

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and good evening everyone. A special welcome home to our alumni.

As you'll remember from my May speech, the redevelopment of the John Deutsch University Centre, or JDUC, is a key priority for the AMS.

Tonight, I want to begin by highlighting the progress we have made on the JDUC.

We have accomplished a great deal in the last five months, and it's the culmination of the last three years of work. We have completed feasibility studies. We have received Class D cost estimates. And we have started our consultation process with students.

In addition to this, I want to say thank you to Principal Woolf, Provost Bacon and VP Janiec for their continued efforts to get this project moving on the PVP side.

I also want to single out Vice Principal Harris for committing his talents and time to this project. We are truly grateful that the JDUC has been designated as an Advancement priority, and I look forward to continue our work together.

However, I recognize that the path forward will be difficult. We must win support from stakeholders, and I must win the approval of my constituents through a direct referendum. This will only be possible by fostering a strong partnership with the University.

In our research, students have said clearly that they will support a JDUC redevelopment plan if the University contributes their fair share to the project. To students,

accessibility and safety issues are top-of-mind. In 2017, a student in a wheelchair will need to use a freight elevator to access the upper floors. That same student can only use one out of three entrances to the building.

These issues may pose a major reputational risk to the University if they are not addressed, and they will continue to worsen until they are resolved.

My recent predecessors have tackled major issues together with the Board and University. We've had success addressing non-academic discipline, success with fall reading break and success with the Reunion Street Festival.

Like these student leaders, I understand the risks you consider. My Executive knows the importance of reaching a stable and lasting agreement that mitigates the University's risks. I am prepared to offer a mandatory and non-reviewable student fee so we will not repeat the unfortunate episode in 2011.

However, we **must** reach an agreement this year in order to meet the tight timelines incumbent to a project of this magnitude. And we must complete the business case for a renewed JDUC by the end of the calendar year.

To complete the business <http://myams.org/elections/case>, we will rely on the expert knowledge and support of Physical Plant Services, Campus Planning, Financial Services, Advancement, and other stakeholders across the University to meet the December deadline.

We will need a funding commitment from the University that I can viably sell to my constituents in a referendum.

That referendum will be won or lost based on the agreement I reach with you. We must quickly deliver an effective deal to definitively settle this issue.

Let me be clear. This is an ambitious project, but one that is achievable and urgent. We have a responsibility to deliver a deal that will make our transformative student life experience a physical reality.