSU's scholarship into a bursary based on financial need, prepared options for health and dental coverage enrollment for USask Prince Albert students, and asked that every student receive one free official proof of enrolment each year. We also launched a new version of the Housing Registry, continued exploring a more flexible tuition payment plan, and are developing a transit survey to gather students' experiences with Saskatoon Transit.

Direct student support remained steady through midterms. We took on many new academic cases and helped students with tuition deadlines, emergency funding and financial appeals. We also shared student concerns about the new Assessment Policy with the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching and Learning, and began planning work with nursing student associations on the challenges nursing students face.

We continued to create spaces for connection, including To Be Seen, a student mental health art exhibition held with the Student Wellness Centre during Mental Health Awareness Week. The executive also supported a Mental Health Awareness Paint Night, a Rock Climbing Social and volunteering at the Good Breakfast program.

On reconciliation, we completed the position profile and are working on bylaw amendments for a new Vice President Indigenous Initiatives and Projects, developed with the Indigenous Students' Union and Indigenous student leaders from AISES and IBSS. We also marked the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation with a needle felting event that opened with a tobacco offering and contributed to a community quilt.

For student groups, the executive approved 34 Projects and Initiatives requests totalling $10,400.23, ratified 17 more campus groups, and held the first Campus Groups Committee

meeting on October 30 to review larger funding requests. We have also begun automating USSUHub to speed up reimbursements for student leaders.

Beyond campus, we are submitting our letter to Saskatoon City Council on encampments and scheduling a meeting with the office of the Minister of Advanced Education. Nationally, the Canadian Student Union Presidents' Network we are building with the Capilano Students' Union has finalized its bylaws and policies and is now inviting about 100 student union presidents to its monthly meetings. Our executives also brought the student voice to University committees, including the President's Executive Committee, the Fee Review Committee, and the Planning and Priorities Committee.

In the coming weeks, the USSU will hold its Annual General Meeting on November 26 and visit the Prince Albert campus ahead of a possible referendum. In January, we will bring our student aid proposals to the President's Executive Committee.

Reflections from VP Gonzalez Avila (she/her)



This October, I focused on creating spaces for students to connect, while continuing to advocate for their needs behind the scenes.

On the programming side, *To Be Seen*, a mental health art exhibition, ran October 5–7 in the Place Riel North Concourse as part of Mental Health Awareness Week, in partnership with the Student Wellness Centre. It featured work from student artists exploring mental health through lived experience, focusing on healing, reflection, and connection. Our team came together afterward for a debrief to capture what we learned. I also hosted a drop-in needle felting event in recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Participants contributed pieces to an ongoing community quilt, developed in partnership with Indigenous campus partners. The event opened with a tobacco offering ceremony. In addition, I organized a Rock Climbing Social at the PAC, giving students a fun, low-barrier way to connect.

I also worked with the USSU team on updating the Housing Registry. The new version is now live and designed to make the website much easier for students to navigate. Alongside this, I continued my conversations with university staff and my search for options around a more flexible tuition payment plan.

Throughout the month, I stayed engaged in campus and university committees and meetings, including the Accessibility Committee, the Parking and Transportation Advisory Committee, the USSU quarterly meetings with Protective Services and Residence, and the Campus Planning and Development meeting. I also attended the USask Council meeting, the USSU Childcare Centre board meetings, the USSU bylaw review, and the USSU Executive, PEC, University Students' Council, and Centre meetings. These conversations help me stay informed on the issues that affect student life and bring the student perspective to the table.

Reflections from VP Mendez Rosales (she/her)



October was a busy month on the student case side. I took on many new student cases, some in my office and some over Zoom. Between the Academic Grievance Assistant and I we have been working hard to juggle our student life with student cases in the busy months of midterms. I also met with Elena Geller, the Learning Specialist, and Wendy James, Director of the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching and Learning, to discuss the new Assessment Policy that will affect students' academics and to share my perspective, along with the issues I've heard from students.

I also started drafting plans to work with the Saskatchewan Nursing Student Association and the Canadian Black Nursing Students Association on the problems nursing students have been facing at USASK. This is an issue that my predecessor mentioned to me before I started my role, and it's something I've seen through my student cases. Communications to them have not been sent, but this was brought up in the University Student Council, and great conversations were had with the nursing MSC, Counsellor Fortier. By having these conversations, I am opening lines of communication and learning more about students' lived experiences, which helps me raise awareness.

