

YEAR PLAN

MSU COMMISSIONER (FINANCE)

Matthew Brodka

2016 - 2017



GOALS

Objective 1	Effective Display of Financial Projects
Description	<p>The McMaster Students Union must always take into consideration the voice of students on campus - this pertains to financial decisions as well. As the Finance Commissioner of the MSU, I believe that a large part of the role is to gather student input on the finances of the MSU and McMaster as a whole. With that said, it is difficult for students to meaningfully contribute when they are ill-informed or have a lack of resources to access regarding points of discussion.</p> <p>We can better prepare students for these discussions by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ensuring all SRA Finance Standing Committee documents are posted to the standing committee webpage. 2) Advertising bi-weekly summaries of the Finance Committee work.
Benefits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Students will have access to the information they need to formulate educated conclusions regarding the SRA Finance Standing Committee. 2) The SRA Finance Standing Committee will be able to uphold transparency to MSU constituents. 3) Establishing good habits in terms of student outreach will set a precedent for current and future SRA Standing Committees.
Difficulties	<p>There are no major difficulties in ensuring this goal is followed through. During busy weeks a task such as preparing bi-weekly summaries can be distributed throughout committee members.</p>
Long-term implications	<p>Information will be accessible throughout the entire year for students. Establishing this trend will ensure that the page is not forgotten about in future years.</p>
How?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Updating the SRA Finance Standing Committee webpage when needed. 2) Writing summaries on Standing Committee decisions that will impact students (whether personally or through committee members).
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SRA Finance Standing Committee - Pauline Taggart (Network Administrator)

Objective 2	Financial Affairs Council
Description	<p>I wish make better use of the Financial Affairs Council, according to Bylaw 7/ C. This group encompasses individuals such as the VP-Finances of each Program Society.</p> <p>Smaller program societies have many challenges - a limited budget can impact the actions of program societies, the IRC, SOCS, etc. With continuous consultation between these groups I believe that we can effectively gather input on the diverse opinions and concerns of students regarding their finances.</p> <p>Through the Financial Affairs Council we will work on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Faculty specific budget breakdowns. 2) Faculty specific budget submissions.
	Benefits
Difficulties	<p>A past difficulty (and one that still poses as a threat) is being able to continually maintain communication between members of the Financial Affairs Council. Establishing specific projects will provide more purpose for the Council and hold members accountable.</p>
Long-term implications	<p>Establishing a good relationship between faculties and the MSU is timeless. The reality is a turnover of student positions each year - with tangible projects being completed there will be more incentive to continue these relations in future years.</p>
How?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Establishing a web group to maintain frequent and easy contact. 2) Meeting bi-weekly to ensure projects will meet deadlines set in place.
Partners	<p>- Financial Affairs Council Members</p>

Objective 3	Research
Description	<p>1. Student Life Enhancement Fund (SLEF)</p> <p>The Student Life Enhancement Fund is an immensely important fund in place for student participatory budgeting. On top of promoting the SLEF in order to grow the number of submissions and student engagement throughout the decision making process, I believe it is also important to gain feedback on the quality of previous projects.</p>
	<p>2. Restructuring of Budget Town Hall</p> <p>Working alongside the VP-Finance in order to restructure the Budget Town Hall, allowing the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data.</p>
Benefits	<p>Through these actions the MSU will be able to better gauge the effectiveness of SLEF projects. By analyzing past projects from start to finish we will be able to ensure future projects are implemented in a correct manner. Reviewing past projects will also provide insight as to whether funding can be used towards upgrades, maintenance, etc., for previous projects that may need updating.</p>
	<p>Collecting quantitative data will turn the Budget Town Hall from less of an informal conversation, into an event of numerical significance. While gathering opinions is nice, it would be useful to get numbers behind these opinions in order to determine which action items to pursue first.</p>
Difficulties	<p>Student response from surveys and events such as these are always a challenge. Like most surveys, if they are not promoted online correctly they are very unsuccessful. The same goes for events - it is difficult for students to find time in their busy lives to come to events like the Budget Town Hall.</p>
Long-term implications	<p>Having a long term data set that can be used as reference in future years.</p>
How?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishing a working group within the SRA Finance Standing Committee to review past SLEF projects. Recommendations will be delivered to the MSU President. 2. Having a notetaker at the Budget Town Hall to record the discussion. 3. At the Budget Town Hall having a survey for attendees to fill out, as well as a follow up survey. These questions will be similar to the qualitative data gathered from discussion at the event itself.

