

ASUS

Arts & Science



Undergraduate Society

GOVERNANCE OFFICE
STRATEGIC PLAN
2023-2024

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Mandate

The Governance Office shall be concerned with matters relating to the internal administration and operation of the Arts and Science Undergraduate Society (ASUS). The Office shall remain unbiased and act as a resource for general information regarding the Society. In particular, the Office shall oversee ASUS Assembly, Advisory Board, Archives, Elections and the Constitution and Policy.

Opening Statement

The Governance Office serves the Arts and Science community to achieve two goals:

1. To regulate procedures
2. Provide an outlet for student voice

The primary goal of the Office is to uphold and regulate societal operations, policies and procedures. This is accomplished through guiding each of the seven ASUS Offices and Commissions with policy interpretation and reform. The Office ensures that societal protocols are followed to maintain a cohesive, stable and productive student government capable of serving ASUS members. Furthermore, the Office endeavours to offer opportunities for the diverse and passionate voices of ArtSci students to be expressed, heard and respected to enact positive change for not only current, but also future students. For instance, three election periods allow students to vote for a peer or a team of peers who they believe will best represent them and advocate for their needs. This is additionally carried out through Assembly meetings where both Assembly members and the general ArtSci student body can present topics of discussion. Significantly, the Advisory Board directs the Society by critically evaluating strategic plans and approving financial aid applications. A third priority of the Office that enables the two aforementioned goals is student engagement. The Governance team invites ASUS students to aid us in achieving our goals of regulating procedures and providing an outlet for student voice. There are opportunities for various skill sets and we welcome your talents. Every voice is valued and is capable of impacting change in our shared student experience to lead the Society, students and Queen's University towards a better future.

With this, I enjoy learning about and leading the internal aspects behind the largest faculty student government. Working for the Governance Office is especially rewarding as each of the five committees contributes to our understanding of how the Office and Society can

work to its best. I hope that I can share my passion for the Office with my team and Arts and Science students through my work.

Governance Office Goals

Expand the Office to Meet the Needs of Our Diverse Student Community
As ASUS continues to grow with each successful year of operations, the Governance Office grows alongside and is fortunate to be able to provide more student opportunities. This allows for a diverse set of student voices to be heard, to serve their peers with their various skills and talents through different opportunities.
Increase transparency
The Governance Office is responsible for the internal administration of the Society. As such, internal stakeholders understand the operations of the Office. However, external stakeholders may not understand the operations of our Office. Increasing transparency and creating more digestible content is vital for the students the Office serves and represents to fully trust in the Society administration.
<i>Policy</i> <p>Policy defines the goals and provides a set of guidelines to ASUS about how to achieve its objectives across each Commission and Office. It is a vital part of the society's inner workings but can be difficult to understand. In collaboration with the Marketing and Communications Office and specifically the Web Design Manager, the Office will update policy in a consistent and accessible manner in order for all staff, volunteers and students to access and learn more. Policy documents on the ASUS website will be standardised to clickable and interactive PDFs. Page breaks at complete sections will be inserted to enhance readability. The most recent versions of policy will be uploaded to the website within one week of changes being approved to ensure.</p> <i>Instagram Rebrand to Further Represent Students</i> <p>In the previous year, the Governance Instagram page underwent a revamp, diversified in content to better interact with the student population and inform them of Governance Office initiatives that affect their student experiences. Using this momentum, the media type will continue to vary beyond static, graphic posts to include reels, highlighted stories and videos. Followers will have the chance to interact with the Governance Office through takeover stories and livestreams. The posting frequency will be increased to a minimum of three times per week to</p>

boost engagement with the student body. In addition, the five committees will be highlighted: Assembly, Elections, Advisory Board, Archives and Constitution and Policy. In particular, the Office will engage students in ASUS Assembly by promoting discussion topics prior to Assembly, and releasing summaries after. Lastly, Instagram giveaways will be utilised to enhance student engagement during election periods.

