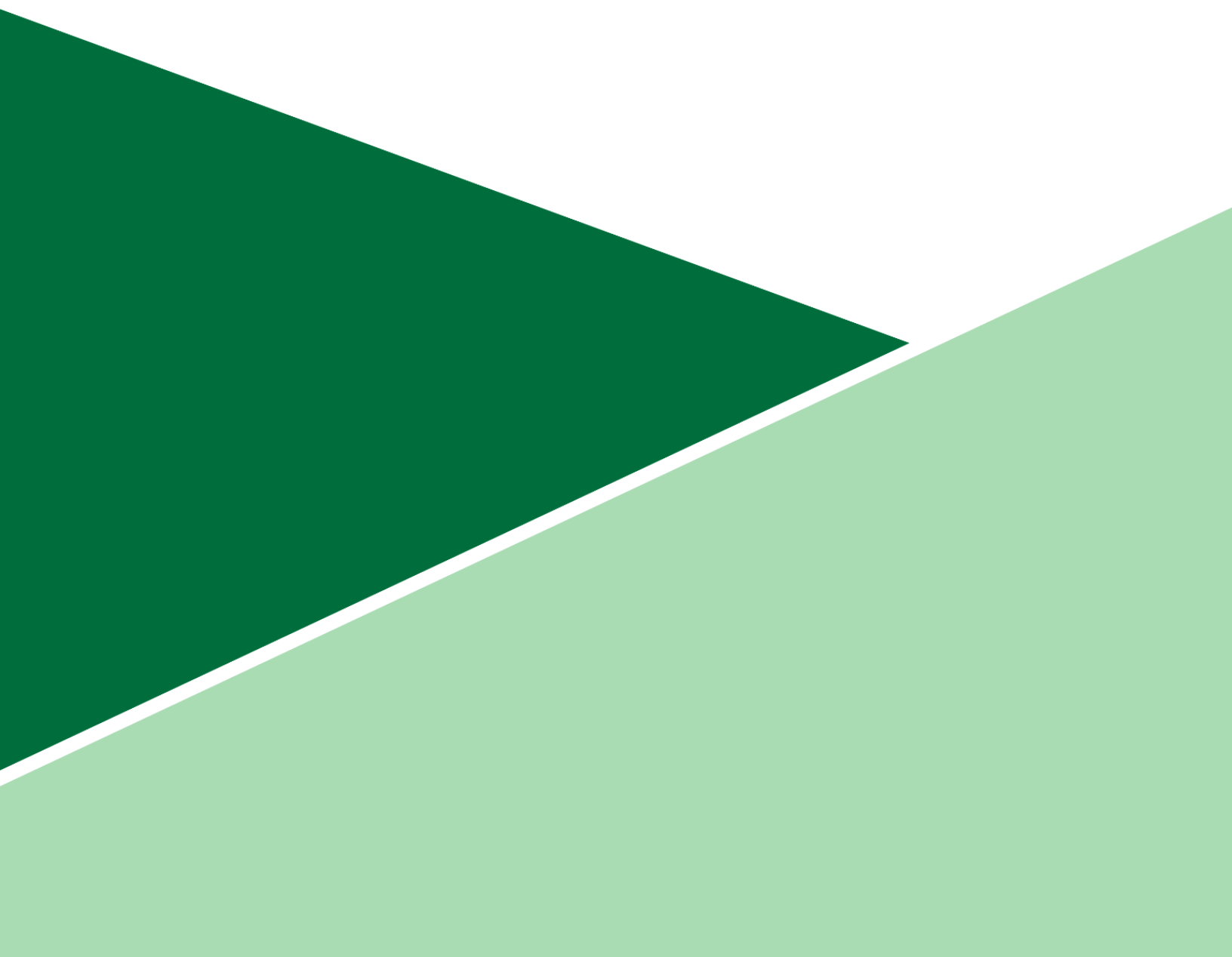




SENATE REPORT

APRIL 2026



Introduction

The USSU is grounded in the belief that meaningful progress for undergraduate students is achieved through a strong partnership between students and the University of Saskatchewan. By working collaboratively to identify shared priorities and values, we can more effectively advocate for improvements to both academic and non-academic aspects of the student experience. As student advocates, navigators, and support systems, we are an unwavering voice for undergraduates. The USSU plays a vital role in strengthening student governance and championing student needs not only within the university, but also at municipal, provincial, and federal levels. We are encouraged by the support we receive from the University Community. Specifically, several Senior Leaders, including former President Peter Stoicheff, President Vince Bruni-Bossio, Interim Provost and Vice-President Academic Dr. Patti McDougall, Interim Vice Provost Students and Learning Dr. Marjorie Delbaere, and Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement Angela Jaime, attended University Students' Council this year. We also welcomed several critical support units on campus to meet with members of our students' council. Finally, we would also like to acknowledge the work of former Chancellor Grit McCreath and current Chancellor Scott Banda for their work and engagement with the USSU.

Our commitment to advocacy is rooted in active engagement with students and campus partners to ensure responsive, informed action on issues that matter to our membership. Each executive is responsible for uplifting diverse and intersectional student perspectives across their portfolios, and as a team, we work to ensure that authentic representation is reflected within and across our community. Therefore, this report aims to capture, at a high level, some of the USSU's priorities and ongoing projects from our term.

Central to our work for the 2025-2026 academic year was centring our work in the values of courage, accountability, and collaboration. Through the culmination of our initiatives, projects, and lobbying efforts, our work intended to serve and respond to the evolving needs of students in an ever-changing world and social-political landscape. The USSU is grateful to our committed student council, constituency and college presidents, students-at-large, coordinators, and volunteers for the hours upon hours of dedication to uplifting the student experience for 2025-2026

On behalf of the 2025-2026 USSU Executive Team, we are grateful to have the opportunity to share our reflections and contributions with the University of Saskatchewan's Senate.

Acknowledging the Land

Grounded together on Treaty 6 Territory, the traditional territory of the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Dene, and Dakota Peoples, and the homeland of the Métis, the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union (USSU) works to reaffirm and strengthen relationships with Indigenous Peoples and communities.

