The 2011/2012 year was one of building capacity and pushing the ball forward on many on-the-go projects. Most of the work in this report reflects the combined effort of nearly 200 full and part-time staff, over 800 volunteers, a provincial and federal lobby group and its staff, 32 student councilors, and members of the University and broader community. There are very few items in this report that are worked on in isolation and without the consideration of the impact each item has for the 30,000 undergraduate students at the University of Alberta.

I would also like to acknowledge that much of the work in this report is a continuation of the efforts of executives and staff that came before us and it is important to recognize their contributions. Because of the one-year mandate that our Executives and some staff face, it is very easy for many to forget that each year is part of a much larger story. Some of the “wins” we see today are because of the efforts of student leaders years earlier and only now coming to fruition. For example, the relatively low tuition increase we saw this year is a result of successful lobbying of past student leaders to create a provincial regulation that mandates CPI limits to tuition increases. With that in mind, this report reflects the 2011/2012 year’s contribution to moving the ball forward for students at the University of Alberta. I wish the best to the current 2012-13 Executive and look forward to seeing what the future holds for the University of Alberta Students’ Union.

Best of luck this year.

Rory Tighe
President 2011/2012
extension of the U-Pass to those studying in the Spring/Summer terms. We are now working with Edmonton Transit on implementation in 2013.

**Services**

The Students’ Union offers members a wide range of services that exist to support students’ academic, financial, and personal needs. Our services unit also provides job and professional development opportunities to more than 50 staff and 800 volunteers. No other student association in the country offers the range and depth of services we do.

**Centre for Student Development**

The Centre for Student Development offers a variety of programs to help support students to, through, and beyond University Orientation. 2011 was well attended and achieved a higher retention rate than in past years. We had a high level of satisfaction from attendees, and 95% of surveyed students surveyed after Orientation said they were happy with their Orientation experience.

In collaboration with the Alumni Association, the CSD launched the After U program, a series of workshops and events targeted at students through their transition out of University. Over 250 students attended After U events in the first year of the program.

“Our services unit also provides job and professional development opportunities to more than 50 staff and 800 volunteers.”

**Inflink**

2011 was a busy year for Inflink, with the service adopting a more holistic approach to helping students. The service began to actively connect visitors to student life resources, such as the upgraded Volunteer Registry, and introduced new academic supports, such as the well-received SU Tutoring training program. Inflink served over 13,000 students campus wide.

**Peer Support Centre**

The Peer Support Centre moved to the second floor of SUB, closer to other wellness-related services. Partly as a result of this move, we saw visits to the PSC increase by approximately 100%.

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**Advocacy & Representation**

The first responsibility of any students’ union is to advocate for and represent students to administration, government, and the community at large. From lobbying on copyright reform to encouraging students to vote, the Students’ Union had an active year in:

**Provincial Election Get Out the Vote Campaign**

The Students’ Union worked with its partner associations at the Universities of Lethbridge and Calgary to encourage students to vote in the last provincial election. At the University of Alberta, we signed up thousands of students who pledged to vote and followed that up on Election Day with a reminder vote. This campaign led to a real and significant increase in the number of students voting. We continue to advocate for changes to residency rules to make it easier for students to decide where they live for the purpose of voting.

"From lobbying on copyright reform to encouraging students to vote, the Students’ Union had an active year."

**Fall Reading Week**

Work continued toward the implementation of a reading break during the Fall Semester. We worked with closely with the Dean of Students and the Registrar to review scheduling options and their impact. We hope to bring the Fall Reading Week proposal through University governance for formal approval in 2012–13.

**Advocacy and Lobby Training**

We developed a training program for Faculty Associations and interested students to increase their advocacy skills. This included the creation of a training curriculum for interested lobbyists on student-specific issues.

**CRAM**

We worked with the University to host the Canadian Roundtable on Academic Materials. Held online, the conference brought together bookstore, students and publishers to talk about the future of academic materials.

**Undergraduate Research Symposium**

Working with the Undergraduate Research Initiative, we hosted the University of Alberta’s first Undergraduate Research Symposium. This event brought together student researchers from a variety of disciplines and gave them the opportunity to highlight their work. We hope this becomes an annual event.

**Copyright Legislation**

After years of advocacy done by the Students’ Union and the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, students saw a number of positive changes to the Copyright Act. The most important improvement is the inclusion of educational use as protected under fair dealing. We continue to advocate for changes to the import regulations connected to the Copyright Act to reduce academic material costs for students.

**Spring/Summer UPass**

In a referendum, students resoundingly approved the "Profits from business and lease operations go directly to offset the cost of our advocacy, student services, and building operations."
feasibility study. Students’ Council approved a referendum asking students for a capital fee to fund facility improvements; this referendum passed in March. We are now developing the design reports required for student consultation in the fall, prior to Students’ Council determining whether to give final approval to the project.