Maintain Accessibility and Inclusivity

One benefit of the pandemic is the increased accessibility and understanding from organisers in planning online events. Attendees can join the conversation from the comfort of their own home, cutting costs and removing barriers to participation, for instance through transcripts and event recordings. With the transition back to in-person operations, participants may be apprehensive about a potential loss of accessibility and flexibility.

Events

In reference to technology, attendees of ASUS Assembly and election events, such as debates, mixers and all-candidates meetings, will be provided the options of in-person or online participation. Events will be livestreamed and recorded in collaboration with the Marketing and Communications Office, also contributing to the Governance Office institutional memory. For meetings and webinars, Zoom and Microsoft Teams live transcripts will be enabled. The Office will select physical meeting locations that are accessible. For instance, ASUS Assembly will be held in Mackintosh-Corry Hall Room E202. This space includes wheelchair access, wide aisles plus movable chairs and tables. Students will have the option to participate remotely or in a hybrid fashion by tuning into the livestream or watching the posted recording. There will be no bias towards in person participants.

Promote Professional Development

A primary objective of ASUS includes inspiring and educating students through extracurricular involvement, preparing them for future success in the workforce after university. The Office continues to fulfil this mission by offering professional development initiatives to shape the next leaders of our world.

The Office will coordinate professional headshots for volunteers in the office, in partnership with the Marketing and Communications Office. In collaboration with the Human Resources Office Talent Acquisition Deputy, hired and elected positions will be promoted and outreach will be done to garner a wider range of students to fill these positions. Lastly, guest speakers will be invited to ASUS Assembly in order to discuss career paths and professional development, in addition to a networking opportunity.

Collaborate on an Internal, Inter-Office Level

The ASUS Council structure with its various Offices and Commissions benefits the faculty society, catering to diverse needs that students may have and offering enrichment and support in their university experience. This extends to volunteers and staff where working

together between Offices and Commissions provides a mutual benefit.

In previous years, significant work has been made in collaboration with the Human Resources Office and the Marketing and Communications Office. With a continued effort to promote these relationships, these will continue to grow. In order to continue fostering a collaborative space in the office and to prevent siloed work this coming year, collaboration with the Academics Commision will be important. Specifically during the Department Student Council (DSC) election and DSC Assembly. There is much overlap with the two activities and the Governance office. Therefore, collaboration and guidance will strengthen both processes. In turn, this work will allow for increase engagement amongst the student body and reduce the capacity burden of hiring.

Reflect evergreen nature of ASUS

In the previous year, the relevance and purpose of Election policy has been tested. It has proven to be inconsistent, confusing and contradictory. This is due to the evolving nature of the candidates and the society. To ensure the smooth running of ASUS elections and establish clear expectations for the candidates, the elections policy should be revised for clarity. Additionally, the policy presented in the candidate information slide show regarding appropriate campaigning locations was not reflected in the written ASUS policy, resulting in some confusion among candidates. Election policy will be updated and communicated to candidates in information sessions and is mirrored clearly in the written ASUS elections policy. The students and society of ArtSci have ever changing and ever-evolving needs. Policy needs to reflect these needs in order to best suit the needs of the students and provide a fair and equitable election for all.

Committee Team Descriptions and Goals

Committee Descriptions

1. ASUS Assembly

ASUS Assembly is the highest legislative body of the Arts and Science Undergraduate Society. All members of ASUS are welcome to attend Assembly where they can move or second motions, speak for or against any motions and at the Annual General Meeting, may vote on motions being considered by the Society.

Assembly fulfils its mandate by debating reports, recommendations and motions as submitted by ASUS Council or individual ASUS members. It is constitutionally empowered to direct the Executive, Council and Advisory Board as they carry out their duties consistent with the best interests of Arts & Science students.

Assembly holds great influence over the lives of Queen's University students who pursue studies in the Arts and Sciences. However, many students are not familiar with Assembly itself, better yet its function, including the approval of an annual \$1 million budget.

At Assembly, ASUS students discuss policies that impact themselves and those within their faculty. This takes place in the form of policy implementation or reformation. When making significant choices for the largest student faculty body, it is essential for as many intersectional voices to be considered.

