



## 2014-2015 Executive Board Meeting

**Topic:** Executive Board Meeting 15-01

**Date & Time:** Tuesday, May 20, 2015

1:00 p.m.

**Place:** TBD

**Items:**

- 1) Adopt Agenda
- 2) Adopt Minutes EB 14-26, 14-27
- 3) Open Seats on Committees Osazuwa
- 4) Open Nominations for Students of Distinction Award Scott
- 5) Transition Reports Scott
- 6) QSCC Job Descriptions Guarna
- 7) Space Allocation Report and Proposal Guarna
- 8) Operating Policy 1.9.4 – Maroons Guarna
- 9)
- 10)
- 11)
- 12)
- 13)

**Objectives**

- 1) Adopt Agenda
- 2) Adopt Minutes
- 3) Approve
- 4) Approve
- 5) Approve
- 6) Approve
- 7) Approve
- 8) Approve
- 9)
- 10)
- 11)
- 12)
- 13)
- 14) Provide Information & Answer Questions
- 15) Unfinished/Other Business
- 16) Time of Next Meeting and Motion to Adjourn

### Motions

**3.a)** Moved by \_\_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board open nominations for two (2) seats on the Space Audit Committee.

**3.b)** Moved by \_\_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board open nominations for one (1) Executive Board member on the Sponsorship and Donations Committee.

**3.c)** Moved by \_\_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board open nominations for one (1) MSU member on the Sponsorship and Donations Committee.

- 3.d) **Moved** by \_\_\_\_, **seconded** by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board open nominations for one (1) Executive Board member on the Silhouette Board of Publications.
- 3.e) **Moved** by \_\_\_\_, **seconded** by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board Open Nominations for one (1) Executive Board member on the EFRT Advisory Committee.
- 3.f) **Moved** by \_\_\_\_, **seconded** by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board Open Nominations for one (1) Executive Board member on the Peer Support Line Advisory Committee.
4. **Moved** by \_\_\_\_, **seconded** by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board open nominations for the MSU Students of Distinction Award.
- 5.a) **Moved** by \_\_\_\_, **seconded** by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board approve the transition report for the Vice-President (Finance) '15.
- 5.b) **Moved** by \_\_\_\_, **seconded** by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board approve the transition report for the Vice-President (Administration) '15.
- 5.c) **Moved** by \_\_\_\_, **seconded** by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board approve the transition report for the Vice-President (Education) '15.
- 5.d) **Moved** by \_\_\_\_, **seconded** by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board approve the transition report for the President '15.
6. **Moved** by Guarna, **seconded** by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board approve the creation of the following job descriptions for QSCC: Administrative Executive, Athletics Executive, Desk Shift Volunteer, Health and Wellness Executive, Intersecting Identities Executive, Newcomers Executive, Newcomers Facilitator, Peer Support Volunteer, Promotions Executive.
7. **Moved** by Guarna, **seconded** by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board approve the following space allocations, effective July 1, 2015:
- The movement of SWHAT to the Maroons office.
  - The movement of the SRA to the committee room.
  - The movement of WGEN into the SWHAT/SRA office
8. **Moved** by Guarna, **seconded** by \_\_\_\_ that the Executive Board approve the changes to Operating Policy 1.9.4 - Maroons as circulated.

**Executive Board Meeting 15-01**  
**Wednesday, May 20, 2015 @ 9:30am**  
**MSU Boardroom, MUSC room 201**

**Call to order @ 1:03 pm**

**Present** D'Angela, D'Souza, Guarna, Jama, Khanano, Nestico-Semianiw, Osazuwa, Stegmaier

**Late**

**Absent** Ibe

**Others Present** J. McGowan (General Manager), V. Scott (Recording Secretary), M. Wooder (SLDC), S. Nadarajah (SRA Member), Christine Yachouh (Advocacy Coordinator), Ryan MacDonald (CLAY Coordinator), Nicole Vandenheuval (Maroons Coordinator), Daymon Oliveros (SCSN Director)

**1. Adopt Agenda**

**Moved** by Nestico-Semianiw, **seconded** by Jama that the Executive Board adopt the agenda, as amended.

**Amendments**

- Guarna - Add Clay Report as Business Item #3

**Vote to Adopt**

**Motion Passes by General Consent**

**2. Adopt Minutes**

**Moved** by D'Angela, **seconded** by Stegmaier that the Executive Board adopt the minutes from Executive Board meeting 14-26 – March 18, 2015 and 14-27 – March 25, 2015, as circulated.

**In Favour: 3 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 5**  
**Motion Passes**

**3. Clay Report – Ryan MacDonald reported**

- MacDonald summarized the report.

**Questions**

- McGowan asked if there are emergency personnel onsite. MacDonald responded that there are six staff from the camp on site at all times. He added that they are first aid trained and the ambulance is less than 120 seconds from camp. MacDonald stated that the breakdown of emergency procedures has been outlined in his report.
- D'Angela asked if going off campus for the conference had affected delegate registration. MacDonald responded they have found it more financially flexible and more of an attraction. He added that some people were excited for it being taken off campus.
- Khanano asked how they were alleviating the stigma on programming. MacDonald responded that before they would have a semi-formal dance and for those who didn't want to go there was alternative programming. He explained that there will be a theme night and dance going on inside the pavilion at the camp, and a scavenger hunt and board games for others. He stated that they are making sure that it doesn't seem like alternative programming, that it's just one big event and the delegates can choose where to go.
- Nestico-Semianiw asked about the budget. MacDonald responded that the HWDSB had given various levels of funding over the past couple years, and last year \$5,000 was given; \$4,000 for delegates and

\$1,000 to make up costs. He explained that this year they didn't receive the sponsorship as HWDSB didn't receive the follow up information that was promised. MacDonald stated that they will be giving a report this year so that hopefully the partnership can be revived for next year.

- Osazuwa asked MacDonald to speak to the sponsorships. MacDonald responded that it was luck through private donations for the conference mainly because of the new tone of the conference. He added that fundraising has been hard but they have been successful getting their numbers. He stated that he's not sure if \$8,000 is sustainable moving forward but everything is listed in the report.

#### **4. Open Seats on Committees**

**Moved** by D'Angela, **seconded** by Nestico-Semianiw that the Executive Board move motions 4.a to 4.f omnibus.

#### **Vote to Consider Motions Omnibus**

#### **Passes Unanimously**

**Moved** by D'Angela, **seconded** by Nestico-Semianiw that the Executive Board open nominations for two (2) seats on the Space Audit Committee.

**Moved** by D'Angela, **seconded** by Nestico-Semianiw that the Executive Board open nominations for one (1) Executive Board member on the Sponsorship and Donations Committee.

**Moved** by D'Angela, **seconded** by Nestico-Semianiw that the Executive Board open nominations for one (1) MSU member on the Sponsorship and Donations Committee.

**Moved** by D'Angela, **seconded** by Nestico-Semianiw that the Executive Board open nominations for one (1) Executive Board member on the Silhouette Board of Publications.

**Moved** by D'Angela, **seconded** by Nestico-Semianiw that the Executive Board Open Nominations for one (1) Executive Board member on the EFRT Advisory Committee.

**Moved** by D'Angela, **seconded** by Nestico-Semianiw that the Executive Board Open Nominations for one (1) Executive Board member on the Peer Support Line Advisory Committee.

#### **Passes Unanimously**

#### **5. Open Nominations for Students of Distinction Award**

**Moved** by Khanano, **seconded** by D'Souza that the Executive Board open nominations for the MSU Students of Distinction Award.

#### **Passes Unanimously**

#### **6. Transitions Reports**

##### **a) Vice-President (Finance)**

**Moved** by D'Angela, **seconded** by Nestico-Semianiw that the Executive Board approve the transition report for the Vice-President (Finance) '15.

- D'Angela stated that he thought it was fairly comprehensive.

**In Favour: 7 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 1**

### Motion Passes

#### b) Vice-President (Administration)

**Moved** by Guarna, **seconded** by D'Angela that the Executive Board approve the transition report for the Vice-President (Administration) '15.

- Guarna stated that it was quite extensive.

**Passes Unanimously**

#### c) Vice-President (Education)

**Moved** by Nestico-Semianiw, **seconded** by D'Angela that the Executive Board approve the transition report for the Vice-President (Education) '15.

- Nestico-Semianiw stated that he had read it and the report was good. He added that Narro Perez was still around if he had any questions.

**Passes Unanimously**

#### d) President

**Moved** by Osazuwa, **seconded** by Jama that the Executive Board approve the transition report for the President '15.

- Osazuwa stated that it was a good report.

**Passes Unanimously**

### 7. QSCC Job Descriptions

**Moved** by Guarna, **seconded** by Jama that the Executive Board approve the creation of the following job descriptions for QSCC: Administrative Executive, Athletics Executive, Desk Shift Volunteer, Health and Wellness Executive, Intersecting Identities Executive, Newcomers Executive, Newcomers Facilitator, Peer Support Volunteer, Promotions Executive.

- Guarna stated that the job descriptions were created by the previous coordinator and last year's VP Admin. She explained that this reflects the executive structure that has been in place for the past two years.

**Passes Unanimously**

### 8. Space Allocation Report and Proposal

**Moved** by Guarna, **seconded** by Stegmaier that the Executive Board approve the following space allocations, effective July 1, 2015:

- The movement of SWHAT to the Maroons office.
- The movement of the SRA to the committee room.
- The movement of WGEN into the SWHAT/SRA office
- Guarna first went over the report with the Board. She explained that the spaces were audited and PTMs filled out surveys about the space needed. She explained that a formal report was supposed to be drafted

but it wasn't done. Guarna then went over the proposal with the Board. She explained that they tried securing space for WGEN using the SSC swing space but it didn't work out. Last year's Executive Board tasked the VP Admin to find a space for WGEN by May 1. She explained that this proposal was discussed with this year and last year's Board of Directors. She added that this would address most of the needs of WGEN and that all services still have space.

- Vandenheuval handed out a memo to the Board. She went over the memo with the Board stating that it wouldn't be feasible to have SWHAT move down to the Maroons/Shinerama office.
- Stegmaier pointed out that SWHAT was used to sharing space and wondered why not just keep SWHAT in the space with WGEN.
- Guarna stated that the service will operate like SHEC, there will be a resource library and events in the evening. She stated that she can only do so much with the information given by the previous VP Admin. She added that she would imagine it being an odd vibe for SWHAT to operate out of the WGEN space.
- Stegmaier stated that this would focus on putting one service with four other services. He stated it wouldn't be fair to the other services.
- Guarna responded that currently only three services would work out of that space as FYC and Spark are not officially in that space. She added that an agreement would be worked on, and while she understood it would not be ideal this was the best way to make sure everyone had space.
- Jama added that SWHAT and WGEN working out of the same space wouldn't work because of confidentiality reasons and that WGEN needs to be a safe(r) space.
- Khanano stated that with the concern that Maroons brought up he wouldn't be comfortable moving forward with the proposal.
- McGowan stated that this is a great example of what the Board will be doing all year as EB is responsible for not only for space allocation but also the overarching needs of the organization. He explained that from a historical perspective this was talked about all last year, and the pros and cons were all weight. He added that some of the concerns brought forward were discussed previous and some are now but they want to make sure that everyone knows the goal of the organization, which was to have WGEN have a space by May 1.
- Stegmaier stated that he had no issues with WGEN taking over the space of SWHAT and the SRA, but he didn't think that SWHAT moving into the Maroons office was a good idea. He felt that it might be more beneficial to the service to be on the main floor, like with EFRT.
- Guarna stated that they went through scenarios with six options before deciding on this one. She felt that this was the best compromise for the health of the organization and service.
- D'Angela felt that everyone was in support of WGEN going into the space proposed but the contentious item was where SWHAT would go. He asked if it would be possible to push SWHAT from going to the basement for a couple of months and then find an alternative. He felt that it shouldn't take too long to do.
- McGowan liked the direction of the conversation, he added that MUSC will be doing re-branding of their signage in the building and that the decision should be made soon so that the signage can be correct.
- Guarna stated that while WGEN doesn't run in the summer it would be ideal to have the date be July 1 so that everyone has time to set up their spaces for September.

