

YEAR PLAN

MSU SRA Engineering Caucus

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2016-2017

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OFFICE OF THE ENGINEERING CAUCUS

To whom it may concern,

The engineering caucus would like to thank you for your support in electing us to the Student Representative Assembly. As such, we are thrilled to represent you in the McMaster Students Union's (MSU) governing body.

The main goal of our caucus this year is to increase our outreach to the student body, and strengthen the ties between the McMaster Engineering Society (MES) and the MSU. Through collaboration of the two organizations, and increasing our social media presence, an increased number of engineering students will be informed and integral to the decision making bodies at McMaster University. We aim to allocate our resources toward completing the platform that you elected us on, which has four main categories: better communication, more accessible opportunities, bettering the academic experience and addressing financial barriers. It is of our highest excitement, and determination that we meet these goals.

Through increased presence on social media, and on campus, it will be clearer to engineering students what services are available to us when we are away on internship, and co-op opportunities. We will publicize how to opt-out of MSU fees, and become a visible body in all MES programs and events. We will offer an opportunity to participate in the planning of a conference aimed to empower engineering students. It is our mission to continue to advocate for a better, and more affordable academic experience by means of new support initiatives, and a reduced cost of textbooks. Under our lead, there will be discussions on a coherent expansion plan for the school, and extending Thode library hours.

Our vision is to better the experience of McMaster engineering students. We are honored to have been elected to fulfill these projects, and hope to finish our term with Mac Eng better connected to the greater McMaster community.

Sincerely,

Sarah Kula and Desmond Flowers
Caucus Leaders, 2016-2017
Electrical and Biomedical Engineering V
Engineering Physics and Society V

GOALS

Better Communication

Objective 1	Heighten student awareness of discussions held within their MSU
Description	Frame issues in a way that is interesting to engineering students, and make this information more accessible so that these students are more aware of the affairs of their SRA and MSU
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engineering students are more engaged, so that we can better represent them in decisions made by the assembly
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult to know how to best reach students that are simply uninterested in these discussions
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better representation of the engineering faculty in discussions that affect the MSU, and engineering students
<i>How?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a webpage on the MES website that contains relevant SRA/MSU information - Publicize topics that are of higher interest to students, e.g. the MSU Budget, and how to opt out of different MSU fees - Continue bringing traction to our Facebook page, by sharing information that is relevant to engineering students, as well as continuing our Humans of Mac Eng Initiative - Incorporate a work station for a representative of SRA Engineering to have conversations with students during Welcome Week, about what the SRA is about and our student union - Utilize Google Forums to inspire student engagement with hot SRA/MSU topics, and make this a centralized resource by adapting the Maroons Minutes - Post SRA Engineering meeting minutes in laymen's terms on our Facebook page and webpage 	
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ryan Macdonald, <i>VP Finance</i> - Andrew Cook, <i>MES President</i> - Mike and Lauren, <i>Engineering Welcome Week Planners</i>

Objective 2	SRA Engineering Standing Committee
Description	A committee that works closely with the SRA Engineering Caucus to perform in outreach tasks, collecting student feedback and aiding in event facilitation
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides engineering students with student union experience, and leadership tasks - Creates greater student awareness of the affairs of their caucus, so that we may better represent them in our activities
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retention of volunteers - Utilizing the committee in the most efficient way possible, so that it offers valuable deliveries
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A successful committee this year could translate the SRA Standing Committee into becoming a permanent addition to our MES and engineering caucus - With more student support the engineering caucus can better represent its constituents in all its activities, including discussions within the assembly and in completing a set platform
<i>How?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote a sign-up sheet during Welcome Week and during office hours - Include on Google Forums the option for students to leave an email address if interested in joining the committee - Make the year plan and meeting minutes accessible to committee members, and devise a comprehensive committee plan prior to the first meeting - Consider interview process, and training so that committee members are aware of their resources, and responsibilities 	
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pearl Almeida, <i>SRA Arts and Science</i> - Andrew Cook, <i>MES President</i>

Objective 3	Collaboration with the MES
Description	Build a strong relationship with the McMaster Engineering Society, so to plan joint events and to create more engineering student awareness of the activities of their SRA Engineering Caucus and their MSU
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A better relationship between the engineering caucus and its constituents helps us to better represent them in our activities - A better relationship between the engineering caucus and the MES allows us to reduce redundancies in our year plans, and have greater student participation
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning how to collaborate when our goals are dissimilar
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The SRA and MES have a stronger relationship, and can plan larger initiatives with higher student satisfaction
<i>How?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a representative from SRA Eng at every MES meeting - Create dialogue between SRA and the MES by having regular meetings, or during MES meetings, and organize this information into an accessible online document - Coordinate an MES & MSU Services Night, as a social opportunity for students to come and discover the different services offered by their MES and MSU - Start a First Year Mentorship initiative that opens dialogue between upper year and first year students, and offers mentorship experience 	
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Andrew Cook, <i>MES President</i> - Liam McDermott, <i>VP Academic of MES</i>