Increase Student Engagement with ASUS Assembly

The Office will promote discussion topics prior to Assembly and release summaries after. To reach ASUS students beyond the use of social media, posters will be placed around campus in common spaces, such as Joseph S. Stauffer Library and residence buildings. Importantly, advertising will be targeted to buildings where large Arts and Science courses are held. Posters would not only inform students on ASUS Assembly, but also encourage them to participate.

Sibling Society and Academic Representatives will be further integrated into Assembly by placing emphasis on the Assembly Voting Member budget allocation. These funds are for voting members to organise special projects with the aim of connecting and interacting with the students that they represent and advocate for on Assembly.

To ensure that all students are able to access Assembly, a remote option will be available to students through Zoom. Further accommodations will be provided if necessary and it will be clear in all communication that we are willing and happy to accommodate.

2. ASUS Elections

There are three election periods: Fall, Winter and Department Student Council (DSC). Each election has its own function, electing different positions in each period. The most significant election takes place in Winter where candidates nominate themselves as a team of three, campaign for votes and participate in a debate/open forum before students elect the next year's ASUS Executive. This general process occurs for all three elections, varying slightly depending on the positions. Elections allow students in the faculty of Arts and Science to address their peers, speak on issues they believe are relevant to the student body and importantly, vote according to their values.

An issue plaguing not only ASUS, but also student government across the campus is declining voter turnout and unfilled positions. This could be due to apathy or lack of awareness. Therefore, a goal for this upcoming year is to reach as many students as possible, encouraging voting and running in the various election periods.

Increase Marketing Efforts Governance Office Instagram Page

The upcoming term will be the second year of running the Governance Office Instagram. Currently, the page posts approximately once per week. In addition, the main medium of communication is graphic, static images. The revamped page will be diversified in content to better interact with the student population and inform them of Governance Office initiatives that affect their student experiences. The

media type will vary beyond graphic, static posts to include reels, highlighted stories and videos. Followers will have the chance to interact with the Governance Office through takeover stories and livestreams. The posting frequency will be increased to a minimum of three times per week to boost engagement with the student body. This is important during election periods. The more things are posted, the higher the awareness. This could translate into higher voter turnout. The latter can also be accomplished through instagram giveaways. The Marketing Elections Coordinator will design their social media posts according to the Office Visual Identity Standards.

Physical Promotional Materials

Furthermore, posters will be placed around campus in common spaces, such as Joseph S. Stauffer Library and residence buildings to reach ASUS students who are inactive on social media. Importantly, advertising will be targeted to buildings where large Arts and Science courses are held. Posters would not only inform students on ASUS Elections, but also encourage them to run as a candidate and to vote. To incentivize voting, the Office will offer free Common Ground Coffeehouse pastries at a booth in front of the ASUS House when students present their voting receipts during the Winter Election Period. Connect with Past Position-Holders Marketing campaigns will highlight these students' experiences and accomplishments to motivate future students to nominate themselves and campaign in this year's elections. This could be done through Instagram takeovers and special guests at the 'So you want to run in an election?' mixer. In connecting with the past position-holders, the Office additionally aims to understand how policy affects students' choices to run in elections, ultimately working towards continually improving the Office practices.

3. ASUS Advisory Board

The Advisory Board is responsible for the long-term strategic planning and financial sustainability of the Society. The Board achieves this mandate through three pillars: governance, human resources and financial planning. Advisory Board also serves as the adjudicative panel of the Society and may exercise jurisdiction in matters of policy interpretation, elections violations or appeals. The Board additionally awards financial assistance for ASUS services and initiatives through a blind submission process.

Increase Accountability of Advisory Board Members

The Advisory Board (AB) Chair and Deputy Chair will update the handbook created for members to ensure continuation and consistency over the course of the year. Monthly check-ins between AB and Council will be facilitated by issuing specific Governance Office AB interview templates.