We call upon students, staff, and faculty to recognize the colonial nature of institutionalized knowledge and to consider creative ways in which their education can aid in the ongoing processes of decolonization.

Through coming together in gratitude, humility, and respect for learning, we actively remember and work to dismantle colonialism, institutional racism, and oppression. We will amplify student voices and the voices of the land to build and guide accessible and accountable spaces, transcending colonial binaries and divisions.

In values of sustainability, integrity, and collaboration, we commit to leading, learning, and advocating for all students.

Sexual & Gender-Based Violence Prevention

Since beginning in May, the USSU has called for updates to the University of Saskatchewan's Sexual Violence Prevention Policy, which is over 10 years out of date. The USSU has worked with Senior Leadership, and specifically, Dr. Marjorie Delbaere, Interim Vice-Provost, Students and Learning to provide feedback, insight, and lived experience to help inform the future of the policy. However, a policy is no good if it does not remain relevant. The USSU has called on the Minister of Advanced Education to require the University of Saskatchewan to review the policy every 3-5 years, in line with other U15 Universities across Canada. In order to bring attention to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence on campus, the USSU has struck a collaborative coalition with the Saskatoon Sexual Assault and Information Centre to support advocacy and education. Additionally, the USSU has worked with members of the University community to develop a new University-wide Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Prevention Campaign.

In summary, the USSU continually pushes for:

- Major updates to USask's outdated Sexual Violence Prevention Policy
- Commitment to frequent updates and review of the policy
- Increased institutional investment in prevention, response, and survivor support
- Student-centred consultations and campus-wide education
- Stronger EDI-aligned frameworks that treat sexual and gender-based violence as both a safety and equity issue

Growth & Support of Campus Groups

Throughout the year, the USSU has worked to strengthen campus group support for students and make it increasingly accessible. Campus Groups help to strengthen the USask student community through promoting leadership skills, collaborative initiatives, and support. This year, the USSU ratified over 180 student groups. This demonstrates the diverse landscape of student needs, ideas, and community spaces. Additionally, the USSU worked to update Campus Group policies and procedures to improve accessibility and student understanding. Finally, the USSU successfully approved over \$75,000 in funding across multiple categories. These include Projects & Initiatives grants supporting groups with cash and credit at XL Print & Design and Louis'/Louis' Loft, EDI grants, Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression funding, and Executive Sponsorship.