#### **Vote on Motion**

**Passes Unanimously**

#### **9. Operating Policy 1.9.4 – Maroons**

**Moved** by Guarna, **seconded** by D'Souza that the Executive Board approve the changes to Operating Policy 1.9.4 - Maroons as circulated.

- Guarna explained that the previous Coordinator and VP Admin worked on this and it was passed on to her and the current Coordinator to finalize.
- Vandenheuval went over the changes with the Board.

**Vote on Motion****Passes Unanimously****10. Information and Question Period**

- Oliveros reported that the first executive meeting for SCSN was last week, and that it went well.
- Yachouh reported that they are currently working on items for the upcoming federal election.
- Wooder reported that TwelvEighty launched their new summer menu, and that the annual charity golf tournament supporting Shinerama and the Child Care centre is on June 25 at Chedoke.
- Guarna reported that PTM summer training was two weeks ago. The SRA orientation and MSU retreat have been booked, and she is looking forward to booking the PTM training weekend. Guarna reported that she was very excited for everyone looking at their operating policies and job descriptions diligently. She reported that she will be in Europe next week for the next two weeks, and that PTMs have been informed.
- D'Angela reported that he has been working on items such as food on campus, and advocacy work with HPSAG. He met with PTMs about their budgets and with the SOPs about their plans for the year.
- Nestico-Semianiw reported that he and Osazuwa went to OUSA transition and they got to meet all of the OUSA school presidents. He reported that a lot of things will be going on over the next few weeks.
- Osazuwa reported that he has been working with the Clubs Administrator and Wooder on Clubs. He and D'Angela are working on food on campus, and that he will be meeting with the University Affairs Commissioner about food accessibility.
- Jama reported that she is helping plan MACquest for SSC.
- Stegmaier reported that the Services Committee has their first meeting and that it went well. He added that there is a SWHAT meeting tonight that he will be attending.
- Khanano stated that May at Mac went well for Horizons, and that a lot of people were interested in speaking about it.
- Osazuwa asked when the applications for LDS for Horizons would be. Guarna responded that it would probably be opening the third week of May.
- McGowan reported that they are still working on a secondary bus pass with the HSR as the University is no longer doing the sticker option. He reported that at Athletics and Recreation, the MSU has a joint partnership with Ath and Rec for the Maroon Shop. He explained that it has been steadily declining over the past few years, so he and the Director of Ath and Rec are coming up with ideas of what can go in that space. McGowan reported that he hoped to bring something to this Board soon.

**11. Other Business****a) Finding Alternate Space for SWHAT**

**Moved** by D'Angela, **seconded** by Guarna that the Executive Board find alternate space for SWHAT by July 1.

- D'Angela stated that this is a good conversation to have, and moving forward the Board should try and to find some alternatives. He added that if the Board chooses to go back to the original proposal than that it what they will do but at least they will have looked for something.
- Jama asked if they would extend the deadline if they couldn't find something.
- Guarna stated if there was a space but they needed more time they could possibly motion to extend.

**Vote on Motion****Passes Unanimously****12. Adjournment and Time of Next Meeting**

**Time of Next Meeting:**

**Tuesday, June 9, 2015  
10:00 am  
MSU Boardroom, MUSC 201**

**Moved** by Osazuwa, **seconded** by Nestico-Semianiw that the meeting be adjourned.

**Passes Unanimously**

Meeting adjourned @ 2:14 pm

/vs



# MEMO

*From the office of the...*

## CLAY COORDINATOR

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TO: Members of the Executive Board

FROM: Ryan MacDonald

SUBJECT: CLAY Report #3

DATE: Wednesday May 19th

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### **UPDATE**

First of all, congratulations and welcome to Executive Board! As I'm probably your first service report you'll have looked at I'll try to be thorough. With less than two weeks until the Conference, CLAY is gearing up for our most exciting and well-attended conference yet! We've increased the size of our staff team to provide more opportunities for McMaster students, we've reached our capacity for the conference for the first time since I've been at McMaster (and from my records from some time) and we've received the largest sponsorship total in recent years. All things are going fine and dandy and we are excited with what's to come. I look forward to submitting a report to you following the conference's completion.

### **SERVICE USAGE**

#### *REGISTRATION*

Registration closed on May 15th with a total of 152 registrations, we expect a few schools to drop out but this still represents our biggest total of all time (that I can find), the second highest being 147 registered in 2013. This is very exciting for us going from a year of poor turnout in 2014 with only 94 delegates. Further we are excited to say that we are aware (there could be more through school funding) of 74 delegates being sent through our sponsor a delegate matching opportunities and financial aid program representing nearly 50% of the total conference. I think this is a big win for the program in that we are providing a high quality leadership development opportunity for students in our community that otherwise might not have ever had an opportunity like this. A few partnerships in this program to highlight are 23 students through Sir John A McDonald Secondary, 5 students through Empowerment Squared and 10 students through St. Mary Secondary, our closest high school to McMaster.

#### *TRAINING*

This Saturday May 23rd and Sunday May 24th, we will be hosting our annual staff training to prepare our McMaster student volunteers for the weekend. This year we are lucky to provide opportunities for 59 students to participate. Highlights of this training will include a modified Anti-Oppression training run by HRES & MSU Diversity Services and a mental health resources training supported by the HWDSB.

#### **STAFF HIRING**

Very excited to say that we received 207 applications total for the CLAY 2015 staff team. This represents an increase from the previous high in 2014 from 120 of over 70%. As previously stated offers were made to 59 individuals who we felt best represented what CLAY embodies and the values we hoped they could instill on the CLAY delegation this year.

## CONFERENCE

CLAY 2015 is nearly upon us and I'm very excited to see it through to fruition. Being that CLAY is two weeks later this year than in the past, we've put this time to good use and are well ahead of the game in terms of our preparation (you can pretty much find me in the committee room 9-5 on working days....and maybe weekends too). We have two Keynote speakers for the weekend; Brandon Love and Andy Thibodeau as well as the tender tracks of Mr. DJ Staples and the undying spirit of Ms. Kristina Weatherbee who will be delivering our CLAY Connector will highlight our weekend. We have emergency procedures in place and are prepared to host our first ever Creating Leadership Amongst Youth off campus at Camp Muskoka, I've attached an updated schedule to this report as an appendix.

## PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Feb 25th - Coffeehouse  
Mar 1st - Applicant Workshop  
March 6th - Staff Applications Due  
March 11th - Staff interview offers go out  
March 13th-15th - Staff Interviews  
March 17th - Staff Offers  
April 7th - Staff Meet & Greet  
May 22nd - Staff Potluck  
May 23rd-24th - Staff Training  
May 29th-31st - CLAY Conference 2015

## BUDGET

Attached is our current updated budget projection alongside. We have received a massive bump in donations thanks to the hard work of Sponsorship and Fundraising Coordinators with an estimated final total of nearly \$8,000. Because we were able to do so well with our fundraising we had additional funds to play with regarding our totals for delegate sponsorship. In the future it may be hard to sustain this level of sponsorship however suggestions that we didn't take advantage of in time may include the Hamilton Youth Advisory Committee, the Hamilton Optimist Club and Hamilton Rotary Club. Further, due to a misunderstanding we did not receive any donation from HWDSB this year.

## CURRENT CHALLENGES

Our biggest challenge at this point is anticipating the unknown. Frankly, as much as we are incredibly well prepared for this conference, we are in uncharted waters moving off campus and problems could present themselves that might be unanticipated. Whatever challenges are coming our way I feel we are prepared to face them head on and I can only thank my team for the incredible effort they've put in thus far.

## SUCSESSES

This is a big year for CLAY, largest application pool, largest staff team, largest number of delegates, largest sponsorship total, largest sponsored delegate total, reduced price and the first time in a number of years where I expect CLAY to stay on budget. As much as I am incredibly excited for all these cool milestones I think the biggest success I've had this year is the collection of people I've allowed to come together and grow as a team. I've been involved in a lot of things at McMaster and this by far has been the most organic and familial group of people I've ever interacted with and I'm so thankful for their hard work and dedication. Many times the success of a service is thrust upon the Part-Time Manager, for the success we've had thus far I have to deflect that praise completely to my executive team. They are a bunch of stars through and through.

CLAY 2015 GENERAL BREAKDOWN			
<b>CLAY REVENUE</b>			
ITEM	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
Delegate Fees (Including Tax)	97	\$146.02	\$14163.72
MSU Budget	1	\$16,000.00	\$16000.00
Staff Fees	48	\$10.00	\$480.00
Reduced Delegate Pricing	1	\$700.00	\$700.00
Sponsors	1	\$7,950.00	\$7950.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>			<b>\$39,293.72</b>
<b>CLAY EXPENSES</b>			
ITEM	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
Camp Fee	194	\$140.00	\$27,160.00
Bussing	1	\$4,058.90	\$4,058.90
Printing	1	\$1,100.00	\$1,100.00
Lanyards	199	\$3.30	\$656.70
Events	1	\$1,890.00	\$1,890.00
Conference Gift	300	\$1.00	\$300.00
Training	1	\$400.00	\$400.00
Sessions	1	\$350.00	\$350.00
LDL Expenses	1	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Promotions	1	\$400.00	\$400.00
Food	163	\$5.00	\$700.00
Administration	1	\$250.00	\$250.00
Special Projects	1	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>			<b>\$39,265.60</b>