More Accessible Opportunities

Objective 4	Empowerment Conference
Description	A comprehensive plan, aimed to reduce redundancies in networking, and empowerment opportunities planned for engineering students. This would associate different opportunities by hosting them during a similar time period.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More students would be able to participate - This would likely be more cost effective, concerning promotional material, etc.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration challenges if participating bodies aren't able to offer the same opportunities within a similar time frame
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With higher student participation, we may be able to inspire higher funding for a higher quality student experience - More emphasis placed on accessibility, and value to students
<i>How?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a separate planning committee whose goal is to lead the conversations with stakeholders, and iron out the logistics - Create a shared, online document that highlights when specific opportunities are happening, as well as their specific goals and list of requirements - Create a feedback forum that offers insight on what students want from this opportunity 	
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LSS Presidents, and MIREx Coordinators - Andrew Cook, <i>MES President</i> - Ryan MacDonald, <i>VP Finance</i> - Shaarujaa, <i>VP Admin</i> - Faculty Administration

Objective 5	Increase awareness, and access to services for students that are on internship and co-op opportunities
Description	Increase student awareness of the services they have access to when on internship, and co-op opportunities. This may be through better publicizing the opportunities, or bringing clarity to the access of these opportunities
Benefits	- More student engagement with available services
Difficulties	- Poor student feedback from students that are uninterested
Long-term implications	- That services update their mandate to include students that are on internship, and co-op opportunities
<i>How?</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use the MES & MSU Services Night to share with students the MSU/MES and all non-faculty society/union specific services that are available to them while they are away on co-op, and internship opportunities - Prepare a formal document that can be attached on our MES webpage, and Facebook page, highlighting the different opportunities available to students
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shaarujaa, <i>VP Admin</i> - Andrew Cook, <i>MES President</i>

Bettering the Academic Experience

Objective 6	Introduction to Engineering: elective course
Description	Strengthen first year proficiency in areas of testing that will be more challenging to succeed in, in upper year courses. This includes technical lab report writing skills, verbal and written communication skills, programming, etc. This can also create a space to formally introduce students to upper year programs, and co-op.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heightened positive academic experience
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determining what type(s) of information is most useful for first year students taking this class - Affordability, and finding a professor that will teach the class
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More access to academic tools that will help students to succeed in their upper year programs
<i>How?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have standing committee help to initiate conversations in their respective programs, and promote the forum. Specifically, what are the different challenges students currently face in their specific program? - How much money will we need to allocate, and where is it coming from? Discuss with faculty administration how we can better integrate complex concepts early in the student curriculum 	
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Andrew Cook, <i>MES President</i> - Blake, <i>VP Education</i> - Shaarujaa, <i>VP Admin</i> - Faculty Administration

Objective 7	Test Review Session for first year students
Description	Create an affordable, test review session plan for students. This will include TAs of our faculty to facilitate sessions that are cost affordable to students, in hopes of bettering their understanding of their academic concerns and to make support more easily accessible.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better academic experience for students
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making this an affordable opportunity for students - Getting TA's interested in facilitating these sessions without guaranteed payment compensation
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To have an established plan for yearly, cost affordable test review sessions
<i>How?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use this opportunity to recognize our TAs and department supporters, by Macademics, the MES and by other academic groups - Use a Google Forum to collect student feedback on the importance in affordable review sessions, and use this data as a reference in all pursuits 	
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blake Oliver, <i>VP Education</i> - Rohoma Zakir, <i>Macademics Coordinator</i> - Andrew Cook, <i>MES President</i> - Faculty Administration

Objective 8	Extended Thode library hours
Description	Extend Thode Library hours so that students are able to use this space until later hours of the night, throughout the academic year
Benefits	- Increases student space for academic improvements
Difficulties	- Where is the money coming from?
Long-term implications	- Attention landing on the operating hours of other libraries, and toward a formalized expansion plan that concerns how students can better access their resources
<i>How?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have representatives on relevant committees, and participate in the conversations held by other relevant groups on campus - Use Google Forum to get student feedback on the idea of extending Thode hours 	
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meg Shu, <i>University Affairs Commissioner</i> - Justin, <i>MSU President</i> - The BOD

Addressing Financial Barriers

Objective 9	Lower the cost of textbooks
Description	Work with textbook publishers to provide slimmed down, or “budget”, versions of textbooks. These versions would provide the information, while reducing the amount of example problems, sample questions, and other unnecessary information.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As much as 20% reduction in length of textbooks, resulting in similar price decrease - Books would be easier to carry around and keep as a long term reference
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each publisher will have to be convinced separately, and it will likely be difficult to convince them
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower cost of the university experience, and easier access for students to academic tools
<i>How?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use the university bookstore to connect with representatives from major publishing companies - Show the differences between editions of the same textbook 20 years apart - Convince them that a budget edition would have a market and that it would be good for students 	
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Justin, <i>MSU President</i> - Blake Oliver, <i>VP Education</i> - University Bookstore - Representatives from other student unions (possibly)