In summary, the VP Operations & Finance and Campus Groups Committee achieved:

- Record-high numbers of ratified groups

- Record high amounts of approved funding
- Policy updates to provide clearer communication on expectations and guidelines
- Updates to the USSUhub, campus group policies, and GOALS training modules

Saskatoon Transit & City Relations

As a primary mode of transportation for USask students, Transit is a recurring operational theme. The USSU worked closely with Saskatoon Transit representatives to engage Student Councillors and the broader student community on the Transit system. Additionally, regarding city relations, the USSU met with Mayor Block's Chief of Staff and maintained open, accountable lines of communication throughout the academic year.

With the Link (BRT) implementation on College Drive within the next two years, the Student & City Connections Committee has been diligent in requesting information from both Saskatoon Transit and the University. Students, faculty, and staff need to know how the College Drive construction will affect their daily trips to and from campus. Now public, the plans will significantly alter operations along the College Drive corridor. Effectively, College Drive will be operating at reduced capacity for two years during construction.

In summary, the USSU's connection to Transit and City Relations was centred on:

- Ongoing Link BRT project updates
- Safety concerns (College Drive, overpass removal, winter bus delays)
- USSU's role in helping students navigate major changes to routes and fares
- Student & City Connections Committee initiatives to improve communication and engagement with Saskatoon Transit
- Frequent and open channels of communication with the Mayor of Saskatoon's Office

Student Learning Experience Questionnaires (SLEQs)

Throughout the 2025-2026 academic year, the USSU focused on enhancing the Student Learning Experience Questionnaires (SLEQs) to ensure they provide meaningful information for students and faculty alike. Recognizing that open access to course evaluations is standard practice at many U15 universities, USSU engaged in extensive collaboration with student unions across Canada to identify best practices and develop a design that would fit the University of Saskatchewan's unique context. This

included working intensively with a dedicated committee tasked with shaping the approach, consulting students from across faculties and colleges, and gathering input on the types of information they value most, from course clarity and workload to teaching quality and assessment transparency.

The goal of these efforts was to make SLEQs more student-centred and relevant, ensuring that evaluations reflect student priorities and can be used to inform ongoing discussions around teaching and learning. USSU led thoughtful, iterative discussions to integrate these insights into a cohesive SLEQ framework, emphasizing transparency, fairness, and accessibility in the evaluation process. By centring student voices in this work, the initiative aimed to create a system that not only collects data but meaningfully engages students in shaping their educational experience.

In summary, the work of USSU brought attention to:

- Student-centred design of evaluation tools and transparency in teaching feedback
- Engaging students in the iterative development of academic resources
- Collaborative learning and sharing of best practices with peer institutions
- Supporting informed dialogue between students and faculty regarding course quality
- Elevating student voices in academic decision-making and feedback systems

Academic Support and Resources

The USSU dedicated substantial effort to improving academic support and resources for students throughout the year. A major component of this work was the complete revision of the Academic Handbook, which now incorporates updated guidance on academic misconduct, AI in coursework, and clarifications designed to make policies easier to navigate.

Beyond resource development, USSU consistently provided direct support for students navigating complex academic challenges. Frequently serving as the first point of contact for appeals, academic misconduct cases, and other grievances, she ensured that students had access to clear guidance, advocacy, and explanations of their options. This consistent, hands-on support helped create a student-centred approach to navigating academic policies, fostering confidence and understanding among those facing difficult situations.

In addition, USSU advanced initiatives to expand access to Open Educational Resources (OERs), advocating for funding, support, and broader adoption among

faculty. This work aimed to reduce barriers for students, lower costs, and encourage innovative teaching practices.