# CLAY 2015 SCHEDULE

## D A Y # 1

### Friday May 29th

Start Time	End Time	Activity	Delegates		Staff		Planning Team	Ryan	Mike	Anj	Christine
			Where	What	Where	What	Where	Where	Where	Where	Where
9:00AM	9:10AM	Staff Arrival	N/A	N/A	McMaster University	Arriving with Bags - Loading Buses	McMaster University				
9:30AM		Staff Bus Leaves	N/A	N/A	EnRoute (Projected arrival 12:30)	EnRoute to Camp Muskoka + Lunch Stop	McMaster University				
10:30AM	11:00 AM	Delegate Arrival	McMaster University	Parents/ School drop off to McMaster		N/A	McMaster University	EnRoute	EnRoute	McMaster University	McMaster University
11:00AM	11:15 AM	Delegate Bus Loadup	McMaster University	Planning Team assist in bus loadup		N/A	McMaster University			McMaster University	McMaster University
11:15AM	11:45 AM	Lunch for Delegates	McMaster University	Organized by Events - Delegates eat lunch before getting on bus		N/A	McMaster University			McMaster University	McMaster University
12:00PM		Delegate Bus Leaves	EnRoute	Bus Leaves McMaster for Camp Muskoka		N/A	EnRoute	Pavillion	Pavillion	EnRoute	EnRoute
1:00PM		Staff Bus Arrives at Muskoka		N/A	Cougar Lodge	Staff Arrive and Set Up Session Rooms + Camp					
2:45PM	3:15PM	Delegate Arrival to Camp Muskoka	Cabins	Unload buses Move into cabins	Cabins	Tasks as assigned by LDL Coordinator	Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Cabins	Cabins	
3:15PM	3:30PM	Delegate Registration & Move In	Cabins	Move in and cabin assignment	Cabins	Tasks as assigned by LDL Coordinator	Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Cabins	Cabins	
3:30PM	3:45PM	CLAY Welcome + Session Group Split	The Sod	Meeting New People	The Sod	Facilitating Icebreakers	The Sod	The Sod	The Sod	The Sod	
3:45PM	3:50PM	Travel Time									
3:50PM	4:45PM	Session #1. Welcome	Various Locations	Welcome Session in Breakout-Session Rooms	Various Locations	Welcome Session in Breakout-Session Rooms	Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Dining Hall	Dining Hall	
4:45PM	4:50PM	Travel Time									
4:50PM	5:45PM	Dinner	Dining Hall	Eating	Dining Hall	Eating / Facilitating Conversation	Pavillion	Dining Hall	Dining Hall	Pavillion	
5:45PM	5:50PM	Travel Time									
5:50PM	6:40PM	Opening Ceremonies	Pavillion	Listening	Pavillion	Listening + Skits	Pavillion	Pavillion	Pavillion	Pavillion	
6:40PM	6:45PM	Travel Time									
6:45PM	7:30PM	Session #2. Teamwork + Communication	Various Locations	Teamwork Session in Breakout-Session Rooms	Various Locations	Teamwork Session in Breakout-Session Rooms	Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Pavillion	Pavillion	
7:40PM	7:45PM	Travel Time									
7:45PM	8:20PM	CLAY Connector	Pavillion	Participating	Pavillion	Participating	Pavillion	Pavillion	Pavillion	Pavillion	
8:20PM	9:00PM	Keynote: Brandon Love	Pavillion	Listening	Pavillion	Listening	Pavillion	Pavillion	Pavillion	Pavillion	
9:00PM	9:05PM	Travel Time									
9:05PM	10:05PM	Session #3. Mental Health	Various Locations	Mental Health Session in Breakout-Session Rooms	Various Locations	Mental Health Session in Breakout-Session Rooms	Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Pavillion	Pavillion	
10:05PM	10:10PM	Travel Time									
10:10PM	12:00AM	Theme Night	Pavillion	Enjoying the Theme Night	Pavillion	Tasks as assigned by LDL Coordinator	Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Pavillion	Pavillion	
12:00AM	12:10AM	Travel Time									
12:20AM	12:30AM	Good Nights	Cabins	Getting Ready for Bed	Cabins	Goodnights / Sweeps	Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Floating	Floating	
1:00AM	2:00AM	Staff Debrief & Sweeps		N/A	Pavillion	Tasks as assigned by LDL Coordinator	Pavillion	Pavillion	Floating	Floating	

## D A Y # 2

### Saturday May 30th

Start Time	End Time	Activity	Delegates		Staff		Planning Team	Ryan	Mike	Anj	Christine
			Where	What	Where	What	Where	Where	Where	Where	Where
6:50AM	7:10AM	Staff Wakeup		N/A	Cougar Lodge	WOKEN UP		Cougar Lodge	Cougar Lodge	Cougar Lodge	Cougar Lodge
7:10AM	7:20AM	Morning Staff Briefing		N/A	Cougar Lodge	Preparing For The Day		Cougar Lodge	Cougar Lodge	Cougar Lodge	Cougar Lodge
7:25AM	7:30AM	First Delegate Wakeup	Cabins	Waking Up	Cabins	Waking Up Delegates	Floating (Ch 2)	Cougar Lodge	Cabins	Floating	
7:50AM	7:55AM	Second Delegate Wakeup	Cabins	Woken Up	Cabins	Waking Up Delegates	Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Cabins	Dining Hall	
8:15AM	9:15AM	Breakfast	Dining Hall	Eating	Dining Hall	Eating/Facilitating Conversation	Dining Hall	Dining Hall	Dining Hall	Dining Hall	
9:15AM	9:20AM	Travel Time									
9:20AM	10:40 AM	Session #4. Stress & Time Management	Various Locations	S&T Session in Breakout-Session Rooms	Various Locations	S&T Session in Breakout-Session Rooms	Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Floating	Floating	

10:40AM - 11:00AM	Talent Show Prep / Free Time	Various Locations	N/A	Various Locations	N/A		Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Pavillion	Pavillion
11:00AM - 11:05AM	Travel Time									
11:05AM - 12:15PM	Keynote: Andy Thibodeau	Pavillion	Listening	Pavillion	Listening		Pavillion	Pavillion	Dining Hall	Pavillion
12:15PM - 12:20PM	Travel Time									
12:20PM - 1:20PM	Lunch	Dining Hall	Eating	Dining Hall	Eating / Facilitating Conversation		The Sod	Dining Hall	Dining Hall	Dining Hall
1:20PM - 1:25PM	Travel Time									
1:25PM - 5:25PM	Session #5 + #6 + Group Photos + Group Photo	<b>REFER TO SATURDAY ROTATION SCHEDULE</b>					Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Floating	Floating
5:25PM - 6:15PM	Talent Show Prep						Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Dining Hall	Dining Hall
6:15PM - 6:20PM	Travel Time									
6:20PM - 7:20PM	Dinner	Dining Hall	Eating	Dining Hall	Eating / Facilitating Conversation		Pavillion	Dining Hall	Dining Hall	Pavillion
7:20PM - 7:25PM	Travel Time									
7:25PM - 9:30PM	CLAY 2015s Got Talent	Pavillion	Perform/Enjoy!	Pavillion	Perform/Enjoy!		Pavillion	Pavillion	Pavillion	Pavillion
9:30PM - 9:35PM	Travel Time									
9:35PM - 11:15PM	Session #7 - Empowerment	Various Locations	Empowerment Session in Breakout-Session Rooms	Various Locations	Empowerment Session in Breakout-Session Rooms		Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	The Sod	The Sod
11:15PM - 11:20PM	Travel Time									
11:20PM - 12:00AM	Camp Fire	The Sod	Enjoying!	The Sod	Facilitating Good Times		The Sod	The Sod	The Sod	The Sod
12:00AM - 12:05AM	Travel Time									
12:15AM - 12:25AM	Good Nights	Cabins	Getting Ready for Bed	Cabins	Goodnights / Sweeps		Floating	Floating	Floating	Floating
12:45AM - 1:45AM	Staff Debrief & Sweeps		N/A	Pavillion	Tasks as assigned by LDL Coordinator		Pavillion	Pavillion	Floating	Floating

**D A Y # 3**

### Sunday May 31th

Start Time	End Time	Activity	Delegates		Staff		Planning Team	Ryan	Mike	Anj	Christine
			Where	What	Where	What					
6:25AM	6:30AM	Staff Wakeup		N/A	Cougar Lodge	WOKEN UP		Cougar Lodge	Cougar Lodge	Cougar Lodge	Cougar Lodge
6:35AM	6:45AM	Morning Staff Briefing		N/A	Cougar Lodge	Preparing For The Day		Cougar Lodge	Cougar Lodge	Cougar Lodge	Cougar Lodge
7:00AM	7:10AM	First Delegate Wakeup	Cabins	Waking Up	Cabins	Waking Up Delegates		Floating (Ch 2)	Cougar Lodge	Floating	Cabins
7:30AM	7:35AM	Second Delegate Wakeup	Cabins	Woken Up	Cabins	Waking Up Delegates		Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Dining Hall	Cabins
7:35AM	7:55AM	Delegate Move Out	Cabins	Moving Out	Cabins	Assiting With Move Out		Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Dining Hall	Cabins
7:55AM	8:00AM	Travel Time									
8:00AM	8:45AM	Breakfast	Dining Hall	Eating	Dining Hall	Eating/Facilitating Conversation		Dining Hall	Dining Hall	Dining Hall	Dining Hall
8:45PM	9:00AM	Travel Time									
9:00AM	11:30AM	Session #8 - Self-Awareness	Various Locations	SA Session in Breakout-Session Rooms	Various Locations	SA Session in Breakout-Session Rooms		Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Floating	Pavillion
11:30AM	12:00PM	Session #9. - Resilience	Various Locations	Resilience Session in Breakout-Session Rooms	Various Locations	Resilience Session in Breakout-Session Rooms		Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Dining Hall	Pavillion
12:00PM	12:05PM	Travel Time									
12:05PM	1:20PM	Lunch	Dining Hall	Eating	Dining Hall	Eating/Facilitating Conversation		Dining Hall	Dining Hall	Dining Hall	Dining Hall
1:20PM	1:25PM	Travel Time									
1:25PM	2:15PM	Session #10. Closing	Various Locations	Closing Session in Breakout-Session Rooms	Various Locations	Closing Session in Breakout-Session Rooms		Floating (Ch 2)	Floating (Ch 1)	Pavillion	Pavillion
2:15PM	2:20PM	Travel Time									
2:20PM	3:00PM	Closing Ceremonies	Pavillion	Listening	Pavillion	Listening		Pavillion	Pavillion	Pavillion	Pavillion
3:00PM	3:45PM	Im Special Because & Warm Fuzzies	Pavillion	Warm Fuzzying	Pavillion	Warm Fuzzying		Pavillion	Pavillion	Pavillion	Pavillion
3:45PM	4:00PM	Delegate Bus Loadup	Cabins	Loading Up (Cabin #: Bus #)	Cabins	Assisting With Load Up		Cabins	Cabins	Cabins	Cabins
4:10PM	4:15PM	Delegate Bus Leaves	Cabins	N/A	Cabins	N/A		Cabins	Cabins	Cabins	Cabins
4:15PM	5:00PM	Clean Camp	Various Locations	N/A	Various Locations	Cleaning		Floating	Floating		
5:15PM		Staff Bus Departure		N/A		N/A					

A Transition Report Prepared for the President & Chief Executive Officer of the McMaster  
Students Union

Submitted by Mr. Teddy Saull  
On the 15<sup>th</sup> of May, 2015

## **Preamble**

I'm not sure how much of a difference it would make if this document were one page or a hundred. Regardless of what I write, you will be the president that you were elected to be. If and when you need advice, there will be a long list of more qualified sources at your disposal through the McMaster network that you are about to build. I am always willing to talk about anything you need—whether it's related to the overview that follows or not—and please know that you now belong to a family of (perhaps disgruntled) former McMaster Student Union (MSU) board members that are waiting on the sidelines for you to reach out.

Also, this report is not exhaustive. You will discover other elements of the role that I have not mentioned here, and projects that I worked on without mention, but this is the bulk of it.

Do what you will, and all my very best,

Teddy Saull  
President & CEO, McMaster Students Union, 2014–2015

## **The President on Paper**

*The following section outlines core responsibilities of the role and a few of my most relevant, related thoughts.*

The role of the president is highly complex but also quite simple: make things better. The MSU exists to enhance the quality of student life at McMaster, and you are responsible for everything that happens under that purview. Every staff member decision, every incident at the club, every hike through Cootes, and every tweet from our accounts can be traced back to you. Do not underestimate this responsibility. If you are to stand a chance at strengthening, or at least maintaining the reputation and effectiveness of the organization, you must practice ethical and rational judgment on all matters, at all times.

**Chair of the Board of Directors.** In most organizations and hit television programs, vice presidents serve at the pleasure of the president. That is not the case in the MSU. As the president, you chair board meetings—guiding the conversations and setting the tone—but your input is no more valuable or binding than the other members of the board.

With that said, I think the president bears particular responsibility for the wellbeing of the team and should be looked to for matters related to conflict management, team bonding and team dynamics. Furthermore, the president should work towards the vision they promised students at large; at times, this can provide guidance to board thrusts.