Objective 10	Propose a coherent expansion plan for the school
Description	Work with students and the student union to create a plan for campus expansion, so that new buildings are not built in random locations without an end goal
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will ensure that student's views are brought to the university administration, and that learning is convenient with buildings in close proximity to each other
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The university already has at least part of a plan - It is difficult to get student input on complicated plans - Would require a lot of research
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MSU has a plan and a vision of what we want the school to be in the future - The university has another idea to consider
<i>How?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with students to figure out what is desired in the future (dorm space, food areas, study areas, etc.) - Be in contact with Hamilton officials to allow for coordination of the plan with the Hamilton master plan (and/or downtown revitalization plan) - Take account of what properties the university owns that could be leveraged into a new campus - Make a plan - Present it to the university 	
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - University Administration - SCSN - City of Hamilton - Blake Oliver, <i>VP Education</i> - Meg Shu, <i>University Affairs Commissioner</i>

GOALS to strive for

List 5 things you would like to have prepared for the beginning of September:

- Comprehensive plan for SRA participation for Welcome Week
- Comfortable social dynamic by members of the engineering caucus
- Publicize the MSU budget and how to opt out of different MSU fees
- Comprehensive plan for First Year Mentorship event
- Have already attained feedback from MES Exec on projects
- Keep up the momentum of inclusivity training for Eng Reps

List 5 things you would like to have completed during the fall term (1st):

- Successfully launched our First Year Mentorship initiative
- Successfully held our MES & MSU Services Night
- An operating SRA Engineering Standing Committee
- An operating planning committee for the Empowerment Conference
- Increased visibility and access to services for students on internships and co-ops

List 5 things you would like to have completed during the winter term (2nd):

- Empowering Engineering Conference
- Successfully held our Test Review Session
- Empowering Engineering Conference
- Extended Thode Hours
- Lower Cost of Textbooks

Ongoing Projects:

- Humans of Mac Eng initiative
- Google Forums
- SRA Facebook and MES website updates
- SRA presence at MES meetings and events

Master Summary (Calendar & Checklist)

May	
June	

June	Implemented
	- Submit finished Year Plan
	Prepared
	- Secure plan for the rest of the summer, including the dates of meetings and caucus follow up

July	Implemented
	- Meet with the Engineering Welcome Week Planners to discuss our year plans, having AOP training for reps and securing a table for Welcome Week
	Prepared

August	Implemented
	Prepared
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fully secure our plans to publicize the MSU budget, and how to opt-out of different MSU fees (happening in September) - Meet with the MES to discuss our year plans, and the feasibility of joint-programing (happening in September) - Fully secure our promotional plans for the SRA Engineering Standing Committee (happening in September)

September	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a SRA Engineering representative available during Faculty Fest, and Engineering Clubs Fest - Promote the SRA Engineering Standing Committee - Publicize the MSU budget, and how to opt-out of different MSU fees - Implement our first joint-program with the MES, the First Year Mentorship Program
	Prepared
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fully secure our plans for the SRA Engineering Standing Committee (happening in October) - Fully secure our plans to host the MES & MSU Services Night (happening in October) - Fully secure our plans to increase the visibility and access to services for students on internships and co-op opportunities (happening in October)

October	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Host the MES & MSU Services Night - Secure the first meeting for the standing committee - Increase visibility and access to services for students on internships and co-op opportunities
	Prepared
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fully secure our plans to host the First Year Students Review Session (happening in October)

November	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Host the First Year Students Review Session
	Prepared
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fully secure our plans to continue to increase the visibility and access to services for students on internships and co-op opportunities (happening in December)

December	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to increase visibility and access to services for students on internships and co-op opportunities
	Prepared
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete our rough draft of our plans to lower the cost of textbooks (finished copy due in January) - Fully secure our plans to host the Empowerment Conference (happening in February)

January	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a formalized document on our plan to lower the cost of textbooks
	Prepared
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete our rough draft of our plans to lower the cost of textbooks (finished copy due in January) - Complete our rough draft of our plans to have student involvement in a school expansion plan (finished copy due in February)

February	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Host the Empowerment Conference - Have a formalized document on our plan to have student involvement in a school expansion plan
	Prepared
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fully secure our plans to host the Test Review Session, including plans to recognize the facilitators (happening in March) - Complete our rough draft of our plans to extend Thode library hours (finished copy due in March)

March	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Host the Test Review Session, and recognize the facilitators - Have a formalized document on our plan to extend Thode library hours
	Prepared
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete our rough draft of our transition report (finished copy due in April)

April	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have completed the transition report
	Prepared