

YEAR PLAN
MSU Advocacy Coordinator
Sandy Tat
2016-2017
(submitted August 9th, 2016)



OFFICE OF THE ADVOCACY COORDINATOR INTRODUCTION

Dear members of the McMaster Students Union,

My name is Sandy Tat and I am so excited to work with and on the behalf of students in the position of Advocacy Coordinator for this year. I believe that the role of MSU Advocacy is to amplify the voices of students on campus. Therefore, my overarching vision for Advocacy is to prioritize consultation, feedback, and accountability to the student community. As such, upon hiring the executive and volunteer team, and conducting consultations throughout the year, timelines may shift and new initiatives may be introduced.

My main goals are to engage with the student community which will better inform the scope of Advocacy, empower the volunteers who are integral to the success of the pillar, and increase the accessibility and visibility of the McMaster Students Union's advocacy efforts.

Furthermore, much of my work will be done in conjunction with the MSU Education Department on issues of tuition, sustainability, and student housing. I hope to also collaborate with other MSU Services to achieve the advocacy goals in their portfolios.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to email me at advocacy@msu.mcmaster.ca and I would be happy to chat!

Looking forward to a great year,

Sandy Tat

GOALS

Objective 1	Engagement with student community
Description	Prioritize engagement with the student community to better inform advocacy efforts and develop engagement techniques for use in the McMaster Students Union
Benefits	Student concerns are better addressed and campaigns reflect the voices of students. Campaigns are better received and directly impactful. MSU Advocacy is held more accountable to the student community.
Difficulties	Can be difficulty in gathering meaningful feedback; potential low response rate to feedback forms, low turn-out to focus groups/forums; consultations may be contradictory and concerns may be too wide-ranging to address comprehensively; issues with confidentiality on feedback received; complex and inefficient engagement methods may be developed, can be overwhelming for Advocacy and SRA.
Long-term implications	Consistent evaluation of how effective community engagement methods are, if the relationships/connections built are impactful and to maintain open dialogue between the McMaster Students Union Advocacy pillar and students.
How?	Advocacy will conduct consultations with students, community groups/clubs, and other relevant stakeholders to gather feedback; distribution of feedback forms to create framework/strategic priorities for campaigns; support feedback forums; collaboration with MSU Services to achieve services' advocacy platforms that represent student interests (ex. MacBreadBin's advocacy platform on food security, collaboration for mental health event with links to food security); connect with SRA to develop an accessible, wide-reaching system to collect student feedback; create survey/feedback form in which students can submit advocacy concerns throughout the year.
Partners	Student Representative Assembly MSU Services External Affairs Commissioner University Affairs Commissioner Vice President Education

Objective 2	Empower Advocacy Street Team volunteers
Description	Provide opportunities for Advocacy Street Team volunteers to take on leadership roles and make meaningful contributions to advocacy initiatives.
Benefits	Volunteers feel valued and important to Advocacy Street Team and are committed to roles, translating to well-run and successful campaigns. Volunteers are more likely to be engaged with other initiatives within the MSU.
Difficulties	May be difficult and inefficient with too many individuals involved during event planning; can be difficult to empower volunteers due to various constraints/limited opportunities.
Long-term implications	Consistent evaluation of methods through which volunteers are empowered, must understand how volunteers see their role and if structural changes are needed to better empower volunteers.
How?	Outline significant volunteer roles in advocacy campaigns, during planning and coordination; will arrange working groups within the team, can be based on volunteer's request for involvement in specific tasks; collaborate with MSU services on events where AST volunteers can work with and learn about different MSU services; volunteers can help develop promotion strategies and programming; create leadership and growth opportunities within the team; directly ask volunteers for campaigns they are interested in and how they would like to be empowered.
Partners	(Internal) MSU Services