Board meetings are the glue that keep the potentially divergent paths of board members' together, and should be treated with reverence when trying to balance competing schedules. Make a concerted effort to have every single member of the team present at every meeting. There were a few times in our term where the Vice President (Education; VP Ed) missed multiple meetings in a row because of conference conflicts, and by the time he got back into the loop of meetings the rest of us were miles ahead in our thinking, and consequentially entrenched in an opinion, on a variety of initiatives. This is obviously strenuous on team dynamics and detracts from the strength of team decisions. Standing strong on this point will sometimes mean you and the other members will have to sacrifice opportunities, and when the cost of missing those things is paramount, will require flexibility and a willingness to reschedule on your end.

**Chair of the Executive Board.** The Executive Board (EB) is a great place to keep up to date on the struggles and successes of our part-time services. The president is an arm's length away from the day-to-day activity of the services, and necessarily so—to be overly involved could undermine the authority of the Vice President (Administration; VP Admin) and confuse the staff about their reporting structure. Use EB to understand where staff are struggling and could use a boost, what is going well that you can use in your lobbying efforts, and to get a sense for what the VP Admin is dealing with. I always found EB to be a reliable litmus test for the VP Admin's stress level.

I was new to the MSU this year, and EB taught me a very important element of the culture of this place. Part-time managers feel a pressing sense of ownership and responsibility for their

services. In some ways, this is a good thing – it is nice to have staff that are invested and actually care. You can always hire talent, but passion for the service and an instinctive understanding of its impact on student life is harder to find. The serious drawback, however, is that one of the primary roles of EB is to provide strategic direction for the services. This process begs critical questions. I found that when bringing these up with the staff, they could be personally offended and take my feedback as out of line and hurtful (note my point above about being only vaguely aware of their regular business). In other instances, I brought things up with the EB and without the part-time manager, only to receive unhappy responses from the managers who felt cut out of the process. This was not something I ever spent much time trying to change. I just noted it and allowed it to inform my approach. Perhaps you'll do the same, or maybe you'd like to shift the culture of ownership. You might even want to further cultivate it, but I would strongly suggest that you do not.

While on the note of critical feedback, I have a few passing thoughts on the future of our services. At the time of writing, we offer (or intend to offer) peer support at the Student Health Education Centre, Peer Support Line, Queer Students Community Centre and the Women and Gender Equity Network. It also appears that there may be an Abilities Service on the horizon, and I expect there would be an appetite for peer support there as well. I think that in the next few years, these services should evolve into a single space—the Peer Support Centre—with a professional staff member able to assist with their coordination. I think it is important that each service preserve its autonomy, as this helps with our advocacy initiatives, but things are eventually going to get (if not already) confusing for students who just want to check in with a peer. Wouldn't it be easier as a student to know there was a safe(r) space on campus to talk to a peer about anything, especially when we consider the intersectional nature of many of the things students could be expected to want to discuss? The space itself could have wings where peers from the specific services can offer more specific support, but I think it would just make things easier for the uninformed student. Consider this idea with future governing bodies, especially as new space on campus becomes available (e.g., the basement of MUSC should have vacancies when the Living & learning Centre opens).

I think that Creating Leadership Amongst Youth (CLAY) should strive to be a zero cost service for the organization, if it continues at all. Those that benefit from the service should bear the cost—indeed, it is an investment in professional and personal development. Those that require financial support should receive it from the institution sending them, not from McMaster student fees. The Student Community Support Network is a powerhouse and represents a beautiful collision of advocacy and service provision. The impact of the Maroons on campus life should never be underestimated. Mac Bread Bin should evolve into food bank with a soup kitchen. The source of our community's collective efforts to raise thousands of dollars every Welcome Week should be carefully considered—why is it Shinerama by default? Why not rotate? Why not have charities compete through a proposal process, pitching what the money would do for their organization? Why aren't we focused on supporting community initiatives? We strive to be good neighbors in Hamilton, imagine what the injection of \$150,000 annually could do for our reputation and the community in which we live.

The EB is a great place to embody the attitude you would like to see from the organization. I always tried to be upbeat and welcoming, but also efficient and critical. As chair of the meeting,

you do have a lot of influence on the atmosphere in the room and should be intentional about that impact. Remember that for the services, this is the primary interface with the institutionalized and thus potentially daunting or disheartening “MSU”.

Lastly, this year we thought that the EB should be discussing our advocacy initiatives as well as our services. This makes sense for a lot of reasons. The most compelling is that any of our governing bodies ought to at least acknowledge that advocacy and service provision exist on a continuum, and focusing explicitly on one end and not the other can tempt us out of that way of thinking. Second, it would be a wasted opportunity to have a group of eager elected representatives together on a weekly basis and not to tap in to their thoughts on advocacy initiatives of the day.

**Chair of McMaster Students Union Incorporated.** There’s not really much to this one, you just sit at the front of the room and wield that commanding gavel. I used the gavel at every shadow of an appropriate opportunity, and encourage you to do the same. Also, I used first names while calling the roll to keep things hip and fresh. There was some debate about whether or not the chair of these meetings should engage in the discussion. I did not shy away from guiding things with my input or answering a question. You’re not the speaker of the house, so I don’t think it makes sense to expect the chief executive not to provide input to corporate decisions, regardless of whether or not they chair the meeting. That said, if I was bringing forward a motion I would decline the chair and let the VP Admin play with the gavel.

**Chair of the Student Services Committee.** The Student Services Committee exists to oversee all services funded through the compulsory ancillary fees. The president co-chairs this with a delegate from Student Affairs, and it makes sense to meet briefly before each meeting to go through the agenda and plan an effective meeting. The Committee does not meet often; perhaps 6–8 times annually.

This year, we worked with the Dean of Students to re-write a Compulsory Ancillary Fees Agreement. I cannot overstate the importance of seeing this revision through to completion. Currently, undergraduate students fund a disproportionate amount of the student affairs budget. These services (student success, student wellness, athletics and recreation) are integral to the student experience. Without sufficient financial resources, cuts will eventually have to be made to reconcile the current annual deficit of \$1.6M. The new draft policy takes significant strides forward, bringing us at least \$0.8M closer to a sustainable model, by redirecting the vast majority of Student Life Enhancement Funds to core operations and collecting several hundreds of thousands of additional dollars from graduate students. Additionally, we secured a fund matching by percentage agreement with the University, which is a clarifying step forward for the agreement. Furthermore, the new policy will clarify feedback structures for the various departments in Student Affairs, allowing for student feedback to be more easily incorporated into the strategic direction of the services. These are all wins, and are worth pursuing adamantly.

Our work on the CAF Agreement solidified what we hypothesized at the beginning of our term: large committees with a huge mandates can easily run astray, aimlessly striving for unsynchronized benevolence, so you have to be willing to pick one manageable bite and work on that for the year. As the president and co-chair of the committee, it is on you to propose

directions and to encourage the Committee to focus. This year, your focus should be on completing the CAF update and seeing it through implementation for the first time. You can then provide recommendations for the team that comes after you to hone the process. This will put us in a good spot about 2–3 years from now to actually start drilling down on the services and assessing their value to undergraduate students. Before we get into that, though, the structures must be clarified and the financial health of that integral limb needs to be in tact.

**The Student Representative Assembly.** The Student Representative Assembly (SRA) is a ripe breeding ground for talent, passion and hard work. Cultivate it. I didn't, and probably should have. It is made up by a group of committed individuals that are just dying to make an impact. However, the nature of their roles leaves all but the exceptional few under-resourced and partially informed at best. You could do a lot by just meeting with Members and helping them complete their projects. In many cases, it will be as easy as making an introduction to somebody at the University or directing them to a place in the organization they didn't know about or think to consult.

As the president, and really as the Board, you need to lead by example and set the tone at the Assembly. Do not let ridiculous things come to the floor, or marginally relevant conversations span hours long. Also, be very careful about the extent to which you allow the Assembly to micro-manage the activity of the Board. You have been elected by students and should be trusted to act in good faith. Having the SRA motion every time they want you to go talk to somebody at the University or in government will shackle your creativity, judgment and tact.

**Full Time Employees.** You are responsible for the performance and wellbeing of all full time employees that work with and for the MSU. This is a really interesting phenomenon because you are also, in many ways, a short-term guest in their place of work. The balance is delicate and requires that you treat everybody with respect. Recognize that you are rarely going to be the expert and will always have something to learn, but that at the end of the day many decisions rest with you and the board. This means you need to actually listen to people, so that their ideas can guide the way, or when yours have to trump, you will at least have a thoughtful explanation for why you didn't follow through with theirs.

The full time staff were our refuge this year, especially when things got tough politically. We tried to build personal relationships with everybody, but also to understand the position they were in with their career and with the organization. Plan staff socials, provide opportunities for everybody to share their thoughts, and be ready to adapt your approach if and when you learn that it is not working.

Your only direct report is the General Manager (GM). This is a position that experiences great stress, though the current occupant of the role never shows it. The GM needs to balance three main priorities: support for the Board, management of the full time staff, and continuity for the University and MSU relationship. Hang on to John for as long as possible. If you are ever in the position to fill this role, I would suggest that you commission the help of a search agency to ensure a highly capable and competent crop of candidates are interviewed. I cannot imagine the case where you would hire somebody with less than 5–10 years of relationship and business management experience.

**McMaster University Senate and Board of Governors.** The president sits on these governing bodies as an official observer. There are elected student representatives on each board as well, and they can vote and are expected to bring student perspectives to the board decisions. As an observer, however, you will be asked to share the opinion of the student union and student body at large. I think that these meetings could be great places to make advocacy impacts, and I never tapped into this potential because I couldn't really see the forest through the trees.

**University Administration.** University administrators are highly capable executives that work at McMaster because they care about higher education and our institution. You don't need to trick them into helping with your projects, you have to help them see why you believe in them and listen to their feedback. Life is a lot easier when you are on good terms with the University and work towards common goals. Remember that for you, a year in office is a long time (it's all of your time, really). For the University, a year isn't very long; they can wait you out if you are difficult to work with or if you are being ridiculous. I would, if I were in their shoes. Keeping this in mind was what helped keep me on track, purposeful and grounded in my approach.

It makes most sense for the Board to split up working relationships with the administrators. For example, the president should be the primary contact for the Office of the President and University Advancement. This year, it made most sense for the VP Ed to take the lead on the relationship between the MSU and the Provost's Office, but I suspect there would be years where the president wanted to take this on as well. Splitting things up like this helped ensure that the University wasn't hearing different messages from the student union, and also allowed the primary contact for each office to form stronger relationships.

You should have monthly meetings with the President. I used these meetings to highlight challenges and successes of the student union, to ask for advice on our approach to high level challenges, and to provide something of a report card to the president on how members of the university were in their interactions with the student union (this was always a very positive report and served to energize us all). I was always careful that updates I brought to the President would not put those working for him (read: every person at the university) in an awkward position, unless that was my explicit intention. For example, it is not fair to discuss something with the President that you haven't already tried to solve with the Dean of Students.

The kindhearted nature of our current President may tempt you to use these one-on-ones as therapeutic reminders of all that is good about the world. There were times where I gave in to this impulse and came out feeling like I had just rediscovered my very soul, but for the most part I would encourage you to resist these personally fulfilling conversations and bring focused agendas to get the most out of your time together. The president is the busiest person on campus, and to have an hour of their time every month is a gift worth its weight in gold. Use it wisely.

Outside of our monthly meetings, I would also meet with the President, the Senior Advisor to the President (effectively his Chief of Staff), or both to discuss pressing issues or to get time sensitive advice. I only asked for these meetings for urgent matters, and would always move things around if the Office of the President reached out to me—there is no relationship more important than this one, both symbolically and practically.

**University Departments.** You'll notice rather quickly that any conversations you have with University Administrators about practical changes you're looking to make actually trickle down to the departments they supervise—the worker bees, if you will. I tried to engage as many as possible, and I will give you a brief outline of those that will mostly likely creep in to any president's year.

