

USSU Year-End Report:

A Year of Progress and Partnership

2024 - 2025



Our Vision

The University of Saskatchewan Students' Union strives to be the recognized leader in enhancing the student experience.

Our Mission

The University of Saskatchewan Students' Union exists to represent, serve and support the academic and non-academic needs of undergraduate students of the University of Saskatchewan through accountable, dynamic, and unified leadership. It also serves to protect and maintain the integrity of quality, accessible public education.

Our Values

The following principles shall guide the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union in all of its endeavours: innovation, integrity, mutual respect, professionalism, service, social, economic and environmental responsibility, teamwork, and trust.

This report outlines the significant strides made by the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union (USSU) during the 2024-2025 academic year. Guided by the core principles of Advocacy, Awareness, and Alliance, the USSU executive team enhanced the student experience across all facets of university life. This report highlights the key initiatives undertaken and their impact on the student body.

Advocacy

The USSU actively championed the interests of students at all levels of governance. By engaging in consistent and targeted advocacy, the USSU ensured that student concerns were heard and addressed.

University Level

- Prioritized key areas such as academics, misconduct policies, career services, campus spaces, queer housing, and safe/prayer spaces. This direct focus ensured that the most pressing needs of students were brought to the forefront in discussions with university administration.
- Addressed concerns raised by college society presidents and students with college deans and university senior administration, specifically regarding the accessibility of the scholarships portal, food insecurity, campus safety, and financial issues. These direct dialogues fostered a stronger relationship between the USSU and college leadership, allowing for more effective problem-solving.
- The Academic Advocacy Office provided crucial support to students navigating academic challenges, including misconduct allegations, appeals, and conflict resolution. This service empowered students to understand their rights and access necessary resources, leading to fairer outcomes in academic processes. The office also identified gaps in policy-driven complaint structures and explored ways to strengthen student-faculty relationships, aiming to create a more supportive academic environment.
- Visited the Prince Albert campus to understand students' unique experiences, with safety emerging as a top concern. This direct engagement demonstrated the USSU's commitment to representing all students, regardless of their campus location, and allowed for tailored advocacy efforts to address specific needs.
- Conducted a campus safety walk with university administration to identify and address safety challenges. This collaborative approach fostered a safer and more welcoming environment for all students on campus.
- Advocated for students facing an increasingly complex and inconsistent academic support system, as highlighted in the comprehensive USSU Academic Report. The report provided detailed recommendations for the university to improve its structures and processes for student support and conflict resolution, laying the groundwork for future enhancements to the student experience.
- Addressed the increasing tensions between faculty and students, urging for greater engagement and support beyond the classroom. This call for increased interaction aimed to bridge the gap between students and faculty, fostering a more collaborative and supportive academic community.

City Level

- Addressed affordable housing and transit issues, advocating for solutions that directly impact students' daily lives and access to education.
- Advocated for student interests in the transit committee, ensuring that student needs were considered in city-wide transportation planning.
- Discussed advocacy efforts with city councillors regarding traffic intersections and the BRT, as well as affordable housing for students near the university. These meetings built crucial relationships with city officials, enabling the USSU to effectively represent student needs in municipal decision-making.

Provincial Level

- Advocated for more Indigenous student scholarships and the removal of interest on student loans. These efforts aimed to reduce financial barriers to education and promote equity for Indigenous students.
- Met with the Minister of Advanced Education and the Shadow Minister to communicate key issues affecting students, such as financial aid and access to education. These high-level meetings provided a platform to directly influence provincial policy and funding decisions impacting students.
- Attended the provincial budget meeting in Regina, ensuring a student voice was present during crucial financial planning processes.

Federal Level

- Pushed for affordable housing and the inclusion of international students in the Canada Summer Jobs program, addressing critical needs for both domestic and international students.
- Joined the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) to amplify the collective voice of students and lobby the federal government on national policies impacting students. This strategic alliance provided a stronger platform for advocating for student interests at the highest level of government. Advocated for significant investments in the Student-Work Placement Program, measures to increase Canada's skilled trades workforce, adjustments to Tri-Council Agency funding, enhancements to immigration policies, and increased Indigenous post-secondary support. These comprehensive advocacy efforts aimed to create more equitable opportunities and long-term success for all students.
- Collaborated with undergraduates at Canada Research Intensive University (UCRU) for federal advocacy, broadening the reach and impact of student advocacy efforts.

Awareness

Through proactive and engaging awareness campaigns, the USSU ensured students were well-informed about crucial resources, their rights, and important campus and societal issues.

Academic Awareness

- Hosted Academic Awareness Week in September and October to familiarize undergraduate students with their rights and academic support services. This included distributing academic handbooks and resources, engaging in conversations about academic questions and rights, and launching an AI information campaign. These initiatives directly empowered students with the knowledge necessary to navigate their academic journeys successfully.

Civic Engagement

- Hosted a Mayoral candidate forum and a Provincial Elections debate watch party to inform students about their civic and provincial candidates and encourage participation in democracy. These events fostered a more engaged and informed student electorate.
- Signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with "New Majority" to promote voting on campus in the federal election. This partnership aimed to increase student participation in the democratic process and ensure their voices were heard. The USSU also facilitated successful advanced voting on campus for the federal elections, contributing to increased accessibility for student voters.