Provide a Starting Point for Strategic Plans

Incoming Council members can utilise the SWOT analysis written by the previous year's AB. These analyses serve as the final, cumulative AB project summarising and collating their monthly meetings with their respective council members.

4. ASUS Archives

Every May 1st, ASUS experiences a society-wide turnover, leaving very few positions held by the same student for longer than a twelve-month period. An exception to this are the three two-year Advisory Board Director positions. This operational formula stresses the significance of institutional memory and diligent record-keeping in order to preserve the procedures and operations of the Society. As projects often surpass the tenure of the Society's leadership, the knowledge and memory of ASUS as an organisation must be efficiently conserved to ensure its long-term success. The purpose of the Archives is to collect and catalogue all information pertaining to the Society since its creation in 1890. This includes information concerning the Levana Society, a women's student society at Queen's University that operated until 1967, when the Levana Society merged with ASUS. Under the guidance of the Governance Officer, the Chief Archivist (CA) arranges and organises materials in an accessible manner according to ASUS Records Retention Policy for students and faculty to utilise and appreciate. Furthermore, the Chief Archivist provides educational outreach to advertise and showcase the Archives, the gem of our Society.

Increase Student Engagement with ASUS Archives

The @asusarchives page will be merged with the @asusgovernance page to present a cohesive Office front and to leverage the existing @asusgovernance follower account. This increased coverage will raise more awareness among ArtSci students. Furthermore, an Archives page on the ASUS website will be established to store documents dating back to the 1920s.

5. ASUS Policy

Policy provides the guiding documents for the Arts and Science Undergraduate Society. As such, policy reform affects ASUS members and the broader student body of ArtSci students that ASUS serves. An important aspect to consider while writing policy is equity and inclusivity. We not only strive towards equity and inclusivity in terms of our goals, but also reflect equity and inclusivity in the actual writing of policy. Proper rules and policies are required for effective and equitable governance. This can be achieved with a two-pronged approach: policy administration on the part of the Governance Office and policy action on the part of applicable Society members. Policy guides the initiatives that ASUS offers and respective individuals involved in managerial roles are to be held accountable to the policy manuals.

Emphasise the Importance of Policy

A centralised online form will be implemented to handle policy interpretation and reform. This form will be easily accessible on the ASUS website as well as the Governance Office Instagram page. The Office will also reach out to student directors, including, but not limited to, the Head Gael, DSC Presidents and Advisory Board Chair. This is to bring attention to their relevant policy documents before the start of and during their terms.

Update Policy in a Consistent and Accessible Manner

Policy document file types on the ASUS website will be standardised to clickable

and therefore interactive PDFs. The files will be further organised by inserting page breaks at complete sections to enhance readability. The Office will continue its efforts towards inclusivity by removing gendered language, including the use of the “they” pronoun as opposed to “him” and “her” pronouns.

The centralised online form will be accessible to remote and hybrid students. This implementation further serves as a benefit because in-person, remote and hybrid students will be interacting with policy and working with the Governance Office in the same manner. If requested, connecting with students regarding policy inquiries could be conducted in real-time through online web-conferencing or on an asynchronous basis through email. Updating policy consistently is of benefit to remote and hybrid students for accessible and easy reference to online materials.

SWOT Analysis

**From the 2022-23 SWOT Analysis*

STRENGTHS

Funds. An inherent strength of the governance is its low operating budget. The ongoing success of the office’s goals is, therefore, more insulated from potential outside threats or interruptions in funding.

Elections. Outreach has been at the centre of many of the governance officer’s goals this year. While some of the challenges and opportunities for this file will be touched upon later on in this analysis, the work that has been done on this file this year has established strong practices for future governance officers. To attract multiple candidates for this year’s ASUS elections, the governance officer coordinated a class talk campaign to reach potential candidates. Additionally, the governance officer worked with the talent acquisitions manager to contact potential candidates within ASUS, and boothed at the ARC to share information about running in the election.