Alumni Advancement is a key hub for your activity. On the Alumni side, you'll meet a department with a very similar mandate to the MSU related to the enhancement of student life. From their perspective, happy students are going to be engaged alumni when they graduate. Leverage their investment in student life to build momentum on campus-wide initiatives, and listen to their ideas about community building in return. Together, you are capable of great things. Advancement will invite you to wine and dine with members of the McMaster community, and you should always make an effort to go, to look professional and to speak with pride about the students. Government Relations is wonderful for coordinating visits with elected representatives, and it is helpful for both the MSU and University when we speak in unison about things we agree on. Public Relations serve as a filter for the voice of the University, and can be used to promote some of the successes of the MSU. There is plenty more to say about each of these groups, but you'll pick it up from them because they will be very eager to work with you. Enjoy these relationships and cultivate them to your liking!

The Student Success Centre (SSC) is also a place where everybody genuinely wants students to succeed (no shock). I worked with the SSC to launch a leadership conference for faculty societies and to explore our options for the Peer Tutoring Network. There is a lot of potential for collaboration with this department. The MSU can and should look for ways to work with the SSC, both to align the efforts of SSC with student needs and for us to learn a different approach to student support.

Parking and Security Services are good to get to know, as many of our large-scale programs require consultation with these folks. Sometimes things come up with our business units or services that Security can loop in on. Also, they are delightful. In a similar vein, you'll also want to get acquainted with the risk management folks for the same reasons.

**Government Relations.** Dealing with government officials and their staff can be quite daunting, especially if, like me, you are not well-acquainted with the political landscape municipally, provincially or federally. This is not only understandable, but also expected and prepared for. Through the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA), along with full time resources in the MSU, there are plenty of training opportunities to get you ready for lobbying government. At your first OUSA conference there will be training, and before your lobby week there will be chances to do mock lobby meetings to gear up for battle. In the MSU, the Student Life Development Coordinator can help ensure your points and strategy is clear and plays to the strength of you and the VP Ed. These meetings can actually be quite fun when you get into the swing of things and see how you two compliment one another's approach.

I will make a few suggestions for your interactions with government. First and foremost, remember that government folks are human beings. Any interpersonal skills you have acquired

up to this point will work with them as well. I think most are dying to be treated like regular people, rather than stuffy decision-makers or important politicians. You can be respectful and personable at the same time, and I wouldn't shy away from doing so. Just think how you'd like to be approached by your constituents, and let that calm your nerves (if any!). Second, as with the University Administrators, be purposeful with the time you spend with politicians. Be sure that you know what you're asking for before you ask it, why it is important, and what it means to your constituents. Last, always try to connect with the assistants or policy advisors that come in a politician's entourage – they are the real key to staying connected and getting results. The politician will meet with 20 versions of you in a day, all asking for different things, and it is up to their staff to keep their commitments organized and time functionally allocated.

On a final note, government officials, as many others that do not intimately understand the structure of the MSU, will gravitate to the president because your role as the advocate for student needs is embedded in your title. Let this happen when it is getting you in the door with somebody, and use it to make timely introductions to your VP Ed when it makes sense to do so.

**Communication with the Student Body.** The president is expected to stay in touch with students. This can take many forms. I received occasional emails from students, was regularly sought out on social media and would be approached in person, sometimes on campus and others directly in my office. I always found that students really appreciated if I took the time to talk to them or to respond to an email, even if there was nothing I could do to resolve their (sometimes ridiculous) requests. It's important to remember that most people don't understand the scope of your role, and so they may ask you for things as petty as where they can get a new sticker for their student card to things as absurd as asking for free parking, or a refund of their student fees, or to force professors to make all of their tests multiple choice. Just roll with the punches and connect with people where you can. The response is generally positive.

For more broad sweeping communication—things where you are trying to notify the masses—I'm not really the best person to provide advice. First, I have no experience in communications or public relations, so I don't know how to effectively reach 22,000 people (beyond trying to get elected). Second, I actually had no interest in doing so this year. Generally speaking, I didn't think students cared what I was doing. I sure didn't when I was a student. For every minute spent strategizing a communications plan, writing an article or putting together a video, I lost a minute available to spend pushing projects forward and liaising with partners to see my vision through to fruition. I cared less about getting credit, as an organization or as an elected representative, for the projects I was working on that I did about actually plowing through as much as I could during the short presidential term. Also, when it comes to consulting with students when making decisions, when was the last time your local member of parliament reached out to ask what you wanted them to do on issues related to foreign affairs, transportation, health care or education outside of their campaign? They don't, probably because it is inefficient but also because most people don't have a clue how these things work. The topics are complex beyond the capacity of the public's attention span or interest. Instead, we elect representatives we trust to make decisions in our best interest and with the entire context considered. The same should be true of the MSU president, in my opinion. Frankly, I didn't lose a lot of sleep not knowing exactly how students felt about various projects I was working on because I already knew that (1) they voted for the vision I promised and (2) that I knew more about the nuances of

the project intricacies than they did—after all, that’s what they were paying me for. I know that everybody will approach this differently, and many disagree with my perspective, but that is how I see it and you will figure out what feels best for you.

## **Platform and Projects**

*The following are projects that occupied my time in office.*

**Year End Celebration.** At some point in the summer, during Frost Week planning, we realized that there is a major gap in student life during the second academic term. This idea quickly snowballed into the realization that our campus should coordinate a farewell celebration for those completing their year, and for many, their story at McMaster. This year, we ran the year end celebration as a block party. There were a few major components, including a carnival, live music, buskers and a firework show. Unfortunately, due to weather, we had to cancel most of these components. Despite that turn of events, we still had an estimated 6000 students attend the event. I think this is all the evidence needed to justify the continuation and further development of the year end celebration. With proper planning and better luck with the weather, next year we could expect a crowd of 10,000 students.

The MSU has already budgeted \$40,000 to Campus Events to run this event again for next year. The primary partner on this project is the Alumni Association, who also sponsored the event for \$40,000 this year (though, when all was said and done, probably more). The SSC was also a great partner, and they ran a \$30,000 keynote speaker event that was included as part of the project. The planning committee was co-chaired by the Director of Alumni and I. In years to come, I could see a board member continuing to chair this with Karen, if not the Campus Events Director.

**Frost Week.** Frost Week is a seedling we planted this year that really needs to be watered with attention and resources if it is to be successful in the long run. We began planning for the week in May at the Student Relations Committee (SRC). The SRC has multiple campus partners represented, including Residence Life, Student Success, SOCS, Maroons, Campus Events and Alumni. The Student Relations Officer in the Alumni Office chairs the committee. Below I suggest a timeline:

- *Early summer:* meet as a committee, build interest and buy-in for Frost Week, map out a vision and overarching goals, get a sense for what each office will be responsible for, create a detailed timeline for the year including meeting schedules.
- *Late summer:* slow down as a committee while many people gear up for Welcome Week.
- *Late September:* meet regularly to plan programming
- *October:* get the faculty societies and residence life in for a conversation about how reps could be involved.
- *November:* have a complete draft schedule to go through with risk management
- *December:* on your last president's page in the Sil, pump out an advertisement about what is waiting for students when they arrive back in January.

There are a series of detailed documents on the server that I have left with recommendations about programming and a draft schedule for you to build on. To drift away from details, I think Frost Week is a huge opportunity for student engagement that we cannot afford to miss. It is possible to bring that Welcome Week magic back to campus in January; we just have to keep at it until it is a regular part of the student life culture.

**Homecoming.** Homecoming was a project I inherited from the MSU president before me. The planning process for this event was fairly straight forward because all of our partners had worked through it the year before. I came in and added a few new ideas (Ferris Wheel, for example) to try to enhance the already strong program. At this point, Homecoming should be getting to the point where it plans itself with our staff and partners.

I want to take this opportunity to stress how important it is for each of us (MSU presidents) to work on each other's projects until they're successful. Although I didn't run on a platform point about Homecoming, the president before me did – that means that the majority of at least half of the students still studying during my term supported the idea a matter of months before. It was therefore my responsibility to continue working on this project, just as it will be yours to keep going on the things that I have started, and it will be up to the person who follows you to continue on with yours. If we all buy in to this concept, the MSU will get a lot more done in the long run and we can give each other a realistic hand as we implement projects that take years to form proper roots.

**LINK Conference.** On my first day in office, we had to do a press release detailing our response to the University's investigation on the Redsuits. In short, there was a report detailing unacceptable elements of the Redsuit culture. The University responded to these findings by implementing a series of sanctions and remedies, including increased University involvement in Welcome Week planning and a series of restrictions on non-academic programming offered through the McMaster Engineering Society. Although we understood the nature of these restrictions, we worried that they might be the first of a series of slippery steps ultimately leading to the removal of student group autonomy. We thought we should try to be part of the solution, acting as a bridge between the student groups and the University, and thus LINK was born.

*Note:* the MSU is different from all other student groups. Our existence is legislated by the provincial government, so the University cannot simply step in and take our privileges away. Other groups, faculty societies for example, exist as extensions of the University. Similarly, clubs exist as extensions of the student union. Anyways, I am just skimming the surface of a more complex description that I don't even fully understand, so I will stop before I make too many false claims.

We ran LINK as a one day, optional conference. All the executives of the faculty societies and the Inter Residence Council (IRC) were invited (more on the IRC to follow). We had invited just over 100 people, and approximately 60 showed up. Concurrent sessions were run on different topics that we thought most relevant to the different executive positions—finances, event planning and volunteer engagement, for example. Overall, the conference ran well for a first time thing. We learned a lot from feedback sessions with the faculty society presidents, and that has formed the plan for next year. Below are a few points worth considering as we move forward with this initiative:

- The University should be paying for this, and it should be built in to the Student Affairs operational budget. Funding for this conference should not depend on special project funding each year, because this is not a special project. It is not a *nice to have*, it is a

*must have.* The University cannot commission an expensive, external investigation on the activity of our student groups only to make recommendations for which they will not take responsibility.

- The University and student groups should plan this conference together. Beyond funding the conference, the University should ensure that the many experts at their disposal are brought in to the process to ensure effective training is provided and the bases covered. Students should be involved so that the content and structure of the conference stay relevant to their positions and meets the needs of the leaders on their teams.
- I think this conference should be obligatory and offered in May, in conjunction with the Welcome Week Planners Retreat. It could be built into faculty society executive volunteer descriptions and contracts. I don't think the MSU or University has a place in mandating this training, but the faculty societies themselves do. The key, then, is to work with these groups to show the benefit of free training and to have them see how important it is to the health of their student groups. I don't think this is tricky on our behalf—indeed, I don't see how or why the faculty societies *wouldn't* want this. It makes sense and it helps mitigate risk and prepare for liabilities they inherit with their positions.

As a final note on LINK, can I just say that this is exactly what the MSU should be expected to do. The University wanted to make the campus culture a healthier process. We agreed with this. They wanted to do it in a way that we thought threatened student group autonomy. We disagreed with this. Rather than yelling at them, we came up with a thoughtful solution, something nobody else had thought of, and worked with the very students this report condemned (I co-planned this with the past president of the MES, who really did most of the work) to make it a reality. This conference diffused a lot of tension on campus and gave opposing forces a project to rally around—it just so happened that the MSU got to shape it as well, and act as the mediator.

**Clubza.** My campaign team and I saw an opportunity to ease the process by which students access our extensive clubs. There are so many, which is great because there's something for everybody, but it can also serve as a barrier for entry into the system. We had an idea for how we could make things a bit easier for students. Early in May, I met with the Network Administrator, Clubs Administrator and Student Life Development Coordinator to describe my idea. Together, we morphed it into something that would fit our backend web system and the needs of the clubs department. From there, the Network Administrator liaised with our web development company to make it happen and the Underground drafted up a few logos. Just like that, the project was done and Clubza was functional for the year.