**Programming and Venues**

The SU’s Programming and Venues department hosts approximately 200 events, large and small, throughout the year, from Week of Welcome to Antifreeze to the SU Awards Night. Through our venues—SUBstage, Dinwoodie, and Myer Horowitz Theatre—one of our main goals is to work with the University to move up a level over the current windfall is not expected to persist. The ongoing focus on sustainability issues, developing appropriate tracking mechanisms, and implementing appropriate policies to enhance sustainability.

**Governance & Management**

The Students’ Union takes governance issues—transparency, fairness, and responsiveness—extremely seriously. Part of ensuring good governance is a shared understanding of purpose and plan. To that end, the Students’ Union and the Physical Activity and Wellness (PAW) Centre management process to help ensure we kept to our commitments.

The SU’s Programming and Venues department hosts approximately 200 events, large and small, throughout the year. The Students’ Union’s main venues of Dinwoodie and Myer Horowitz continue to see an increased in activity levels. Event revenues at Dinwoodie increased 66% and Horowitz revenues increased 48%. The Myer Horowitz Theatre continues to be a venue of choice with the external community and was almost completely booked every weekend throughout the year. External events helped subsidize the campus programming that we do and offer a diverse array of programming to students in their own backyard—from comedians to concerts and lectures.

Finally, the Programming and Venues department played the key role in helping the Students’ Union co-host the annual national conference of AMICUS—C, the professional organization for student workers in student associations. The conference was a great success, with excellent attendance and programming.

**Marketing & Communications**

Communication with students—our members—is a top priority for the Students’ Union. Letting students know what we’re doing is critical to our success. Communication is also essential to remaining responsive to you, our members.

In 2011–12, we continued developing our digital media assets. SU TV was expanded to the University Bookstore and the OneCard office, and we added new digital signage initiatives, including the Departures Board and the Services Board. We also explored developing digital kiosks for potential use in areas of campus that lack both a significant SU presence and the foot traffic to justify a staffed info/kiosk booth.

The annual student survey continued to generate excellent response rates (over 9000 responses), and has begun to provide the level of trend data essential for the effective management of the Students’ Union.

The SU also began using social media more aggressively to reach out to students, from creating video blogs to using Facebook and Twitter to promote events.

**“Letting students know what we’re doing is critical to our success.”**

Marketing’s Studio staff also contributed countless printed pieces, including logos, posters, banners and brochures, all in support of a wide variety of SU initiatives. Some of the highlights included identity work for Discover Governance, rebranding of ECOs to Sustain SU, and a complete identity for the annual national conference of AMICUS-C, among others.

**“Our balance sheet for all operations, however, continued to improve, as our capital assets and other reserves increased in value by approximately $586,000.”**

**“The Students’ Union adopted a Strategic Plan and developed a strategic management process to help ensure we kept to our commitments”**

The Physical Activity and Wellness (PAW) Centre Agreement between the University, the Students’ Union, and the Graduate Students’ Association was finally completed. This agreement enshrines all of the key principles from the PAW referendum. Initiatives ongoing students involve in program and strategy for the PAW Centre.

We continued to involve the SU more in the pedagogical life of the University, hosting many CSL-driven projects. From the Farmer’s Market to Sustain SU programs to upcoming changes to food labelling, these student projects have helped us figure out how to move forward in the direction students want.

Senior staff at the Students’ Union also implemented new annual transition and professional development programs. For an organization that undergoes so much annual turnover in leadership positions, it is essential that we do the best possible job providing orientation, skills training, and historical context to our new student leaders and service heads, and we continue those efforts.

A Sustainability Audit, and an internal response outlining the next two years initiatives, was completed. The Students’ Union sustainability-related activities will be based on promoting sustainability practices, training staff on sustainability issues, developing appropriate tracking mechanisms, and implementing appropriate policies to enhance sustainability.

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For 2012–13, on an unrestricted cash basis, the Students’ Union essentially broke even, netting a change to the Unrestricted Funds Reserve of $79. This is a reduction from last year’s increase of $277,775 (this is a number restated from last year’s reported figures, in accordance with recommendations from our auditors.)

Our balance sheet for all operations, however, continued to improve, as our capital assets and other reserves increased in value by approximately $586,000.

Our statements have been restated this year, in response to a request from our auditors to modify how student health and dental fees are handled. We concurred with the auditors’ recommendation, as it improves the relevancy and accuracy of our financial reporting.

Student engagement and effective representation are central to the Students’ Union. The SU’s future depends on you: Without students willing to step into leadership positions or without a student body willing to voice its concerns, the Students’ Union cannot succeed.

Get involved in your University! You can join a club, volunteer for one of our student services, or run for elected office. There’s much to learn, and great experiences to gain, by becoming an active member of your community. This University runs on your energy, your enthusiasm, and your ideas.