In summary, the work of USSU brought attention to:

- Accessible and user-friendly academic policies for students and staff
- Proactive support for students navigating appeals, misconduct, and grievances
- Expanding equitable access to Open Educational Resources (OERs)
- Supporting student success through guidance, advocacy, and clarity
- Building long-term, sustainable resources for academic integrity and policy understanding

Undergraduate Research

Expanding undergraduate research opportunities was a key priority for USSU throughout the year. Extensive consultation with students revealed that while many undergraduates are eager to engage in research, they often face unclear pathways to involvement and limited access to mentorship. To address this, USSU worked closely with the College of Graduate and Post-Graduate Studies (CGPS), as well as faculty and student leaders, to develop a structured mentorship program connecting undergraduates with graduate students and faculty mentors. This initiative aimed to guide students through the research process, build confidence, and create approachable entry points into research and graduate studies.

USSU also worked to integrate these opportunities into broader programming, including the Graduate Opportunities Workshop hosted during Academic Awareness Week. These sessions provided hands-on support for students exploring research topics, understanding funding mechanisms, and navigating faculty mentorship, ensuring that research opportunities were not only visible but also accessible to a diverse student body.

In summary, the work of USSU brought attention to:

- Expanding access to undergraduate research opportunities
- Developing structured mentorship programs with CGPS and faculty
- Creating approachable pathways for student engagement in research
- Encouraging skill development, professional growth, and academic confidence
- Promoting inclusivity and accessibility in research participation

Assessment Policy, Academic Misconduct, and Sanctions

USSU worked extensively on the implementation of the updated Assessment Policy, focusing on ensuring that students and faculty understood the new processes and procedures. By creating guides, hosting consultations, and providing direct support, she helped clarify how changes to assessment policy would impact students' academic experiences, emphasizing transparency and fairness throughout the transition.

In parallel, USSU contributed to revisions of the Academic Misconduct Regulations and advocated for the creation of a Sanctions Guide. The guide, an ongoing project throughout the year, is designed to accompany the new regulations and provide consistent, transparent approaches to academic integrity cases. Mirroring practices at other universities, the Sanctions Guide emphasizes a proactive approach, aiming to foster a culture of integrity, education, and honesty rather than merely delivering punitive outcomes. By preparing the university for more structured and equitable handling of misconduct, USSU sought to ensure that academic integrity is embedded into the student experience as an educational priority rather than a reactive requirement.

In summary, the work of USSU brought attention to:

- Transparent and fair implementation of updated assessment and misconduct policies
- Developing the Sanctions Guide to promote proactive academic integrity
- Consistent student advocacy and guidance through appeals and grievances
- Creating a culture of honesty, education, and learning rather than solely punitive outcomes
- Strengthening equitable and accessible academic support systems

Student Awards, Symposiums, and Academic Recognition

USSU played a pivotal role in supporting and coordinating events that celebrate academic achievement and professional development. The Excellence Awards Ceremony highlighted student accomplishments and leadership contributions while also recognizing faculty through the Teaching Excellence Awards, fostering a campus-wide culture of recognition and inspiration.

The USSU also supported the Undergraduate Research Symposium, which provided a platform for students to present their research, receive feedback, and engage with

peers and faculty in a professional environment. These events emphasized inclusivity and accessibility, ensuring that students from a range of disciplines and backgrounds could participate and benefit from mentorship, recognition, and skill development opportunities.

In summary, the work of USSU brought attention to:

- Recognition of student and faculty excellence through awards and ceremonies
- Providing platforms for undergraduate research presentations and skill development
- Encouraging professional growth, mentorship, and engagement across campus
- Strengthening inclusivity and accessibility in academic recognition events
- Promoting a culture of belonging, achievement, and collaboration

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Work, and Human Rights Advocacy

The USSU has committed to amplifying conversations of equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging, as well as engaging in anti-racism and anti-oppressive work, calling attention to systemic oppression and violence. Furthermore, the USSU has taken a clear stance opposing the Government of Saskatchewan's implementation of *Bill 137*, as well as speaking out against genocide, violence, and colonialism occurring both across the world and in Canada. Human rights are not political, and the destruction happening across our world is impacting the lives of students and their academic journeys at the University of Saskatchewan. It is necessary to identify, speak about, and show up for the multitude of students who are experiencing racism, colonialism, islamophobia, antisemitism, xenophobia, transphobia, homophobia, misogyny, and oppression as a result of hegemonic systems and structures.