Objective 3	Improve visibility and accessibility of advocacy initiatives
Description	Ensure that information on advocacy initiatives are approachable, easy to access, and effectively promoted.
Benefits	Students become more aware of resources that can benefit them; students are up to date with advocacy efforts taken by the MSU and, therefore, the MSU can be held more accountable to students; campaigns are more effective when they reach targeted demographic.
Difficulties	Can be difficult to reach all students on campus; promotions can be overwhelming or go unnoticed when other services and campus groups are coordinating their own promotions; requires consistent effort to maintain visibility of advocacy initiatives (i.e. continuous updates to website, social media, developing and distributing posters, filming videos)
Long-term implications	Continuous re-evaluation about the efficacy and effectiveness of promotions and accessibility strategies.
How?	Review pre-existing Advocacy resources (i.e. Advocacy tab on MSU website, Facebook page, Twitter, past campaign infographics) and identify strengths and weaknesses (such as how it can be inaccessible, not up to date etc.); evaluate the outreach of advocacy promotions (i.e. if promotions only reach certain communities and not others); make necessary changes based on such evaluations; develop “brand” recognition with Michael Woorder; develop promotion strategies beyond Facebook; increase likes to Advocacy Facebook page by 400 likes by the end of the year; develop collaborative promotions strategies with other MSU services (i.e. develop a promotional video series with Peer Support Line on mental health)
Partners	Underground Communications Officer Social Media Coordinator Michael Woorder External Affairs Committee University Affairs Committee MSU Services

Objective 4	Collaboration with MSU services and clubs
Description	Collaboration with MSU services and clubs to achieve mutual advocacy goals while also addressing the intersection of issues and experiences within advocacy platforms.
Benefits	Campaigns are based upon consultation and founded on student engagement; campaigns address the lived experiences on campus and reflect the student community; therefore, campaigns better represent the student voice.
Difficulties	Collaboration can be difficult, many collaborators may be inefficient; collaborators may have conflicting advocacy platforms and/or differing strategies on how to achieve advocacy goals.
Long-term implications	Continuous evaluations throughout and post-collaboration to determine quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of projects.
How?	Identify overlaps in this year's Advocacy priorities (mental health, food security, sustainability, student housing, tuition) with advocacy priorities of other MSU services and clubs; upon determining how to achieve mutual goals, engage in collaboration.
Partners	MSU Services MSU Clubs External Affairs Committee University Affairs Committee

Objective 5	Determine standards of success and scope of Advocacy
Description	Develop strategic priorities for the Advocacy pillar and its campaigns to evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives/efforts.
Benefits	With strategic priorities, Advocacy campaigns are more focused; campaigns and planning can be evaluated if they achieve strategic goals, allows understanding of strengths and weaknesses, then to therefore make any necessary changes.
Difficulties	May be difficult to develop such standards; standards may be arbitrary and are not reflective of campaign success.
Long-term implications	Sets framework for how future Advocacy campaigns are to be coordinated and planned, but requires on-going evaluation and review to determine if standards need change or improvement.
How?	Collect student feedback and conduct consultations; based on feedback and consultations, develop strategic themes for campaigns that reflect student and stakeholder's voices; continuously evaluate

	efforts if they align with strategic themes (in planning, coordination etc.); follow up with students and consults to determine if targeted demographic believes that the strategic themes were achieved.
Partners	(Internal) VP Education MSU Services

Objective 6	Mental health campaign (MacTalks: Beyond Conversations)
Description	Campaign that promotes the awareness and understanding of mental health and illness; encourages a community environment that empowers individuals with lived experiences; and advocates for structural changes at McMaster to provide more resources and increase accessibility.
Benefits	Students find community and support systems that understand their lived experiences; student community is more aware of resources available at McMaster; the MSU and University becomes more knowledgeable about the needs of students for mental health and illness (i.e. structural changes, culture shift, mental health training for McMaster staff and faculty).
Difficulties	Mental health and illness are nuanced and sensitive issues; can be difficult to address all the intersections of mental health; will be difficult to advocate and create immediate structural changes for students; can be difficult to collaborate and coordinate multiple on-going events for the week.
Long-term implications	Feedback on events will be necessary to evaluate if strategic priorities for the campaign have been met; develop recommendations/call to action based on event turnout, feedback; provide follow-up and develop next steps.
How?	Conduct extensive consultations and engage with student community to understand students' needs and concerns regarding mental health and illness on campus; develop strategic priorities and themes; review these priorities with student community and partners to agree upon effectiveness of scope; collaborate with MSU services and clubs to address the intersections of mental health and illness; develop tangible measures to advocate for structural changes; conduct follow-up.
Partners	MSU Services: Women and Gender Equity Network, Diversity Services, Queer Students Community Centre, Maccess, Student Health Education Centre, Mac BreadBin, Peer Support Line Hamilton Mad Students Collective Student Wellness Centre Athletics and Recreation MSU Clubs