Now that we have taken a stride forward on the front end of student interactions with our clubs, the next step is to do more on the backend to ensure that the department is adequately resourced. A second clubs assistant was hired for next year, and it will be up to you and your team to figure out how to maximize on that extra support. I would suggest crafting the two roles into different niches, based on feedback from the Clubs Executive Council.

*Note:* there's a lesson to be learned about politics from Clubza, one that I am only realizing at the time of writing this report (which is unfortunate, I really could have used some political points this year). There was a running commentary this year that our board did not care about clubs. This narrative neglected the fact that I had launched, on time and as promised, a project that

specifically targeted student engagement in the clubs system. However, this was a project that was completed in August when very few students are around. Also, anything you do (or don't do) in the summer is diminished by the excitement of Welcome Week and the perception that nothing happens at university during the summer.

**Participatory Budgeting.** This project was actually a lot of fun to work on, and I suggest you keep it going. It started with the identification of a large sum of money that either (1) is not always used each year and (2) is not well known by students. I am speaking, of course, about the Student Life Enhancement Fund (SLEF). Each year, the Student Services Committee allocates roughly \$0.4M from the Student Affairs budget to new projects that will have a direct impact on student life. The projects typically funded through this pool of money came from budget managers in either student affairs or the MSU. The Vice President (Finance; VP Finance) and I worked to get student input, ideas and voting into this process.

The project began with a revamp of the SLEF website. We built a module with Student Affairs that would allow for a multiple stage process to unfold. First was the idea submission step. Here, students would go on to our site and leave a cool idea that would enhance student life. They could give as much or as little thought to the idea as they wanted, and we saw a range of responses. From there, the VP Finance and I went off and pursued the feasibility of every idea submitted. This was a large investment of time. We had to consolidate the ideas into similar concepts, create packages for each university department they impacted, meet with the relevant university staff, and have them assess what could be done and provide initial quotes for the ideas that were doable. For example, where we had ideas for outdoor climbing walls, we would bunch all of these submissions into one and have a conversation with the Athletics and Recreation department. Once we had completed our feasibility analysis, we narrowed the ideas down to the biggest – a list of about 7–8 projects that would each cost between \$100k-\$200k. We then brought these ideas (in December) to the Student Services Committee and asked for an allocation that would allow us to promise funding for the top ideas. We settled on funding the top two ideas, as voted by students. That meant that in December, the Committee had already approved funding at least two of these projects (over half of the available funds!) for student submitted ideas.

At presidential elections in January, we opened our website up for the second major stage, which was voting. Each of the major ideas was showcased on the website and students could rank their preferential votes for the list. We promoted this voting heavily, linked it to presidential voting (because so many people vote for president), and saw almost 2000 student responses! This project was a huge success and is ready to be replicated in years to come.

For future iterations of the participatory budgeting process, you may want to scale down the size of projects brought to the student vote. We brought six-figure projects because we had a lot of money to spend, and because it was the first year running the program so we wanted to gauge interest on large impact projects. With fewer funds available, you might want to consider bringing a final list of projects in the \$10,000 range to students to vote. Regardless of the future of SLEF, and how much money is available in that pool, I think you should always use this system to get student feedback. It served as an excellent place for us to point students who wanted us to work on random projects they found to be important or pressing. It allowed us to

deflect political pressure about funding, because we could always say “this process is open to all students with an idea, so take it off the SRA question period and bring it online”. Lastly, and most important, this was an amazing compass for student needs. By watching what ideas came in through the site, we could see student interests. This was especially helpful during the voting period. I learned, for example, that despite the running commentary about how expensive our Athletics and Recreation department is, students still want more! An incredible number of ideas that came up had to do with increasing the type of programming offered, and student voting solidified this notion.

Before departing from this point, I just wanted to highlight the advocacy impacts this project had for us. What does it say about a student union that prioritizes the student voice in university funding decisions? And, what does it say about the university that is open and willing to listen to it? McMaster is in a great spot, one where a project like this could be successful, and I think it is important to keep this “students should be involved in funding decisions” mentality up.

**Peer Tutoring Network.** There is a niche for affordable, peer-based tutoring on campus. Initially we conceived of this as a new MSU service, but upon reflection it became clear that this should be something run through the University. The SSC already has a peer tutoring website, and the idea we had just built upon that. To that end, I spent the year working with the SSC to muddle through what this could look like, how it should run, where the funding will come from and how its impacts can be measured.

This summer, the Student Affairs web design team should be working on the development of a new site that I worked with SSC to conceptualize. It will operate much like an online dating website. Tutors will sign up to have their name, contact information, qualifications and teachable courses advertised in a central, controlled, online environment. Students seeking a tutor will then be able to go online, find a tutor that they think is a good match, make contact with them and set up a tutoring “date”. These dates are intended to be \$15/hour. Each tutor will have a profile, similar to a LinkedIn profile, and students will have an opportunity to go on and rate their tutor after each lesson. This ensures a free market, where good tutors will be rewarded with strong ratings and thus are more likely to receive business in the future.

The Student Services Committee provided seed funding for this project through SLEF. This money is meant to cover web design costs, a part time staff to deal with administration of the service under the full time academic resource staff member at the SSC, a pool of money to advertise the service during its launch, and a subsidization pool for students who face financial barriers but need assistance. The website should be ready to launch in September, and I suggest you and your team follow up with the SSC regularly this summer to stay in the loop. Once it has launched, the MSU should stay involved to assess its effectiveness, but should leave its administration and oversight to the professional staff at SSC who can make it their own.

Although I did not launch this service during my term, I hope that you will keep an eye on it for me to ensure it does get off the ground. The most important piece is that students are able to access affordable tutors. Almost everything after that is window dressing that can be edited and changed as people see fit. I define affordable relative to what other options students have on campus for hiring a private tutor, which often runs hourly rates over \$30/hour. When speaking

with the Provost about this, he expressed clear interest in seeing it through. To quote him almost directly, “\$20,000/year to offer students a potentially unlimited number of hours of academic assistance is a great investment for the University, one that we should actively pursue.”

**Off-Campus Safety.** This was probably my most successful and fulfilling project to work on, and unexpectedly so! It served as a lesson in community relations. I started by meeting with various members of the University to ask their advice—what opportunities they saw for increased safety off campus, with whom I ought to speak to, things like that. From there, I began to build a relationship with our local crime manager. We spent a few months discussing opportunities, making videos, and getting acquainted with what our organizations could bring to the table. From there, we met with a large group, including the chief of police, and discussed projects that could ultimately work towards a shift in the perception from students that police are only ever here to deal with parties or to get us in trouble, but never to keep an eye out for us and watch our backs in the regular, potentially dangerous situations we find ourselves in.

As you continue building this relationship, I suggest the pursuit of a campaign aimed at educating students how they can make themselves difficult targets of crime (e.g., property theft, assault, muggings). This campaign can be cheeky if it comes from the MSU, and should be balanced with whatever PACBIC ends up rolling out for the sexual assault campaign they are planning to run next year. I have a left a long list of project updates and proposals for you on the server, so please access that for a more detailed account of where we have been and where we might be able to go.

**Exam Upgrades.** During my campaign, I had promised students three major changes during exams. They are listed below, along with the progress we made on them. As a general point, when you are trying to get things from the University departments, I suggest thoughtful proposals and delicious lunches funded through your expense account. Here is what we did:

- *Library Hours:* the 24h library hours previously offered were only available during the exam period itself. This schedule neglected the students preparing for an exam on the first or second day of the exam calendar. Accordingly, we asked the library to adjust their schedule to allow the 24h study time to begin a few days before the first exam. They happily did so, and just based off of social media response and what I observed in those few days, I believe it was effective. In the future, I would suggest that you continue to meet with the library to see that their services meet the needs of the modern student.
- *Gym Hours:* in years past, the gym reduced its hours during the exam season. We asked them to open the facility and its amenities back to regular hours through the exams, and they agreed. Their reason for doing so was not only because we had asked, but because a survey they ran the year before confirmed that students wished it was open at that time. The lesson here is that wide consultation from students has its place in advocacy, and surveys are one great way to do that.
- *Later Food Options:* this was the trickiest point to realize. Hospitality Services has to balance their responsibilities as a student service and ancillary unit of the University, meaning they want to meet student needs but also have to make money. In the end, we got to a point where the Reactor in Thode stayed open later to accommodate students studying in that space. We were unsuccessful at attempts to have Mini Mac or La Piazza

open for 24h, but perhaps with more effort and a thoughtful, collaborative plan you will be able to do it.

These were small changes (a few hours here, a day added there) that had large impacts on the student body. I remember walking home one night in April, before exams had started, and seeing Thode packed at 2:00 am, thinking, “this is what it’s all about.” I hope you’ll find those moments as well.

**Student-Centered Student Center.** The McMaster University Student Centre (MUSC) must be an ongoing priority for the MSU. This year, because of the work put in motion by my predecessor, the MUSC Board of Management had about \$1.0M to allocate. We were given a list of potential projects to fund by an architect that had been commissioned the year before. We decided to fund projects that increased first floor seating and rerouted foot traffic through the food court area.

**A New Student Center.** In the years to come, we need to give some serious consideration to new student space. The MUSC is at capacity, evident I’m sure by the number of students sitting on the floor during business hours because there is no other central location for students to hang out, eat and study. This year, we discussed the prospect of building a new Alumni and Student Centre as an addition to the current Alumni House. This would draw students over to the other side of our growing campus, give alumni and current students a hub for relationship and network building, and allow us to showcase the beautiful Cootes Paradise. We did not move forward with this project because the likelihood that we would be given access to the land without a plan for a large-scale building was very low. To continue this conversation, I suggest you give a lot of thought to a wide student survey aiming to gather information about what exactly students are looking for from new student space, and whether or not they are willing to pay a small fee to see it through. You can bring this information to the campus plan committee, which will be gearing up in the fall of 2015. We will need a significant amount of new, unprogrammed space for students in the next decade.

**Perspectives on Peace.** This year, knowing that tensions would be high on campus related to the conflicts in the Middle East and exacerbated by what I expected to come forward at the General Assembly, I felt obliged to explore opportunities for the MSU to engage in challenging conversations on campus. The way I saw things, it wasn’t the role of the student union to engage in political debates that would leave some members of the community feeling detached from the organization, but it was our role to ensure that where students were interested in having these conversations that we played some role in helping them do so in a respectful and safe manner. I shared these thoughts with the President, and as it turned out he too had an interest in taking some sort of action. We spent the summer brainstorming what role the MSU and University could play in handling contentious conversations on campus. We worked with Human Rights and Equity Services to develop a tentative plan for the campaign, wrote a joint letter, and filmed a video together to launch things.

The role of the MSU in an initiative like this is quite simple – we need to figure out a way to engage students in the conversation. I had hoped this would happen in two ways. First, Diversity Services could shape some of their programming around the goals of the campaign.

Second, we could have student representatives at the committees that oversee the activity of the campaign. This panned out with limited success this year. In years to come, the extent to which the MSU is involved in this campaign is up to you. If you see potential, pursue it and maybe you have ideas for how to make things better. If not, I expect the campaign will continue to run through the University and it will probably evolve with each year until it hits its stride, which it certainly did not do in its pilot year.

## Emerging Opportunities

*The following section outlines miscellaneous thoughts of mine that don't quite have a place in the sections above, but that warrant a note and could be seen as opportunities for us to move on.*

**Risk Management.** Before September 2015, we need to complete a contract or memo of understanding with the university related to our risk management practices. I will briefly outline what I think needs to happen, but lean on the General Manager and your good judgment while searching for the full picture.

