

## Candidate Statement



**Name:** Alyson Gher-White

**Program:** Bachelor of Arts in Criminology at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV)

**Running for:** Vice President External

### Who Am I?

I am your average student who drinks too much coffee and doesn't get enough sleep. That might sound like I have poor time management, but there's really not enough hours in the day to be a student. I blame Netflix for that one. Jokes aside, I am passionate about advocating for human rights and I am not afraid to put myself out there for others to be heard and acknowledged.

Fun Fact: I am a certified black belt in Sun Hang Do. I used to volunteer with them for years before I started university here.

### My Background

I am currently working in the Student Union Society (SUS) as the Advocacy Officer for the 2016/2017 term. This means I am well versed in the obligations and duties of the Student Union to advocate for student's rights and needs. I am knowledgeable on the policies and board decisions from SUS, as well as the portfolios of the officers under the Vice President External. I will require less time to learn policies, which leaves more time to work on positive changes on campus!

I am also a third year Criminology student. As a Criminology student, I have background knowledge in Canada's history with disadvantaged communities, and human rights policies (ie: The Charter of Rights and Freedoms). Criminology has taught me that many issues in day to day life are deeply rooted in systemic problems. This is applicable to our education, as the price of obtaining an education become less accessible to those who are already disadvantaged in our community.

### What Does the Vice President External Do?

The Vice President External (VPE) oversees three officers. These officer portfolios are the Engagement, Advocacy, and Equalities Officers. Essentially, the VPE creates a goal plan for the year that they will complete. The VPE promotes activities for student engagement that are educational, fun, and bring a sense of community to UFV. However, this position is not all fun and games. The VPE must also critically analyse the operations and policies of UFV and other post-secondary education institutions. Students have concerns and needs while at UFV, and the VPE serves to be the voice of those students. From sitting in on meetings with other Student Unions, to getting involved with policy reforms, the VPE's obligation to students is to be accountable and transparent.

## **My Plan**

My plan as the Vice President External is to reach out to students and see where your needs are. This is why student engagement is a part of the portfolio, we need to be able to know what the community's collective needs are. As a Student Union Society, your role in your education matters as well! The premise of a Student Union is to protect students, and I plan to do just that.

## **Engagement**

As the Vice President External, I plan to reach out as much as possible so that people know that they are heard and important. Not many students are aware of how the Student Union functions, or how it may benefit students to be involved. Providing volunteer opportunities and holding high visibility events will allow students to not only have fun, but it will also create a larger overall community at UFV.

Examples: Welcome Week and UJoin on the Green; organization of small events on opportunistic days, such as free snow cones in summertime; puppy rooms; paint sessions.

## **Policy**

While I am aware of the policies currently in place at UFV and SUS, I also believe that reviewing and adjusting policies should be a priority, so as to ensure that policies reflect the best interest of student needs at our university which is growing quickly.

Example: Policy Doc, which is research and consensus on student issues – ie: student loans, open education, Fall reading break.

## **Green Team**

The current disposal system does not create sustainability at UFV. The UFV Sustainability team is working on this, but I want to be on board with promoting proper recycling and compost at UFV. On our campus, we have the means to use compost friendly utensils and containers. We cannot make full use of that if we do not have compost bins that are as opportunistic as our garbage cans are.

## **Concluding Thoughts**

These are a few examples of how I plan to make positive changes around campus. However, how the Student Union operates is up to you! We are here to speak on behalf of your needs for a better campus environment and experience. We are obligated to help make the changes we want to see in the world around us.

Don't forget to vote between the dates of March 21<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [alyson.gher-white@student.ufv.ca](mailto:alyson.gher-white@student.ufv.ca)