Objective 7	Tuition campaign
Description	Based upon the tuition framework developed the Tuition Task Force, coordinate tuition campaign to lobby the university and provincial government for students' stance on tuition, and bring awareness to student fees and changes in tuition.
Benefits	Financial security for students is advocated for; students are more aware of tuition and student fees, empowered to make best financial decisions for themselves.
Difficulties	Changes to tuition and student fees will not be immediate; different perspectives from university and stakeholders on tuition freeze; ensure that campaign is evidence-based and grounded in student feedback.
Long-term implications	Evaluation of transparency and accessibility of information on tuition and student fees needed to determine strengths and weaknesses.
How?	Consultations with the tuition task force; develop comprehensive tuition framework; develop strategies that address the tuition framework; prioritize transparency and accessibility of information to students; follow-up and evaluate effectiveness of advocacy efforts.
Partners	Tuition Task Force VP Education External Affairs Committee University Affairs Committee

Objective 8	Student housing campaign
Description	Campaign advocating for student tenants' rights and safety.
Benefits	Student concerns regarding housing are addressed; students are better protected and advocated for in their rental agreements and time in rental housing.
Difficulties	Difficulty in communicating student concerns to Hamilton community, stakeholders (i.e. landlords), and governmental representatives; confronting the perception of "student behaviour" off-campus.
Long-term implications	Develop relationships with community and government partners; follow up with stakeholders and engage with student community to evaluate changes in experiences/if initiatives are effective.
How?	Develop strategic priorities based on consultations and student feedback; consult with External Affairs Committee, Community Engagement Coordinator, and Student Community Support Network on strategic priorities; develop campaign through collaboration;

	engage with community and governmental stakeholders; conduct campaign that engages with the student community; follow-up with tangible advocacy initiatives (i.e. letter campaign).
Partners	External Affairs Community Engagement Coordinator Student Community Support Network Off-Campus Resource Centre Student Off-Campus Society

Objective 9	Sustainability education initiatives task force
Description	Conduct sustainability education initiatives and advocacy efforts to develop more sustainable practices on campus.
Benefits	Environmental accountability; prioritizes the sustainability of the university and its impact on the environment.
Difficulties	Difficulty may be that task force is new with limited previous sustainability efforts to guide efforts; lack of environmental audit to guide sustainability education initiatives.
Long-term implications	Evaluation of sustainability initiatives on campus; based on effectiveness of task force, there might be an opportunity to develop a service to address sustainability on campus in the upcoming years.
How?	Working with the sustainability education initiatives task force to develop programming and initiatives to address wide-ranging sustainability topics; consult with university departments, stakeholders, and experts in sustainability.
Partners	Sustainability Education Initiatives Task Force Sustainability Office Environmental clubs

Objective 10	Food security campaign
Description	Campaign on food security, raise awareness of resources available on campus, and advocate for structural changes.
Benefits	Confront stigma of food insecurity; bring awareness to students on available supports and resources on campus; lobby university for accountability to students' food needs.
Difficulties	Immediate change at university level may not be achieved.
Long-term implications	Evaluation of advocacy efforts; sets framework for Advocacy Street Team and Mac BreadBin to continue collaboration for food security campaigns; follow-up with university to ensure structural changes.
How?	Engage with student community to develop strategic priority on food security; collaborate with Mac BreadBin service to determine overlapping advocacy priorities; coordinate food security campaign; follow-up with concrete advocacy initiatives; gather student

	feedback.
Partners	Mac BreadBin Service MSU Clubs McMaster Hospitality Services

Long-term planning

Overarching Vision	<i>Mental Health concerns addressed on campus</i>
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a framework for which the intersections of mental health are addressed on campus
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students can find a form of support on campus for mental health and/or illness • The initiatives for mental health reflect the lived experiences of the student community
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate 2016/2017 MacTalks in its new format • Draw upon the strengths and weaknesses of the campaign, provide evaluations to the relevant stakeholders to create resources, workshops, and structural changes necessary that reflect the feedback and findings from campaign
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate new resources, workshops, and changes within the stakeholders' services • Evaluate effectiveness
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make changes to new initiatives, continue evaluation
Partners	PACBIC – MEDS Student Wellness Centre Student Health Education Centre Maccess Peer Support Line Queer Students Community Centre Diversity Services Women and Gender Equity Network