In summary, the work of the USSU brought attention to:

- Student-led advocacy against racism, oppression, genocide, global conflict, Islamophobia, antisemitism, and colonial violence
- Calls for ethical investment policies
- Pushes for gender-affirming care and accessible health services (Virtual Health & gender-affirming care added to the Student Health and Dental Plan)
- Broader messaging about equity, belonging, and community accountability
- Working with the Graduate Student Association to renew the Anti-Racism and Anti-Opression MOU
- USSU staff-wide anti-racism and anti-oppressive training

Prince Albert Campus

As members of the USSU, over 500 Prince Albert Students have not been consistently recognized by the union in its advocacy. This year, the USSU worked with student leaders, faculty, and staff at the Prince Albert campus to establish relationships and connections to foster meaningful representation. The USSU went to Prince Albert once a month to meet with and share space alongside students at the Prince Albert Campus. The USSU also welcomed representation from PA students across various committees this year.

In summary, the USSU has collaborated with PA Campus through:

- Strengthening ties with the PA campus
- Welcoming our first member of the University Students' Council from PA.
- Expanding USSU resources (exam files, sexual health supplies, prep books)
- Addressing student concerns about parking, housing, communication, and belonging

Indigenous Student Collaboration and Initiatives

This year, the USSU worked to build relationships with the Indigenous Students Advisory Committee, the Indigenous Students Union, and the Métis Students of USask. The USSU consistently held committee meetings and began to build collaborative, authentic relationships with Indigenous student leaders across campus. The Indigenous students advisory committee approved over \$6,000.00 for student recipients of Indigenous Achievement Week awards, as well as hosted a Circle of Voices Event, which was intended to bring together Indigenous, International, and non-Indigenous students together, alongside Elders to engage in discussion and share stories. Additionally, the USSU had regular meetings with Dr. Angela Jaime, Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement, as well as with members of the OVPIE team. This connection supported deeper engagement and reflection on the work of *ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan* and on ways to mobilize the strategy's contents to the broader student community.

In summary, the USSU has worked to build connections with Indigenous students and Indigenous initiatives through:

- Commit to regular engagements with Indigenous student leaders
- Hold regular meetings through the Indigenous Students' Advisory Committee
- Collaboration with the Office of the Vice Provost, Indigenous Engagement

- Authentic engagement with ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan

Beginning the Process of Louis' Name Change

The USSU has met with the Wise Ones Council to begin a conversation about changing the name of Louis Loft and Pub to address the harm and stigma associated with alcohol and partying, as well as the legacy of Louis Riel. Additionally, the USSU has been in contact with members of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, as well as with Dr. Cheryl Troupe, a Métis historian, and Jocelyn Ormerod, to consult and gain further insight into the work of Louis Riel. Our intention is to elevate Louis Riel's presence in Place Riel to promote greater awareness of his importance and properly honour his legacy. The USSU will continue to work with the Office of the Vice Provost for Indigenous Engagement and the Wise Ones Council to advance this process in a positive way. It is anticipated that this process to remove the name Louis from the USSU Memorial Union Building will take just over a year.

Community Engagement, Culture, and Events

The USSU Centres continuously host and develop themed and advocacy weeks, including major events such as Sex Week, Sexual Violence Prevention Week, Mental Health Awareness Week, and more! Additionally, the USSU has coordinated Welcome Week, Style Swaps, the USSU Talent Show, and College-wide Family Feud. Additionally, the USSU worked to uplift student community needs through an event in collaboration with the Faith Leaders, as well as drawing and colouring events to promote mindfulness and mental health.

