Dear Assembly,

I can’t believe it’s already the last meeting of our terms! Over the course of the year, the University Affairs Committee has accomplished a great deal of projects and I am very proud of the work that my committee members have done. While we have completed many things, there are some projects that are still ongoing which I would recommend the next commissioner to complete. I have divided this final report into three sections – one for completed projects, one for ongoing projects, and one for projects from my year plan that are incomplete. Overall, we completed thirteen (13) projects, we have six (6) ongoing projects, and we have one (1) project that is incomplete. Due to the large number of projects, I have briefly summarized them below in short paragraphs, however there is much more detailed information on each of them in previous reports (or you can email me or ask a question!).

**Completed Projects**

**MSU Course Wiki Launch**
Over the course of the summer, I spent the majority of my hours updated the Course Wiki to ensure that each of McMaster’s 3,000+ courses were available and had course shells. The committee also hosted two events, one in the summer and one in the fall, to encourage students to fill out courses on the Course Wiki. These events were successful and saw attendance of over thirty students who filled out course shells with information from their courses. Last week, we officially “launched” the Course Wiki, with a promotional strategy aimed at students picking out the summer courses and courses for next year.

**Local Food Day**
In collaboration with MSU Farmstand and other MSU services, the University Affairs committee participated in the second annual Local Food Day this past October, meant to engage students in a conversation around local food in Hamilton, why it’s important, and where to find it.
**MacTalks**
With the Advocacy Street Team, along with many of the Peer Support Services, we completed our Mental Health Awareness Week, MacTalks. The campaign this year ran over two weeks from February 22 – March 4, and consisted of programming from SHEC, PSL, QSCC, Diversity Services, Maccess, HMSC, WGEN, and many other groups. A full calendar of events with descriptions can be found on [www.msumcmaster.ca/macTalks](http://www.msumcmaster.ca/macTalks). A Share Your Story initiative was also undertaken, with the page found at [www.msumcmaster.ca/shareyourstory](http://www.msumcmaster.ca/shareyourstory). Most of our messaging for the campaign was done through the MSU Advocacy Twitter account, and can be found at @MSUAdvocacy or by checking the hashtag #MacTalks.

**International Students Policy Paper**
In collaboration with the External Affairs Committee, we completed the International Students Policy Paper. The paper consists of seven sections: Career Services and Employment, International Student Success and Well-being, Recruitment and Admissions, Deregulated and High International Student Tuition, Opportunities for Needs-Based Scholarships, Issues in Immigration and Visas, and UHIP. We are bringing this policy to the assembly at this meeting (15Q). Thank you to committee members Paddy Sreeram, David Lee, and Chukky Ibe for your hard work on this policy.

**Policy Bank Review**
Along with the other commissioners, we divided the general policy bank to ensure that each policy had a relevant commissioner that was responsible. The primary commissioners responsible for general policies are University Affairs and External Affairs. A list of policies under their relevant commissioner can now be found at [https://www.msumcmaster.ca/governance/bylaws-policies/general-policies](https://www.msumcmaster.ca/governance/bylaws-policies/general-policies).

**Accessibility Forum & Report**
This year’s forum, “Breaking the Stigma”, was held on Wednesday, November 21. The event included several round-table discussions where self-identified students with disabilities had small group discussions and provided feedback and recommendations concerning accessibility on campus. A report detailing the findings of this event is attached to a previous report and can be found on the MSU Reports tab of the MSU website. The Accessibility Forum report will also be circulated to various PACBIC working groups, as well as the McMaster Accessibility Council. More information on the forum itself can be found in previous reports.

**First Year Forum & Report**
On February 1, we collaborated with Spark and FYC to hold the first ever First Year Feedback Forum. The event was a great success with almost 100 first and second year students in attendance to provide feedback. The event was round-table style, with each table consisting of both a student and staff facilitator, and a student note-taker. The table topics included Mentorship on Campus, On Campus Food Options, Arrive and Thrive, Mental Health Support Services, Off-Campus Experience, Student Financial Aid
and Assistance, Pedagogy and Blended Learning, the Role of the MSU, and Welcome Week. There is more information on this event in previous reports. A full report detailing the findings of this event can be found on the MSU Reports tab of the MSU website.

**Course Evaluations**
In first semester, the committee worked with Academic Affairs Council to put forward recommendations for changes to course evaluations to the Teaching Evaluation Committee. Later in the term, I worked with Academic Affairs Council again on a promotional campaign called #EvalsMatter. The campaign consisted of videos of over twenty professors from almost all faculties at McMaster explaining the importance of course evaluations. This term, the University hopes to expand on our #EvalsMatter initiative and run a campaign to continue to stress the importance of course evaluations.

**Federal Election**
Our committee volunteered and supported the rest of the Education Team in promoting the federal election, #MacVotes.