Overarching Vision	<i>Food Security</i>
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a framework for addressing food security and food accessibility (i.e. more vegetarian, vegan, halal, kosher foods on campus), while also prioritizing the access of nutritional information
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have access to food • Students are empowered with the information to make well-informed food choices
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate 2016/2017 food security campaign • Conduct comprehensive consultations with student community, experts, and MSU services on food security framework • Draw upon the strengths and weaknesses of the campaign, provide evaluations to the relevant stakeholders to create resources, workshops, and changes necessary that reflect the feedback and findings from campaign
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate new resources, workshops, and changes within the stakeholders' services • Evaluate effectiveness
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make changes to new initiatives, continue evaluation
Partners	MacBreadBin McMaster Hospitality Services

Overarching Vision	<i>Student Housing</i>
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure students are advocated for and protected in their experiences with student housing • Developing relationship with community housing associations, standard of practice for landlords, and raise awareness of supports and resources available to students in rental housing disputes; educate community on tenants' rights
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are aware of their rights as tenants, are better protected, and housing associations support the presence of student housing
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate 2016/2017 food security campaign • Conduct comprehensive consultations with student community, experts, and MSU services on student housing framework • Draw upon the strengths and weaknesses of the campaign, provide evaluations to the relevant stakeholders to create resources, workshops, and changes necessary that reflect the feedback and findings from campaign
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate new resources, workshops, and changes within the stakeholders' services • Evaluate effectiveness
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make changes to new initiatives, continue evaluation
Partners	Community Engagement Coordinator Student Community Support Network

	External Affairs Committee Student Off-Campus Society Off-Campus Resource Centre
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Overarching Vision	<i>Sustainability</i>
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a framework for sustainability initiatives on campus, promotes environmental accountability
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfils responsibility of the university to the environment
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate 2016/2017 sustainability initiatives from the task force • Conduct comprehensive consultations with student community, experts, and MSU services on food security framework • Draw upon the strengths and weaknesses of the campaign, provide evaluations to the relevant stakeholders to create resources, workshops, and changes necessary that reflect the feedback and findings from campaign • Potentially propose creation of a permanent service/task force in charge of future initiatives and campaigns
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate new resources, workshops, and changes within the stakeholders' services • Evaluate effectiveness
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make changes to new initiatives, continue evaluation
Partners	Sustainability Education Initiatives Task Force Sustainability Office

	Environmental clubs
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GOALS to strive for

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

- Dates for campaigns throughout the fall and winter term
- Onboarding packages for executive team
- Strategy for empowering Advocacy Street Team volunteers
- Establish strategy for successful engagement with McMaster students
- Volunteer welcome gifts

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

- Release feedback form to gather input on student housing, tuition, sustainability, and food security
- Mental health campaign
- Student housing campaign
- Develop effective strategies for advocacy promotion
- Edit online component of Advocacy

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

- Tuition campaign
- Sustainability initiatives continued into term 2
- Food security campaign
- Evaluation of campaigns for future initiatives
- Feedback opportunity to learn of other advocacy interests on campus

Master Summary

May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition into role, become familiar with resources • Develop strategic priorities for Advocacy
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize strategic priorities for the Advocacy Street Team • Engage in consultations for developing campaigns throughout the year
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultations for MacTalks •
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect feedback on MacTalks • Hire executives
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire volunteers • Gather volunteer schedules • Complete planning for MacTalks
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MacTalks: Beyond Conversations campaign

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete planning for student housing
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student housing campaign • Volunteer appreciation
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete planning for tuition campaign • Gather volunteer schedules in preparation for term 2
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition campaign • Promote volunteer opportunities for term 2
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire incoming Advocacy coordinator • Food security campaign
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer appreciation • Write transition report
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide comprehensive transition to incoming coordinator