Assembly and Policy. An area of particular success for the Governance officer this year has been ensuring council members know the procedures needed to make changes to the policy. Through her own personal outreach efforts, Caitlin successfully worked with this year’s council and marketing officer to create a whole new section of the policy for the Art Sci Cup. Future governance officers should mirror Caitlin’s focus on ensuring council members know how to make changes in policy

WEAKNESSES

Social media presence. Without a specific social media manager, the governance officer this year struggled to make time to focus on the office’s social media presence or to find someone who could take the responsibility in addition to their position's original responsibilities. Having a social media presence is crucial to garnering engagement in

governance officer run events like assemblies and elections debate, it also presents an underutilised tool for candidate recruitment efforts. This also ties back to filling governance office positions which were left vacant for portions of the year. The office's lack of social media presence was ultimately a missed opportunity to garner engagement from an already apathetic student body after COVID.

Team dynamic. As mentioned previously, the governance officer was able to establish an excellent team dynamic this year through her personal commitment to the position. A small area for improvement that was brought up earlier in the year was building initiative among team members. As most of the governance officer team positions are student volunteer positions, lack of initiative is to be expected. However, to alleviate the workload of the governance officer and to build a stronger team dynamic, future governance officers should encourage directors to really take control of their portfolios and work according to the expectations laid out at the beginning of the year. This would mean working without having to be consistently asked by the governance officer throughout the year to complete their already laid out tasks. Again, this is a minor weakness but nonetheless an area for improvement for next year.

Elections. Lack of candidates running in the DSC elections this year.

Elections Policy. ASUS elections policy as it stands is confusing and contradictory. To ensure the smooth running of ASUS elections and establish clear expectations for the candidates, the elections policy should be revised for clarity. Additionally, the policy presented in the candidate information slide show regarding appropriate campaigning locations was not reflected in the written ASUS policy, resulting in some confusion with the DSC election appeal. Future governance officers should ensure that all policy communicated to candidates in information sessions is mirrored clearly in the written ASUS elections policy.

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OPPORTUNITIES

Engagement. As students get re-engaged with extracurriculars after nearly two years of COVID-19, the next governance officer will have the opportunity to capitalise on this and spur increased engagement with the governance office. . Additionally, inter-ASUS recruitment efforts by word of mouth and through the talent acquisitions manager further present a promise to yield a contested ASUS executive election next year.

Social Media Manager. Putting effort early on to recruit a social media manager specifically for the governance office next year presents an opportunity for the next governance officer to expand the office's social media presence.

Volunteers. ASUS is so fortunate to have such an active student body at Queen's. The passion and commitment of volunteers were crucial to the governance office's success this year. As the next governance officer completes hiring for next year, the governance

officer has the opportunity to build a team of similarly dedicated volunteers.

THREATS

COVID-19 and Engagement. There is always the threat of a COVID-19 resurgence. The incoming governance officer should have a plan in place to maintain engagement with the governance office in the event we move back to remote learning. Additionally, there is the risk that continued trends of lack of student engagement continue despite the end of the pandemic. The incoming governance officer should be prepared to adapt and innovate upon current engagement efforts to ensure continued growth in engagement with the officer post-pandemic.

Volunteers. There is always the threat that volunteers will not show the same level of commitment to their positions as the outgoing members of the governance team displayed this year. The incoming governance officer should be prepared to find new strategies to maintain volunteer engagement.

Vacant positions. Building on a common theme for this section, there runs the risk that certain positions in the governance office go unfilled due to a lack of student engagement. In this event, the incoming governance officer should continuously work throughout the year to ensure these positions get filled