In summary, the USSU sought to promote events and themed weeks which included:

- Responsive to the needs of students in relation to the global community
- Events for 2SLGBTQQIA+ students, women, feminists, and students of diverse backgrounds
- Collaboration with Faith Leaders and campus critical support units
- Sex-positive conversations
- Sustainability and environmentally responsive

Governance, Transparency, and Budget Work

Throughout the year, the USSU has prioritized cross-college collaboration and governance through the revitalization of the Association of Constituency Presidents. This committee focused on bringing together members from across colleges and student bodies to share insight, initiatives, projects, and questions.

The Finance & Assessment Committee and the VP Operations & Finance have worked hard to prepare and approve the 2026-27 operating budget. Highlights for this budget include:

- 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 University 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 will include videos, social media posts, posters, and more.

Additionally, the USSU worked to connect with municipal, provincial, and federal leaders and ultimately prepared an Advanced Education Lobbying Document to present to the Minister of Advanced Education. This document is a synthesis of issues identified by the USSU in the higher education landscape affecting university students. At a high level, our ten recommendations included:

- 1) Involve student leaders in Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Multi-Year Operating Funding Memorandums of Understanding.
- 2) Eliminate Saskatchewan student loan interest.
- 3) Expand access to Open Educational Resources (OERs).
- 4) Advocate against the international student cap imposed by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).
- 5) Increase support for mental health and addictions, with a particular focus on students attending Northern and regional colleges.
- 6) Promote and support reviews of sexual violence prevention policies at post-secondary institutions every three years.
- 7) Increase the availability of scholarships, grants, and bursaries for Indigenous and international students.

- 8) Repeal *Bill 137, The Education (Parents' Bill of Rights) Amendment Act, 2023*. Support wrap-around services for transgender youth and gender-creative kids, and ensure that third-party sexual health educators can provide resources to classrooms.
- 9) Promote and support reviews of student wage policies at post-secondary institutions.
- 10) Increase funding for and visibility of student housing in urban and rural environments, especially for students facing systemic barriers to pursuing higher education.

In summary, the USSU worked to strengthen connections to student governance, government partners, and ensure fiscal transparency through:

- Association of Constituency and College Presidents Committee Meetings
- Fee reviews, budget prep, and transparency efforts
- Frequent advocacy to the provincial government (Advanced Education Lobbying Document)

Student Community Events

The USSU has hosted over 30 events this year, bringing together students, staff, faculty, administration, and the entire campus community. These events have been very well received, and the USSU enjoyed getting to know students, as well as seeing students make connections with each other. These events have focused on ideas such as sustainability, internationalization, sexual and gender-based violence prevention, highlighting student talent, and, of course, bringing together students to find their home on campus.

USSU Centres

The USSU Centres have gone above and beyond this year in student supports, resources, and events. They are an integral part of the USSU, providing necessary resources and a home for many students on campus. The USSU 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.

Conclusion

The USSU recently welcomed the election of the 2026-2027 Executive Team at the end of March. Stepping into the role of USSU President, Abtin Safaeian, VP Operations and Finance, Elmer Vincent, VP Academic Affairs, Ashley Mendez, and VP Student Affairs, Azul Gonzalez Avila. This team, as representatives of the USask Undergraduate student body, will continue to work diligently to uplift and advance the initiatives of the USSU, working courageously and collaboratively while remaining accountable to a diverse range of student concerns. Ultimately, as the USSU Executive team concludes our term, we wish to emphasize our sincere gratitude to the University of Saskatchewan community for their support, guidance, and collaborative partnerships throughout the year. Thank you for challenging us, encouraging us, and for all of the important and difficult conversations along the way.

Respectfully submitted,



Emma Wintermute (she/her)

President



Owen Deis (he/him)

Vice-President (Operations & Finance)



Norah Jacob (she/her)

Vice-President (Academic Affairs)



Emily Hubick (she/her)

Vice-President (Student Affairs)



Thank you for an incredible year of advocacy, dedication, and service.