



CASA POLICY AND STRATEGY CONFERENCE REPORT

**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
CALGARY, AB**

2022

**SAMANTHA SCOTT, VP EXTERNAL
KAIRVEE BHATT, PRESIDENT**



INTRODUCTION

Vice President External, Samantha Scott, and President Kairvee Bhatt attended the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) Policy and Strategy Conference August 8th-11th, 2022. The conference took place in Calgary, Alberta, and was hosted at the University of Calgary by the University of Calgary Students' Union.



Samantha Message



Samantha Scott

ULSU VP External

CASA events and conferences are such an important opportunity to connect with our peers and represent the ULSU in the federal landscape. Often, when we think of student advocacy, we associate it with only the provincial government (they are, of course, the one's who fund post-secondary education). I will be the first to admit that I myself have been guilty of questioning why we must advocate federally when the choice to say, raise tuition, was done at the provincial level. As mentioned later in this report, however, advocacy to MLAs/the province compared to advocacy to MPs/the federal government are very different, both in their nature, as well as their goals. Each level of government plays a role in making laws and setting standards for post-secondary, and we owe it to students both present and future to make sure that their voices have a place at every table.

I would also like to take this time to commend Kairvee on her work as CASA's treasurer. It is a tough job no doubt, but also a great opportunity to once again represent the ULSU on this level. There is no one else in the CASA membership who can do what she does, and we are forever grateful for her hard work. Both CASA and the ULSU are better off because Kairvee took on this role.

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at su.external@uleth.ca

Sincerely,
Samantha Scott

Kairvee's Message

Kairvee Bhatt

CASA Treasurer
ULSU President



It is a unique opportunity for the ULSU to be represented provincially, with Samantha Scott, our Vice President External, as the Chair of the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS), and federally with me as a representative on the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) Board. As Treasurer on the CASA Board, I had the honour of helping to support the work of a credible and trusted organization within the federal landscape. I was able to share my knowledge within the banking industry, and support a major decision regarding our organizations financial institution.

The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) Policy and Strategy conference is the second part of the conference cycle which allows student organizations to continue its advocacy work as it follows the federal budget cycle. This conference was primarily Board driven in our presentations of our Board Action plan, and I had the opportunity to help drive our membership relations. As a member- driven organization, we finalized our advocacy priorities to the federal governing into the following: Budgetary, Regulatory, and Collaborative approaches, to ensure that post- secondary education remains accessible, affordable, high- quality, and innovative.

We also had the opportunity to share learnings from our peers across Canada, and truly determine the need of post- secondary learners within the federal landscape. I consider myself very lucky to be able to carry out such great work and sharing the immediate needs of ULSU students.

If you have any questions about any parts of this report, or are interested in the work I do with CASA, or my role as President, please always know you can reach out and I am happy to talk with you!

All the Best,
Kairvee



DAY 1 - Monday, August 8

The morning began with an opening ceremony by an Indigenous student. The smudge ceremony was a wonderful opportunity to take a breath, remember that we are here to advocate for students, and to get ready to approach this conference with an open mind.

After the morning formalities (the selection of Code of Conduct Officers and the opening Plenary), Trevor (the CASA Policy Analyst) gave an interactive presentation on some history behind CASA and how priorities have both shifted and advanced over the last twenty five years.

After lunch, the Board of Directors presented on their suggested priorities for the year, followed directly by a member-led discussion on priorities and what is most important to individual institutions

Mackenzey (the CASA Executive Director) then presented on government relations and the most effective ways to communicate and advocate to politicians. It was a fantastic opportunity to learn how we can best represent students in front of our elected officials.



The day ended with Member Relations Committee hosted social event, which was a game of Family Feud, CASA Style. Connecting with other student leaders at these events is an important aspect of attending these conferences, and this was a fantastic opportunity to have some competitive fun with friends.

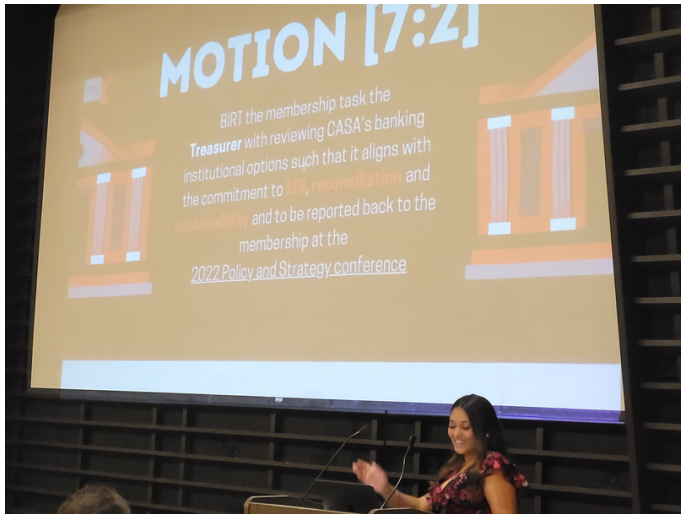
Day 2 - Tuesday, August 9

Tuesday began with a fantastic Media Training session hosted by Mike, a UCSU staff member. As both of us will likely be doing more media relations moving forward, knowing the do's and don't's of how to communicate with the media will be of crucial importance this coming year.

After a breakout session to discuss priorities was hosted, Trevor gave another fantastic presentation on past CASA campaigns and the most effective ways for Student Governments to run campaigns at their institutions. It was great to learn more about this topic as we prepare to move forward with our advocacy this coming year.

The afternoon was full of committee working time. NIAC (the National Indigenous Advisory Committee) gave a presentation, followed by an opportunity for all of the committees to sit down and have discussions about their initiatives and committee plans were finalized.





Day 3 - Wednesday, August 10

Day 3 saw the Board present their Board Action Plan again, this time with all of the changes suggested by the CASA Membership. (Throughout Days 1 and 2, we had the opportunity to suggest any changes we thought were necessary).

We then got a CASA financial update by the Treasurer, **Kairvee Bhatt!** It was so well done and the ULSU is so proud of all of her hard work. The presentation was very well received by the membership.



After lunch, Trevor gave a presentation on how to interact with MPs specifically. This was very valuable, as advocacy towards MPs and MLAs are actually quite different, and most of our experience thus far has been with MLAs.

We then got an update on all of the Committee Action Plans with all of the changes suggested by the membership. There is great work being done by every single committee, and we are so excited to see all of the fantastic change these initiatives will bring!



The evening ended with CASAOke, a conference tradition. It was so fun and such a great opportunity to bond with student leaders from across the country!

Day 4 - Thursday, August 11

The morning began with some fun social activities, including a swag swap (let's go ULSU!).

After a quick refresher on Robert's Rules, we had our final plenary of the conference where we passed our Board Action Plans and all of the Committee Plans. After the Plenary, the conference was wrapped up and we said goodbye to all of our cohorts until we see them again next time!





CASA and UEQ

The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) and the Quebec Students' Union (UEQ) have a historic partnership that is the only one of its kind within the post-secondary education sphere which represents the voices of Canadian students across the nation. With this relationship, both CASA and UEQ are able to effectively communicate to their respective federal and provincial bodies, to advance support for higher education and the student experience. CASA delegates receive an opportunity to engage with the meaningful work of UEQ and to learn from their engaging practices and effective methods.



UNION ÉTUDIANTE
DU QUÉBEC