

March 10, 2014

We would like to thank the students who have sent in their concerns about ASSU's recent "Say No To Private Review Companies" campaign, and would like to take the time to collectively respond to the concerns raised and we hope that this will clarify any misunderstandings.

ASSU launched its "Say No To Private Review Companies" campaign in November as an awareness campaign, not as an attack on any individual private tutoring services. The basis of the campaign was to inform students that there are free under-utilized resources available to them at the university.

It was also a campaign to inform students—first year students in particular—that these companies are not affiliated with the university, though some instructors with the private tutoring companies have teaching experience with the university, as a lecturer or a TA. The responses that we have thus far received clearly indicate that students are trying to make an informed decision, and we are pleased that students are taking the time to decide what is best for them, which is one of our main goals for this campaign.

Certain reviewers use questionable tactics to promote their sessions by highlighting or exaggerating the rates of failure for students, or spreading rumours of forced bell-curve. We do not believe that companies should be allowed to make profit on campus and through preying on students' anxieties during exam season.

We would like to clarify that this is not a campaign to ban these companies. Rather, it is a campaign to raise awareness about the pre-existing and under-utilized resources that can help students to reach their academic goals. It is clear that some students do benefit from the review sessions, and this reflects the University's inability to meet the needs of our students. We wish to stress that students are entirely free to choose to attend these seminars.

ASSU Executives have regular meetings with the Office of the Dean of Arts and Science, and the Office of the Dean has given full support for this campaign. In addition, The Office of the Vice-Provost Students has endorsed the campaign and has repeatedly stressed that there are free but under-utilized resources available to students at the university.

If students are not given enough preparation by the lectures, or if there are not enough resources available to them, then this is something that needs to be remedied by the Faculty. After all, we pay tuition precisely for these resources. ASSU has been pushing the Faculty to provide adequate support and ample review opportunities for tests and exams through the External review process and through our Exam Jam de-stressing sessions.

Thus, we believe that the students in the Faculty of Arts & Science should decide for themselves which academic resources best fit their needs, but it is ASSU's responsibility to ensure that students make these decisions with accurate information.

For more information about our campaign, please visit our campaign website at <http://www.strikingly.com/noprivate>. If you have further questions feel free to get in touch with us, we are always happy to discuss these issues.

Best,

ASSU Executive