

## COUNCIL FORUM

Compiled by Scott Lilwall

Students' Council meets every second Tuesday in the Council Chambers in University Hall at 6pm. Council meetings are open to all students. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 26 September.

Council opened with a speech from Chief Returning Officer Rachel Woynorowski, reminding councillors that, because of resignations, a number of seats remained open on Council. All faculties but Science, Law and Phys Ed have empty seats that need to be filled in an upcoming by-election.

### FOOD SERVICES ADVISORY GROUP

Before regular business was tackled, a motion was brought forward to bring a proposal from the late additions page. Brought forward by Vice-President (Student Life) Omer Yusuf, who was absent for the first part of the meeting, the proposal would establish a Food Service Advisory Group, which would have access to the contract between the University of Alberta and Aramark, and would be tasked with representing student interests in regards to meal plans on campus.

A few concerns over wording were brought forward, and a few amendments suggested, before VP (Academic) Henry pointed out that changes would force the idea back for approval from groups such as the GSA, which had given the green light to the original proposal. The amendments were dropped, and a motion was brought forth to send the draft back to the Executive Council to work on the wording. The motion was quickly defeated.

In the end, it was decided to table the

motion, postponing it until the arrival of Yusuf later in the meeting.

### NEXT UP, QUESTION PERIOD

During Question Period, a couple of questions were asked of VP (Operations and Finance) Chris Cunningham. One councillor asked why businesses such as Hudson's were allowed to advertise in the handbooks that are handed out to students during WOW, arguing that these businesses were direct competitors to SU-run businesses like RATT and the Powerplant. Cunningham explained that Hudson's had paid a significant price for the ad, and that the money was considered a better deal, as Cunningham did not feel that the businesses were serious competition for on-campus bars.

The next question asked Cunningham of his plans following a letter by former councillor Stephen Kirkham. The letter regarded the Powerplant's sale of tobacco products after the a ban prohibiting such. Kirkham requested that the gross revenues from the sales be donated to the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission. Cunningham said that, although he didn't condone the action by the Powerplant, he felt the mistake was in good faith, and that the business was simply attempting to get rid of stock purchased before the ban, and shouldn't be penalized as such. He did suggest, however, that the profits from the sale, a total of \$64, be donated to AADAC.

### THE SECOND TIME AROUND

Council then moved on to a number of political policies that needed to be read in a second time. The content of the policies varied greatly, dealing with the cancellation of classes during election forums, student accessibility to co-op and internship programs, add/drop deadlines for classes, and the tracking and use of mandatory non-instructional fees. All of the policies were approved unanimously.

### ON TO THE MEAT OF THE MEETING

Council then moved on to the main bills of the evening, starting with a motion to pass the Audit Committee Mandate, which would give the committee the responsibility over the disbursement of a number of Dedicated Fee Units, specifically those supplied to CSJR, APIRG, Student Legal Services and the Gateway. The motion was passed unanimously.

The second bill of the evening also passed without a dissenting vote. It added a few clarifications and an extra rules governing over elections, such as clarifications to the responsibilities of the CRO and a law prohibiting Council candidates from endorsing others running in the election.

The last bill of the evening drew a lengthy debate, however. The action in question would have allowed councillors to anonymously opt-out of their pay, the money instead being set aside for scholarships available to students. The supporters of the bill felt that the bill would be the best way for councillors who did not wish to accept their compensation. Critics, however, felt that the plan could create an unfair, two-level Council: those that accepted payment, and those that didn't. Others noted that bylaws were not the place to make changes to the pay system, but rather suggested changes to the budget.

Eventually, a motion was put forward to Council Advisory Committee. More debate ensued, and the motion was passed. The scholarship bill was sent for further discussion in CAC.

With everything on the order paper attended to, the original motion for the creation of a Food Service Advisory Group to oversee meal plans on campus was returned to the table. Debate on the topic was restricted to the motion to send back to the Executive, but was defeated. In the end, the advisory group was created, and the meeting was immediately adjourned afterwards.

# PCs suggest changes to Albertan student loans on the horizon

LOANS • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Charlotte Kingston, VP (Academic) at the University of Lethbridge Students' Union and CAUS Vice-Chair was also involved in the student loans discussion at the retreat.

"It provides a level of stability that's important to students, and we wouldn't advocate for getting out of the Canadian Student Loans Program unless it had some very substantial benefits along with it," Kingston said.

**"It's not just Alberta that's having problems with this; other provinces are asking for the same things we are. It looks like we kind of started something here."**

**DENIS HERARD,  
ADVANCED EDUCATION MINISTER**

Cournoyer said that representatives from the Ministry of Advanced Education admitted "that they weren't how the removal would even take place," and that he thought the province could make the system better for students within the Alberta system

before proceeding on this idea.

However, the idea has moved beyond the ministry, becoming a topic of discussion at the Progressive Conservative leadership forum last Tuesday. When asked about his plans for postsecondary education, Jim Dinning, one of nine candidates debating at the Arden Theatre in St Albert, advocated student loan reform.

"We should be taking back the Canada portion of the loan system so that we've got the flexibility here in Alberta to do remissions in way that Alberta's been doing only on it's first 40 per cent," Dinning said.

Still, Taylor and Pannu were both unaware that leaving the Canadian Student Loan Program was a serious consideration.

"I didn't hear anything that was strongly urging the province or the minister to look at dropping out of the current program," Taylor said.

However, Herard is confident that the province will enter into negotiations with the federal government soon.

"It sounds to me like the federal government is prepared to sit down and listen to us on that, so we're working on that," Herard said. "It's not just Alberta that's having problems with this; other provinces are asking for the same things we are. It looks like we kind of started something here by asking to go that way."

—With files from Natalie Climenhaga

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