**Washroom Audit Report & Gender Neutral Washroom Advocacy**
Over this year, the University Affairs committee has been working hard to visit buildings all across campus. In total, we visited 34 buildings – all buildings that contained washrooms that students could access – and audited each washroom in the building, taking note of the type of washroom, what gender it was, whether or not it was accessible, and what the signage was like on each door. Our report with a detailed summary of each audit, as well as a summary of the audit as a whole and our committee’s recommendations for changes to signage going forward can be found at the MSU Reports tab. The MSU President, Ehima, is working to send a letter to the Provost as well as different faculties concerning this advocacy effort and the changes we would like to see, which will be sent out soon.

**OPSSS Survey**
We promoted OUSA’s Ontario Post Secondary Student Survey from November 2 to November 19. This promotion included Facebook and Twitter posts and an event page. This led to the MSU having the highest response rate of all OUSA schools for the survey! Next year, the incoming University Affairs Commissioner should analyze the McMaster-specific data from the OPSSS survey.

**University Accessibility Policy**
I worked this term to revise the Accessibility Policy with the Maccess Coordinator, Alex Wilson. Essentially, this general policy contained a significant amount of recommendations that would be put to much better use in an Operating Policy. As such, we have worked with the Operations Committee to ensure that those aspects of the policy are included in a new Operating Policy. We have also updated the policy to
include more feedback and recommendations from this year’s MSU Accessibility Forum. It was passed at the last SRA meeting (15P).

Online Presence
Since January 5, our committee has had its own Facebook page to promote the activities of the committee as well as share any relevant information to University Affairs. The page has been successful with over 100 likes! We find the page to be very useful, particularly when the committee is hosting event pages or promoting a particular campaign. Please like the page if you haven’t already, and invite your friends!

Ongoing Projects

Dietician Advocacy
We have been investigating the scope and usage of the dietician available to students in the David Braley Athletic Centre to determine what our further priorities could be for advocacy. As of right now, the committee is of the opinion that we should continue to make additional counsellors an advocacy priority as opposed to extending dietician hours or availability. A further project for this could be to investigate student demand for a dietician.

Indigenous Students Policy
Throughout the year, the Vice President Education has been working with MISCA to conduct focus groups and come up with recommendations for advocating for Indigenous students on campus. We are now in the process of using these recommendations to become the basis of our policy paper, in collaboration with the External Affairs committee. We are bound by our consultation process as we want to ensure that MISCA and other relevant groups on campus are happy with the recommendations for this paper before we begin the process of writing it. We hope to pass on a completed set of Principles, Concerns, and Recommendations for the next commissioner.

Anti-Oppression Policy
We have been in discussions with Diversity Services on how we can better structure and revise our Anti-Oppression Policy. The potential scope of the Anti-Oppression Policy is very wide and it has made it difficult to begin defining what the Principles, Concerns, and Recommendations for this policy are. We hope to complete Principles, Concerns, and Recommendations for this policy for the incoming Commissioner to continue work into a general policy, with continued collaboration from various groups.

Food Security Advocacy
The Advocacy Street Team is working on a project on food security which some of our committee members have reached out to them about and are collaborating on. We are investigating the possibility of the MSU taking a principled stance on food security in the near future.
TwelveEighty Nutritional Information
The committee members working on this project are meeting with TwelveEighty to gather missing information in order to continue to work on this project. Overall, the long term plan for this project is to find a permanent home for the maintenance of nutritional information. The mandate of the University Affairs committee is to advocate to the University on behalf of students, not to maintain information banks about the MSU’s own business units. The next commissioner should focus on finding a place that the project can continue outside of our committee.

Transition Report
I have begun working on the transition report for the incoming commissioner, as well as uploading files onto the MSU server for the incoming commissioner to access. This will be completed by the end of my term.

Incomplete

Student Feedback on PepplePad
As the new Learning Portfolio, PepplePad, was not launched until second semester and very few students are aware of the new design of the tool, the committee decided not to complete this project from our year plan. This is a valuable project and is something that could be completed once Pepple Pad is further integrated into classes and student life. In the future, the next commissioner could collect student feedback on PepplePad and put forward recommendations to the University once it is better known by the student body.

Overall, it has been a very productive year on the University Affairs Committee, as we were able to work on almost every project outlined in our year plan. I would like to thank all of the hard-working members of this committee: Meg Hsu, Ruchika Gothoskar, Taylor Wilson, Nicole Burke, Jordan Manning, Sarah Kula, Robyn Fishbein, Andrew LaGrotteria, Ryan Desphande, Paddy Sreram, Lindsay D’Souza, David Lee, Aquino Inigo, Labika Ghani, Alex Wilson, Rina Muramatsu, Marina Sadik, Chukky Ibe, and Katie Pita—your work is sincerely appreciated and allowed the committee to be so successful this year! You should all be proud of the dedication you displayed; I loved working with all of you.

I would also like to sincerely thank the Education Department for all of their support this year. The best of the projects that we have completed have been collaborative in nature, and I couldn’t have done it without the support of all of you. In particular, thank you to Ryan MacDonald, my trusted Research Assistant, for all of his help and smiles along the way.
Thank you all for a great year! It was honestly a huge honour to serve this year as the University Affairs Commissioner, and I would love to talk to anyone next year who is considering the role.

Warm regards,

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