Timeline

SEPTEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fall Hiring The Office will be hiring an Assembly Speaker and Scribe, Elections Coordinators, and the Office First-Year Intern.- ASUS Assembly<ul style="list-style-type: none">- At the second Assembly meeting, the Assembly Speaker will be ratified and a Deputy Speaker will be elected
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members of Assembly committees will also be ratified - The three ASUS Elections timelines will be approved. - Advisory Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Second meeting - Elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team Training: Elections structure, role responsibilities <p><i>* All elections dates below are subject to approval by Assembly *</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Archives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Office will work towards tailoring the role to the newly-hired Chief Archivist. This includes coordinating outreach to the rest of ASUS and the AMS
OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASUS Assembly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Third meeting - Advisory Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Third meeting - Elections – Fall Election Period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nomination Period: Wednesday, September 20th– Friday, September 29th - All-Candidates Meeting: Wednesday, September 27th - Verification Period: Saturday, September 2nd – Sunday, October 1st - Campaign Period: Monday, October 2nd– Friday, October 6th - Debate / Open Forum: Wednesday, October 4th - Voting Period: Saturday, October 7th – Sunday, October 8th <p><i>* All elections dates below are subject to change *</i></p>
NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASUS Assembly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fourth meeting - Advisory Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fourth meeting - Elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fall Election: Debrief - Winter Election: Begin planning
DECEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASUS Assembly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fifth meeting - Advisory Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fifth meeting
JANUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASUS Assembly

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sixth meeting - Advisory Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sixth meeting - Elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Winter Election Period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nomination Period: Wednesday, January 24th – Friday, February 2nd - All-Candidates Meeting: Wednesday, January 31st - Verification Period: Saturday, February 3rd – Sunday, February 4th - Campaign Period: Monday, February 5th – Sunday, February 11th - Debate / Open Forum: Wednesday, February 7th - Voting Period: Sunday, January 29th – Monday, January 30th - DSC Elections: Begin planning <p><i>* All elections dates below are subject to change*</i></p>
FEBRUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASUS Assembly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seventh meeting - Advisory Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seventh meeting - Elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DSC Election Period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nomination Period: Saturday, February 10th– Monday, February 19th - All-Candidates Meeting: Wednesday, February 14th - Verification Period: Wednesday, February 21st– Thursday, February 22nd - Campaign Period: Thursday, February 22nd – Monday, February 26th - Voting Period: Tuesday, February 27th– Wednesday, February 28th <p><i>* All elections dates below are subject to change*</i></p>
MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASUS Assembly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Annual General Meeting will be held. In addition, the incoming Governance Officer will be trained on leading the Transition Assembly. - Advisory Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the final meeting, Directors will present their cumulative reports on the research and recommendations for their portfolio as collected over the course of the year. - Transition

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin process with next Governance Officer
APRIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASUS Assembly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transition Assembly - The Incoming Governance Officer will lead this Assembly - Transition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finish process with incoming Governance Officer

Collaboration with General Manager

Having Sean's oversight is an asset to the Governance Office. When making edits to policy, it is helpful to have an external perspective to complement the internal perspectives of ASUS student staff. In addition, Sean's insight is beneficial in discussing matters that must be held confidential to my peers, for instance elections particulars. An additional collaboration with the General Manager includes his facilitation of connections between the Office and external organisations in the broader Kingston community. As part of the Office's professional development initiatives, guest speakers will be invited to ASUS Assembly. The Office could look into Sean's connections for this purpose. Furthermore, every May 1st, ASUS experiences a society-wide turnover, leaving very few positions held by the same student for longer than a twelve-month period. As a result, much of the institutional memory is lost. Despite this annual turnover of ASUS Executive and Council, Sean provides knowledge, expertise and strategic advice, making this a seamless transition for the society, the Executive Council and its volunteers. Moreover, Sean serves as the bridge between the past and future of ASUS. Specifically in Governance where institutional memory is valued, it is beneficial to learn from Sean's experiences with previous ASUS operations. His input is valuable in guiding Assembly, Policy, Advisory Board, Archives and Elections. It is a privilege to collaborate with Sean in shaping the future of the Governance Office.

Closing Thoughts

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the readers of my Strategic Plan. The aforementioned goals that I have outlined for the year benefit the operations of our Arts and Science Undergraduate Society and most importantly, our Arts and Science peers. I strive to channel my passion for this Office to see these goals come to fruition. I am fortunate to have this opportunity to serve as your Governance Officer and cannot wait for the year ahead.

Yours in governance,

Piper Veloso (She/Her/Hers)
 Governance Officer
 governance@asus.queensu.ca