Throughout October, the Executive and I went out to support many events. We helped with Together We Felt, put on by Vice President Gonzales Avila; volunteered at the To Be Seen exhibition; and participated in the Mental Health Awareness Paint Night. We also attended the Pow Wow at SaskTel Centre for Orange Shirt Day and worked on filming our Truth and Reconciliation video to spread awareness of what the day really means. I also volunteered at Good Breakfast and met with many students who benefit from the program.

Reflections from VP Vincent (he/him)



October was a busy month focused on improving student services, supporting student groups and building better systems. As Vice-President of Operations and Finance, I focused on making student savings easier to access, strengthening support for student groups, and bringing the student voice to the City of Saskatoon.

The highlight of the month was the launch of the uSave website on October 19. uSave, the student discount program President Safaeian and I started, now has a dedicated site where students can browse every partner offer in one place. Since launch, I have been reaching out to our partner businesses so their staff know about the program and can honour the discounts at the till, and we continue to welcome new local partners.

Supporting student-led programming remained a core part of my work. This month, the executive approved 34 Projects and Initiatives requests totalling $10,400.23. We also ratified 17 more campus groups. To make this process more accountable and student-led, I launched our first Campus Groups Committee meeting on October 30. The Committee, made up of Students' Council members and Students-at-Large, now reviews larger funding requests and hears presentations directly from groups. Behind the scenes, I have been working with our IT Manager to automate USSUHub, which means fewer errors, faster reimbursements, and less back-and-forth for student leaders.

On affordability and city advocacy, I am working to launch a USSU transit survey to gather students' experiences with Saskatoon Transit. On the governance and finance side, I served on the Fee Review Committee and the Planning and Priorities Committee, providing the students' perspective on these matters.

Heading into November, my focus is on working toward automation for campus groups on the USSUHub and building our transit survey with student input.

Reflections from President Safaeian (he/him)



Over the past month, the USSU has continued its work on our two priorities: improving student affordability and advancing reconciliation and inclusion. Several of these efforts have now become concrete proposals, including awards based on financial need, health and dental options for Prince Albert students, and a new executive position developed with Indigenous student leaders.

Student aid remained my main focus. I drafted a proposal to convert the USSU's scholarship into a bursary, so that awards are based on financial need rather than academic merit.

We are also working to extend health and dental coverage to students at USask Prince Albert, who are not currently part of the USSU Health and Dental Plan. This month, I met with Dr. Jay Wilson, Principal of the USask Prince Albert campus, to discuss the plan and prepare coverage options for these students. Adding them to the plan will require University approval and a vote of the University Students' Council, followed by a referendum.

On everyday costs, I raised MyCreds document fees with the Registrar's Office after students brought them to us. A confirmation of enrolment currently costs $10 plus tax, and I have asked that every student receive one free official proof of enrolment each academic year. I also supported individual students with tuition deadlines, emergency funding, financial appeals and a tuition classification review, working closely with Student Finance and Awards and the Registrar's Office.

Students continue to ask about construction around the Bowl, so I met with the University's campus planning and facilities teams, and we are preparing updates for students on closures and walking routes. Beyond campus, the USSU's letter to Saskatoon City Council on city encampments was revised with feedback from the University Students' Council and is now being submitted to the City Clerk's Office. I am also working with the office of the Minister of Advanced Education to schedule a meeting on the USSU's provincial priorities.

Reconciliation remained central to our work. With the Indigenous Students' Union (ISU), we completed the position profile and potential Bylaw amendments for a new Vice President Indigenous Initiatives and Projects. I reviewed the portfolio with Indigenous student leaders from ISU, AISES and IBSS, requested an Elder's guidance through the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre, and discussed the position with our executives and senior managers. Following guidance from the Office of the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement, candidates for the position will be verified under the University's Indigenous Truth Policy.

Nationally, the Canadian Student Union Presidents' Network that I am building with Capilano Students' Union President Benisse Zinga has identified about 100 student union presidents across Canada. We have finalized the network's bylaws and policies and are now inviting these presidents to join its monthly meetings. We are also preparing an agreement that recognizes both unions as its founders.

In the coming weeks, the USSU will hold its Annual General Meeting on November 26, send invitations to join the national network, and visit the Prince Albert campus ahead of a possible referendum. In January, we will bring our student aid proposals to the President's Executive Committee, so that more students can afford to start and finish their degrees at USask.

Respectfully submitted,



Abtin Safaeian
President, USSU



Elmer Vincent
VP Operations and Finance, USSU



Ashley Mendez Rozalez
VP Academic, USSU



Azul González Avila
VP Student Affairs, USSU