

## **Candidate Platform**

- **Introduction:**

My name is Malak Nassar, and I am a 3rd-year student going into my 4th-year at the University of Prince Edward Island. I am a Political Science Major and a History Minor, and I am also an international student. Since my first year at University, I have been keen on being involved in extracurricular activities. I have been a part of several societies on campus, including the Political Science Society, International Studies Society, the African Students Association, and Model United Nations. I have also worked as a Residence Life Advisor, Residence Assistant, and with the Event Staff at the UPEI Department of Athletics & Recreation. This year I got involved with our Student Union for the first time, first being a Campaign Coordinator for Get Out the Vote, then being elected as Arts Representative on Student Council. My involvement with the campus community has increased my passion for making campus a vibrant and inclusive environment for all. I am running for the role of Vice President Academic and External (VPAX), as I see it as the role to which I would best fit within the Executive Team. The VPAX assumes the role of advocating on behalf of students to entities and institutions beyond University; these include Federal and Provincial governments, organizations, and more. The VPAX also tackles academic student issues and matters on campus, including academic grievances and other student interests.

- **Main Platform Points**

- 1. Co-op Opportunities**

Gaining work experience that is related to a student's field helps the student transition smoothly into the work-force, as it bridges the disconnect between the theoretical aspect of education and the real-life duties and environment on the job. It also aids the student with insight into career opportunities post-graduation, skills enhancement, and work experience. Feeling prepared for

the workforce and the increased connections and possible post-graduation employment opportunities would also aid with students' mental health, as unemployment takes a toll on youth's mental health. Also, ensuring inclusivity with the opportunities of co-op programs and international students.

- a. Working with the provincial government on developing employer funding to hire students (domestic and international alike) and provide salaries.
- b. Working with the UPEI Co-operative Education Office, International Student Office, and Career Services to expand relevant co-op opportunities for different faculties, while

## **2. Accessibility and Affordability**

Affordability is always an impediment when it comes to student performance and education. Most students have to have part-time jobs to support themselves financially, considering there are several expenses such as tuition, textbooks, housing, and food. Any means through which we can increase affordability for students is an asset. This could include:

- a. Working to increase scholarships and grants.
- b. Continuing the pursuit for rent supplements and other financial aids.
- c. Working with the other Executives and staff positions to increase awareness of the already offered services of the Student Union, including creating the educational tools to help facilitate the Academic Grievances process.
- d. Hosting educational workshops on the steps to follow to further their grievances and

## **3. Continuity**

An important part of the Student Union as an institution and the role of VPAX is continuing the long-term projects that other people in the roles have started and trying to improve them and accommodate them for the students. This includes:

- a. Continuing annual investments with Open Educational Resources.
- b. Working with the Robertson Library to create a multi-year restricted funding agreement proposal to the Provincial Government for Open Educational Resources.

My greatest goal for this year would be to fill in the shoes that I will be taking over, since the role of VPAX over the past years has been taken up by some of the most brilliant people. Continuing that legacy is going to be a rewarding challenge.

I am not the most public or social person, but I do love meeting students, new people, and getting to hear different stories from everyone's different journeys on campus. I encourage students to stop and have a chat if you see me around campus. I will have a Facebook Event with more details and campaign materials, and it would also be on my Instagram @malaksherin. Please share these resources with your friends if you wish to support me. I would appreciate it if you choose me as your VPAX.