Objective 3	Research
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MSU Vice-President (Finance) - MSU President - SRA Finance Standing Committee

Objective 4	University Budget Submission
Description	<p>The University Budget Submission on behalf of the MSU is a project with the intent to positively enhance student education and financial well-being. As the Finance Commissioner I would like to continue working on this project.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upholding the previous budget submission which highlights: tuition and financial aid, paid teaching assistant training, and student space. 2. Participating in the research and preparation of the next university budget submission. Topics of interest may include: university repairs and upgrades, EFRT funding, faculty specific budget breakdowns, courseware costs and Open Textbook Model, residences, meal plan cards, etc.
Benefits	<p>The University Budget Submission is a way to break the disconnect between the MSU and McMaster Administration. The report highlights the desires of students on campus and the long term benefits that each project/plan will provide.</p> <p>Ultimately, it is the University Budget Submission that provides the University with the MSU's stance on impactful decisions made each year. With student opinions taken into consideration, the University can be guided to make decisions impacting student living and learning in a meaningful way.</p>
Difficulties	<p>Like most advocacy efforts, this projects is simply an outline of the recommendations the MSU has. This submission is the foundation of our needs, and to see these changes come into action will involve much more work alongside university administration.</p>
Long-term implications	<p>Provides the university with both a short and long-term vision the MSU has for McMaster.</p>

Objective 4	University Budget Submission
How?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working alongside the listed partners to work towards the suitable topics included in the University Budget Submission - especially EFRT and the shifting of fees. 2. Meeting with EFRT executive to better understand the day to day operations - understanding how budget alterations can improve EFRT. 3. On top of the University Budget Submission, meeting with University Administration to discuss the importance of emergency first response on campus.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MSU Board of Directors - SRA Members - UA Commissioner - UA Research Assistant

Objective 5	Wage Reviews
Description	Assisting in the development of a wage matrix to ensure congruency in wage reviews across positions in the MSU.
Benefits	With a more standardized process, it will become more clear as to how the MSU will go about executing a wage review - current and future employees noted. This standardization will also make it easier for those holding part-time positions to understand the implications of a wage review, when it is fit to perform one, and the logistics of the process from beginning to end.
Difficulties	Establishing a wage matrix that takes into consideration all part time positions within the MSU. The diversity of the positions will influence how the wage review is performed.
Long-term implications	Establishing consistency in wages within the MSU.
How?	Working with the Executive Board, Vice President Administration, etc., to establish key aspects of each MSU role and the correct compensation for each task completed. One complete, developing a sample matrix and altering the matrix according to the desires of the Executive Board. Once approved, implementing the matrix.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MSU Vice-President (Finance) - MSU Vice-President (Administration) - Executive Board

Objective 6	Underground Business Review
Description	The MSU has several key business units. The Underground Media + Design is a full service media and design centre. With such a wide range of jobs performed through the Underground (copying, graphic design, office supplies, t-shirt transfers, advertising, etc), it is important to monitor which aspects of the business are thriving, and which of those may be underperforming.
Benefits	Analyzing which aspects of the business are performing best will provide insight into the long term vision of the Underground as a business unit. Additionally, elimination of certain components of the business may prevent undesired spending.
Difficulties	This is a project that will take some time, all aspects of the business must be reviewed - financial performance, operations, people, marketing, sales activities, and so on.
Long-term implications	The benefit of this project is the long term implications. Establishing the right track for the business will allow the Underground to thrive.
How?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare a business review framework. 2. Establish a vision for the Underground. 3. Perform business review. 4. Complete report on the Underground (i.e. problems, concerns, recommendations) with regards to the long term vision of the business unit.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MSU Board of Directors - Underground Management and Staff

GOALS to strive for

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

1. Wage Reviews.
2. Update SRA Finance Committee website for the upcoming year.
3. Beginning outreach to Financial Affairs Council.
4. Research into EFRT.
5. Formulate business review framework for the Underground.

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

1. Continue to update SRA Finance Committee website (and begin bi-weekly summaries).
2. Development of a long term vision for the Underground.
3. Finish proposal for EFRT budget submission.
4. Review of past SLEF projects.
5. Development of survey for Budget Town Hall.

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

1. Continue to update SRA Finance Committee website and bi-weekly summaries.
2. Conduct business review of the Underground and report on it.
3. Faculty specific budget submissions/breakdowns through Financial Affairs Council.
4. Analyze Budget Town Hall survey results.
5. Review year/unfinished business.

Master Summary

(calendar and checklist)

July	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wage Reviews. 2. Update SRA Finance Committee website for the upcoming year. 3. Beginning outreach to Financial Affairs Council. 4. Research into EFRT. 5. Formulate business review framework for the Underground.
August	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wage Reviews. 2. Prepare document summarizing EFRT as a service. 3. Formulate business review framework for the Underground.
September	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin bi-weekly finance summaries. 2. Development of a long term vision for the Underground.
October	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finish proposal for EFRT budget submission. 2. Review of past SLEF projects.
November	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of past SLEF projects. 2. Development of survey for Budget Town Hall.
December	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. End of term unfinished business. 2. Preparation of presentation to assembly reviewing past term.
January	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct business review of the Underground and report on it.

February	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Faculty specific budget submissions/ breakdowns through Financial Affairs Council.
March	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Faculty specific budget submissions/ breakdowns through Financial Affairs Council. 2. Analyze Budget Town Hall survey results.
April	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unfinished Business. 2. Transition Report.