- *MSU Incorporated:* we should not go to the University for approval of our events, especially the high-risk programs. It is up to our team to assess risk and approve events accordingly, and with our insurance we have the authority to do so. However, the Board does not have training in risk management. Therefore, I suggest that for all high-risk events, the MSU seek the opinion of the University experts and use that feedback while making decisions. A major decision ahead is whether, in this contract being drafted, the University should have veto power over our approval. The reason this is an issue is because of liability. In the past, MSU sanctioned and approved events that have resulted in litigation have resulted in settlements where both the MSU as the host and the University as the location hosting it have been found liable, which really isn't fair if the University had absolutely no say in the way the event was run. A plan needs to be agreed upon where the liability is clear. This gets murky when we collaborate with University partners (e.g., Welcome Week, Year End Celebration, Frost Week), and that needs to be spelled out in the contract.
- *Clubs:* full time staff structure should be altered according to the conversations we have had at board meetings with you and your team. The new structure should reflect a full time position with risk management training. When a club wants to run an event, they should fill out a form online. The Office Clerks should approve all of these events (and should be trained accordingly). From there, the Clubs Administrator and their supervisor should filter through and approve everything as well (which will be a very quick process since they have already been approved by the clerks – just a glance for any red flags). Where there are high-risk events, the MSU should pass the approval over to the University. This should be as simple as, “if box x, y or z are clicked, it is a high-risk event that needs University approval/consultation.”

It is so important that this be cleaned up and figured out in the months to come. Right now there are too many areas of exposure and under-training that leave us inadequately prepared to assess, mitigate and defend decisions about risk.

**Inter Residence Council.** I'll keep this brief, but I think the Inter Residence Council (IRC) should be combined with the First Year Council (FYC). The IRC has two major mandates. One is programming for the first year residence population. That is something the Residence Life Staff can provide with more resources, training and expertise. When a Community Advisor runs a program, it is still a peer-based activity – it just has the support of a healthy department behind it. The second mandate is advocacy, something that the MSU has a lot of power to do. To make my point, consider a scenario where something egregious is happening in residence that affects

the entire system – perhaps a new rule that says students aren't allowed to study in the building. Who has more influence when they pick up the phone to call the Dean of Students (or anybody) to discuss this issue: the IRC representative, or the MSU president? I'm not saying that it has to be either or—of course the MSU president could help in that scenario if the IRC brought it up to them. But my point is that we already have strong advocacy structures in place, so why not rely on the MSU to speak for all students?

If there is not an appetite to blend the IRC into the MSU, serious consideration should be given at the very least to its fee structure. Right now, the IRC collects a massive student levy (something like \$46/student) and the return on that investment for students is questionable at best. Cut the yearbook, the clipboards and honorariums. Save a small pot for some programming and training expenses, and give students their money back. They already pay into their faculty and the MSU for advocacy and programming, and their residence fees are very high to ensure a holistic experience there.

**Presidents' Council.** I used this as a place to bounce ideas and to attempt to stay up to date on what student groups were up to. I suggest you use it as a place to get updates and hear feedback, rather than trying to do actual projects (I also tried this with limited success). It is nice to be able to go to the SRA with a motion or an idea having already garnered feedback from a table that truly represents all students. The presidents are quite busy, so getting anything out of them is difficult, but use it for political leverage and to keep them informed about what the MSU is doing. They're also a group of wonderful, committed people that want to be in the know, so why not help them out where you can? If I were running a second term, I would have biweekly meetings for an hour without minutes. I would provide food at each meeting with my expense account and I would use I as a time to talk about whatever it is you all want to talk about.

**Your Campaign Team.** This might seem a little random, but it also might click in to place later in your term. Banking on the small chance that happens and you think to look back to this document, I wanted to let you know that I felt a measurable amount of guilt through my term for my campaign team. A group of about 15 committed individuals surrounded me, along with hundreds of volunteers (many who I didn't even know), and all of them worked tirelessly to get me elected. During the campaign, I was in no place to express my thanks, and at that time it would have been premature. When all is said and done, though, your campaign team doesn't win the presidency. *You* do. You get the fancy meals, the corner office, the business card, the access to powerful people, the salary and so much more. They don't. I felt very uncomfortable with this at different points of the year, and never really knew what to do about it. I still don't. I share this note so if it happens to you, you know you're not alone. The best therapy for this guilt was writing reference letters for those who needed them, but that was about it.

**University Budget Submission.** You should do one. The University will pass a budget, just as we do, and I think it would be very wise to submit a report detailing what the MSU thinks ought to be priorities during the planning process. It would be a good place to talk about additional training for Teaching Assistants, more funding for the Student Affairs budget, more forceful thrusts for accessibility and things like that.

## Closing Thoughts

I'm just going to fire off a few final thoughts in bullet form, take them with a grain of salt:

- *Nobody is going to remember you for what you do in this role, but they will remember how you made them feel.* Remember that when dealing with difficult situations, or when getting down about a failed project or anything, really. The projects will fill your time, but they are not the most important component of the job.
- *You will never feel like you've done enough.* The nature of the role is that there are always things to do. You could always attend one more club event, send another email, join another committee, or host another roundtable. For the first seven months of this job, I worked at least 70h/week. I would wake up, go to the office, and stay until it was time to go to bed, every single day. My 9-5 was booked solid, so much so that if somebody wanted to meet with me they would have to wait at least 5–8 business days to find a slot. Only after I had a serious failed project did everything click—it would never be enough, and I would never feel “done”. So, I scaled back, balanced a social life into the equation, and made it through to the end of the term. I could not have done the full year at full speed.
- *Be very conscious about what conversations you are starting, and how you're carrying yourself everywhere you go.* You are in a leadership role that carries with it significant influence on the direction of many things on campus. By speaking about something, whether in an email, at a meeting or in the newspaper, you are making it a priority. You are directing people's attention to that topic. Use this influence to advance your vision. Also be aware that there should be a pattern or some continuity between what conversations you are starting. Let people label your thoughts with a theme, because then you'll be able to rope in a whole bunch of things rather than one-off projects.
- *Don't take yourself too seriously.* There are a lot of cool parts about this job. Most notably and attractive, I think, is that you do wield some power. The thing is, though, you will only ever have a 12-month lease on that. Your next job, no matter how exceptional you are, will not be to lead a \$15M organization. It's important to come to terms with that sooner than later. If you allow the role to inflate your sense of self, and dominate your identity, ask yourself what will be left when you have to pass the torch to the next person in April.
- *Get away from it all when you need to.* There were times when I really started to resent projects or details of the job, and that would trickle into everything I was doing. When that happened, I tried to get away from everything. I would leave campus, delete my email account from my phone, and completely divorce the job. I found these breaks to be rejuvenating and suggest that you do the same.
- *Have fun!* This is the coolest job for a young person to have, so live it up! The coolest cats surround you for the year, and your job has such a positive objective. Enjoy it while it lasts, and have fun.

That's all from me.

# Transition Report for the 2015-2015 Vice President Education

Prepared by Rodrigo Narro Perez (VP ED 2014-2015)

Spenny,

Ahead of you is one of the most exciting, most draining, most intellectually challenging, emotional roller coasters you will ever take. And you will forever be grateful for that experience. When I started this job I was 22, you are 20 and man oh man, are you ever fortunate to be given this at such a young age.

The MSU has defined who I am. It became a place where I've had some of the most important lessons about my life so far. Everyone has a unique experience with the MSU and I cannot wait to see how it impacts you. There is not a doubt in my mind that the MSU has made such an impact in the undergrad experience here at Mac. Often this impact is subtle and students made not be aware it was the MSU who has created such great things; and that is okay, the MSU is here to do great work, and often it can be thankless. And that teaches us humility.

As Vice President Education you will be in charge of a very large, comprehensive and complex portfolio. You will determine the direction of many advocacy initiatives. Yet advocacy is not your burden to bear. I learned, perhaps a little too late, that the rest of the board and other members of the MSU will also be doing advocacy and instead of looking at that as competition, you should be proud of how active the MSU is. VP Eds are often seen as the keepers of knowledge, and that is true. This is due to all the projects or initiatives we are exposed to. At times you will think you know everything, yet everyday will be a learning opportunity for you.

Often our portfolio is thought of as two separate sides, it having an internal and external component. While every VP Ed will have a natural inclination for one or the other, the best thing you can do is to combine both sides through things that you are passionate about. I have always been passionate about mental health, so I decided to write the Student Health paper for OUSA and combine my internal knowledge for external advocacy purposes. I encourage you to find something similar.

This job can be a stressing one, and at times you will feel like you are fighting against a current that you will never overcome. It took me a long time to finally come to terms that I could not solve every problem in PSE in one year. The sooner you realize that, the sooner you can focus on things that you are passionate about. Being able to prioritize is something that will make your job a lot easier. While you are probably rolling your eyes (don't worry I did it too), you will eventually learn all this and then, and only then, you will find your groove.

This position is one that has the potential to make such impact at Mac, Hamilton and Ontario. I will forever be grateful for this opportunity. I am so proud of knowing you and seeing you grow over the past couple of years. You will be great.

Below you will find things I have been exposed to, what I have done and where to improve. If you ever need anything, I'm only a call away. Now go, and make your own adventure.

Rodrigo Narro Perez  
VP Education (2014-2015).

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## The Inner Workings of the McMaster Students Union

### **Academic Affairs Council**

As you're aware, AAC is an interesting body that the VP Ed gets to chair. It is comprised of all the VP Academics (or equivalents) as well as other university student representatives. In an ideal world, this would be a powerful body of student advocates who are constantly working towards increasing the academic experience of undergraduate students.

Unfortunately, its sheer nature does not allow this. All of the students who comprised AAC are not forced or mandated to attend these meetings, let alone be told what projects to do. This year, I had half of AAC was very keen and attended most meetings; the other half not so much. I don't blame any students for not attending or doing work since these students are already involved in many things as well as having their academics to worry about.

This year, aside from having great discussions about many issues, such as the fall break, we didn't do much. It was hard to coordinate projects when everyone was so busy. What we did do was create the templates for academic surveys (you can find them on your server). If you wish you can definitely implement them. The idea was to assess the academics of each academic division, analyze the results, and finally present them to each dean/program director. If you want to do this, *I strongly encourage you to do so.*

For your year, I suggest you actually brainstorm and come up with projects/ideas/initiatives/campaigns before you contact them. If you can come up with a small year plan for AAC, that may allow you to convince members to come together and work together. Ultimately, getting faculty society representatives to work with the MSU is a mixture of excitement, autonomy and desire to make a change.

### **Executive Board**

In the past, EB was often looked at as a burden for the VP Ed. This was due, to a perceived 'waste of time' and it having little to do with the Education portfolio. Both reasons, in my opinion, are wrong. As a Board of Director you should be well informed on the state of the services. With the inclusion of "Advocacy – Committee of the Whole" EB can act as a tool/resource for you and the Education department. The creation of this was to use EB as a body that we (VP Eds) could use in many initiatives. This year we discussed things like MSAF, faculty issues, mental health strategy etc. I enjoyed it and it allowed me to have more input in these initiatives. Additionally, this doesn't mean that it is only for the VP Ed to use, last year Dan, as Finance commissioner, used it to get feedback on the bursary program. As this was a student financial assistance issue it was the perfect spot to discuss but I wasn't the lead. For a long time I thought about providing documentation before Advocacy – COH but didn't, this may be something you consider doing as it could provide background for EB members and make discussion much more productive.