Campus Resources and Well-being

- Organized Campus Groups Week to raise awareness about the various student clubs and societies on campus. This promoted student involvement and fostered a vibrant campus community.
- Held Welcome Week events to connect with new and returning students and build community. These engaging events helped students feel more connected to the university and their peers.
- Managed the uFood program to combat food insecurity on campus, witnessing a significant increase in demand. This vital program provided essential support to students facing food insecurity, directly impacting their well-being and ability to focus on their studies.
- Organized Sexual Violence Awareness Week to educate the campus community, promote prevention, and provide support for survivors. This crucial initiative raised awareness about a critical issue and fostered a safer campus environment.
- Hosted Queerapalooza through Pride Centre to celebrate queer culture and identity, foster awareness, and build community among LGBTQ2S+ students and allies. This event promoted inclusivity and understanding on campus.
- Conducted Mental Health Awareness Week to promote mental well-being and equip students with practical tools for managing their mental health. This initiative addressed a significant need within the student population and promoted a supportive campus culture.
- Organized a Tax Information Session to provide valuable insights and tips on tax-related matters for students. This practical support helped students navigate complex administrative processes.
- Distributed exam goodie bags to support student wellness during the stressful exam season. This thoughtful gesture provided encouragement and care during a challenging time for students.
- Supported and promoted Black History Month and International Women's Day events, fostering an inclusive campus environment that recognized and valued diversity.

The USSU also held its annual executive elections, which saw a significant increase in voter turnout this year, with more than 2200 students casting their votes. This demonstrates a growing engagement of students in their student union's governance. The newly elected USSU executives for the upcoming year are: Emma Wintermute (President), Owen Dies (VP Operations and Finance), Emily Hubick (VP Student Affairs), and Norah Jacob (VP Academic Affairs). The USSU is committed to further increasing voter turnout in future elections to ensure strong student representation.

Alliance

Building strong and collaborative alliances remained a key priority for the USSU, fostering a united front to address student needs effectively.

* University Administration, Faculty, and Staff

- Executives met with college society presidents, college deans, and university senior administration to discuss student issues and explore collaborative initiatives. These meetings fostered mutual understanding and cooperation on matters impacting students.
- The VP of Operations and Finance worked to empower campus group leaders and reform campus group operations policies, strengthening the relationship between the USSU and student organizations.
- VP Student Affairs met with directors of various campus units, like Protective Services and Usask Rec, to ensure cohesive support for students, creating a more integrated network of support services.
- Collaborated with the University Library and the University of Saskatchewan Undergraduate Research Journal (USURJ) for Academic Awareness Week, leveraging university resources to enhance student awareness.
- Partnered with USask to create a banner for Pride, demonstrating a united commitment to inclusivity.
- Collaborated with the Office of Sustainability and the City of Saskatoon on Bike to Work Day, promoting sustainable practices within the university community.
- Supported and participated in the 7th annual māmowī āsohtētān Internal Truth and Reconciliation Forum and the USask Budget Town Hall, actively engaging in university-wide initiatives.
- Worked with various campus units to identify gaps in student advocacy and complaint processes and strengthen student-faculty relationships, fostering a more supportive academic environment.

* Campus Groups

- Actively involved in reforming campus group operations policies and assisting with ratifications, providing essential support for student-led initiatives.
- Created educational videos for campus group leaders, equipping them with valuable resources.
- Hosted a Campus Leaders Social to celebrate and educate campus group leaders, fostering a sense of community and providing important information.
- Collaborated with various cultural, social justice, and internationally oriented student associations for Global Village, celebrating the diversity of the student body.

External Organizations

- Attended the Student Union Development Summit (SUDS) to connect with student union leaders from across the country, fostering a national network of collaboration.
- Joined the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) to advocate at the federal level, creating a powerful national alliance for student advocacy.
- Networked with entrepreneurs and investors at the Uniting the Prairies (UP) Conference, exploring opportunities to bring entrepreneurial resources to campus.
- Met with student union executives from various provinces at the Annual Stakeholder Meeting organized by Studentcare, fostering inter-provincial collaboration on student issues.
- Signed an MOU with "New Majority" to promote voting on campus, partnering with an external organization to enhance civic engagement.
- Collaborated with the Department of Political Science to host a mayoral debate, connecting students with political discourse.
- Worked towards setting up a provincial advocacy group with the University of Regina Students' Union and Saskatchewan Polytechnic Students' Association, aiming for a unified provincial voice on student matters.
- Supported the launch of "Saskatchewan Superwomen: Challengers and Champions" by Chancellor Emerita Dr. Vera Pezer, engaging with the broader community and celebrating local achievements.



The USSU extends its sincere gratitude to all members of the University community for their continued support and commitment to the student body. We also thank the senior administration of USask for their constant collaboration on matters that impact students the most, as well as the Governance Office and other dedicated staff at the university for their invaluable assistance throughout the year.

Finally, the USSU would like to express its deep appreciation to the USSU senior management team and all the staff at the USSU for their tireless work, dedication, and support in achieving the goals and initiatives outlined in this report. Their commitment to serving the students of the University of Saskatchewan is truly commendable.

Yours Sincerely,

Krunal Chavda, Elisabeth Bauman, Moses Ahiabu and Upkar Singh