EB is the place to talk about service operating policies, job descriptions and wage discussions (after going through finance committee). I used it to increase the hours for Advocacy Coordinator. This is the body that will need to approve the rest of your team's job descriptions! Tip: to make everyone's life easier, submit all documentation before the deadline, Vikki will appreciate it! At the beginning of the term, I was unsure how I felt about EB, by the end I looked forward to the meetings; hope you feel the same!

### **SRA**

The SRA holds a special place in my heart. At last year's assembly I was the member with the longest SRA experience (I know – my ego is an issue), thus I had seen the SRA at its best and at its worse and they all contributed to how I performed in this

job. The SRA, as the highest governing body (minus GA), can do a lot of good work and have great discussions. Having people with different opinions/beliefs/ideas on the assembly actually produces the best outcomes. This only happens when discussion is respectful and not negative. As a Board of Director and SRA member, please strive to make discussion respectful, it doesn't matter if discussion takes time, as long as respect is held the value of a 30 minute discussion or 4 hour discussion, in my opinion, is the same.

In terms of things that you will do for the SRA you have the following responsibilities: your VP Ed reports (which have the tendency of being the longest of any report – I used them as opportunities to update myself on the status of projects. Your prerogative if you want to rant to - Dan will hate you for it though as he was my biggest critic for it haha). Every time you travel to a conference and OUSA General Assembly you have to write a report – feel free to use the templates I created!

The SRA can also be a body you use to discuss important issues. I mainly used email to bounce of ideas, inform them of opportunities or for transparency. One of the most frustrating things that can happen is getting no response from the SRA, and then someone bringing the topic of your email and you having to explain that you emailed it out (big face palm, I know). While I don't think this may ever end, don't be afraid to call out the assembly when it occurs. At the same time, you should treat the SRA with respect and kindness as they are all volunteers who dedicate a HUGE amount of time to serve students. In my 3 years in the MSU I have seen how every year SRA members have become more and more engaged. Be thankful for that and use them as catalysts for your projects.

### **Ombuds Management Team**

As Vice President Education, you alongside Sean, the Dean of Students, will comprise the Ombuds Management Team. Your responsibility is to talk to the staff in the Ombuds Office and hear reports on the cases they have taken on (confidentiality of every case is kept!) and talk about future directions.

### **Education Department**

This was one of my favourite things about this job. As if you didn't know that already. If anything asks me about what is something that I'm proud of, this is one of them. Not necessarily about our projects or campaigns but about the comradery, friendship and understanding we built as a team. The seven of us were a force not to mess with and I think it had everything to do with my approach. I had never really managed a team before, a team so diverse on top of that, and it was a great learning experience. You were part of this so you know what I'm talking about. It provides the VP Ed with a support system, I could not have gotten through this year without the support everyone gave me, I only hope I was a support to them as they were to me. I made it my job to talk to everyone separately and discuss not only work but just life. I think it worked, well you tell me!

I think that having a team to bounce of ideas was something I really appreciated it. I would recommend ensuring that everyone is kept in the loop of everyone else's projects. Weekly or bi-weekly meetings worked really great! Having a place to rant, a place to strategize and share experiences goes a long way. Additionally, something I did and think worked was a half-year check-in; it was really nice to talk one-on-one with everyone. Additionally, I asked for everyone to give feedback on me, I suggest you do that too. We can only grow if we hear honest feedback.

Now that you have an operating policy, you will be able to provide your successor a team by hiring them all in the regular January cycle. You will hire your team in the summer and that is okay too!

### *Advocacy Coordinator*

This position has grown immensely in the last three years. The Advocacy Coordinator use to bring in puppies and do de-stressors; Jess made this position into a powerhouse one and was, in my biased opinion, one of the strongest PTMs last year. This role is quite unique. It is considered as a PTM yet it doesn't really have a service like the others. And I think that is okay. We will start with the first and obvious one, the Advocacy Street Team (AST). The Advocacy Coordinator coordinates AST, that is the most service-like equivalent thing that it does compared to other PTMs. AST was a great resource for me and the success of all the campaigns was due to them. They were energetic, enthusiastic and thirsty for knowledge on the issues. Their success had nothing to do with me but it was all because of Jess. She was a great PTM who motivated them and ensured they always felt appreciated it – the key to volunteer appreciation.

In terms of finances, the Advocacy Coordinator doesn't have a budget – another unique thing about this PTM. The Educational Initiatives budget line is where all the money for Jess came from last year. In reality how much money the Advocacy Coordinator uses is up to you. This year only thing we spent money was polos (BE SURE TO DO THEM AND GIVE THEM TO THE TEAM as soon as you can) and just materials for campaigns. The Advocacy Coordinator has signing authority for this but last year I didn't want to complicate Jess's life so I did all the financial stuff. Up to you to how you proceed.

In terms of other responsibilities, the Advocacy Coordinator is also the OUSA Campus Coordinator; I suggest you talk with Christine early on in the summer to see how you want her OUSA responsibilities to be. This year Jess knew she had to plan GA and took leadership with the Wage Gap Campaign! Additionally, I used this position as the go-to position for anything that I needed; Jess was a great support system and helped me out on other things. She participated in MIETL discussions, elections stuff, and really many other things. I have a lot of respect for this position and that is why I don't think it should ever be called the Advocacy Street Team Coordinator or "advocacy is a service". If anything this position could be called the "Education Department Coordinator" or something like that. One thing I hope you build on and expand is the Advocacy Newsletter – we did one issue this year but couldn't do more. Christine should have the template! Maybe plan out 2-3 issues for the year and ensure the content is done!

I suggest you and Christine meet and set out your vision for the year. Once both of you are on the same page, I know you both will do great things!

### *University Affairs Commissioner*

This position, as everyone knows, is one that I also hold very close to my heart. This position has, in my opinion, a lot of responsibility; it is not only in charge of academics but also improving student life. That is quite a lot. Similarly to EA, UA is very project-based. The projects will differ based on the commissioner but often overlap with the VP Ed's goals. I suggest you and Blake sit down and really partition what each of you is going to do. The UA commissioner does not report to you but rather is mandated to work alongside you. A great relationship between the UA commissioner and VP Ed is key to the success of this portfolio. Last year, Alan and I were not only great colleagues but great friends; you will need to find your own groove.

Last year, Alan was incredibly in taking leadership in many projects. I was very confident in what he could do and by October, he would go into meetings without me. He

took charge of the Course Wiki, Learning Portfolio and some issues with Accessibility. This position can do a lot mostly because all of its stakeholders and projects are in-house and the commissioner does not need to travel. With that said, knowledge of the institutions, its people and initiatives is essential for success. Both Alan and I knew a lot of people in the university and had built great working relationships with them over the years. With your external focus and experience I do think that you and Blake will need to work together to ensure that this side of the Education portfolio is well supported and well resourced. You both have learning curves and ensuring frustration doesn't win will be key.

#### *External Affairs Commissioner*

You were a phenomenal commissioner, you did redefine the role and I think that was essential for your success and integral in defining this position and its part in the education department. One of the most challenging parts is geography, asking a full-time student to travel various times during the year for extended periods of time is a bit unrealistic – something you are familiar with. While you would have benefitted from the experiences and your input would have been valuable I really enjoyed what you did with EA and perhaps that is what needs to continue. Your big emphasis in policy making and OUSA contributions were very very solid. It made my life really easy and knowing that you and your committee were competent made my job easier. I think that this direction of a policy-emphasis is one that makes the expectations of this job much more real. With your experience in the role I am sure you have thoughts about how it can continue to excel. All I have to say is a big thanks for the role you played last year!

#### *Research Assistant and University Affairs/ Provincial and Federal Research Assistant*

At first I really did believe that we need a full-time research assistant. I even ran on it, but I waited a year and boy was I glad I did. Joe was amazing; he proved that a qualified and intelligent student could create wonderful outputs. Joe had the responsibilities of two of your staff now. He had the following responsibilities: presence and support in AAC; the production of many OUSA blogs; contribution to OUSA Habitats; creation of the Space Report that was submitted to the provost; election support, other research tasks. This was an interesting position in the sense that there was no year plan or vision that was set, but rather Joe was there to support my goals and vision, the research assistant was created to support the VP Ed. With the splitting of the portfolio into two positions, things may be different for you.

I think that having 20 hours of research support will do wonders. When we created these positions, we said that they would also provide support for UA and EA – that will be something different than last year. You should meet with Blake, Saad and both RA's and talk about how responsibilities will be shared, who can tell who what (especially since the RA's ultimately report to you). I'm really excited what these two positions will do and how you implement them.

The RA's should get access to the committee room and you will need to create 2 emails (that can be done at a Board of Directors meeting). Oh one last thing – you should try and get the RAs (and CE Coordinator) a mailbox or something.

#### *Community Engagement Coordinator*

This position is one that excites me and I think has soooo much potential. I wish I would have implemented this position the whole year but term 2 with Matthew was really great and helped ease my work load. FWI put a big emphasis on Community Engagement (CE) and it something I found really really interesting (more to come in the CE section). Matthew's responsibilities included helping out with work from the Network

for Community Campus Partnerships (and all of the working groups) and the implementation of Change Camp (he came to all the planning meetings with the committee and with just Dave Heidrenbrech). I think that this position has potential to help with other community initiatives. For example, the For Ward One PBAC meetings is something that is totally under the realm of this position and something that you may want to delegate instead of you doing it.

This position is not called “Research Assistant” because in my opinion, it does more than just research. While research does need to occur the CE Coordinator can implement, and direct initiatives. For example, Matthew took charge of Change Camp when Jacob and I were in BC. With that said, I do think that the implementation of Change Camp should be one of this position’s core duties. Once you have hired this person I would be great to sit down with yourself and SCSN to create a vision for the year.

The MSU has grown a lot in CE and this position can ensure that the MSU becomes a big player in Hamilton!

### *Student Community Support Network Director*

SCSN Director plays an important role in the education department - engaging students with the immediate Hamilton community. There are some aspects of the role like dealing with the Community Advisors (CA) that I had nothing to do with. I would say that at first, some people may think that SCSN and the CE Coordinator are similar jobs, but I would disagree. SCSN has a clear mandate, clear duties, and a niche. The CE Coordinator, as stated above, has more than that. I do think communication between the director, the CE coordinator and yourself will be needed to ensure everyone is on the same page about community issues. Josh was a great director to have, his expertise and years of experience in SCSN, made him a strong asset. While Josh reported to Jacob for administrative things, Josh and I had a great working relationship as well as personal one.

One aspect of SCSN that is now under the CE Coordinator is Change Camp (more about Change Camp on the Change Camp section). This left room for more programming under SCSN, talk to Daymon and see what campaigns you may want to get involved in.

I look forward to seeing how you, the CE Coordinator and SCSN Director work together.

For more info on SCSN, go to “Discover Your City” section.

### **Course Wiki**

This is the legacy of your namesake – Spencer Graham. In theory this is a great idea, I do believe in its purpose and once it rolls out, it will serve students greatly. The implementation of this has been quite challenging, and very slow. This year, Alan and UA did a great thing; they set up the framework for the Wiki. The Wiki now has a shell for over 2000 courses – they are our unmentioned heroes. In terms of next steps, here is what you should do, well, in my opinion. You need to create way in which UA, yourself and anyone else can approve the edits. The wiki is set so that before an edit or contribution is seen by the public, someone needs to approve that edit. That way, no obscenities are put live before we approved them. How you want to do it or how many other people you want to include, I’ll leave up to you to decide. You should also encourage SRA or AAC to actually expand on the framework that Alan created. By that I mean that those students should start including what they liked about the course, what tips will make them succeed, whether or not the textbook is necessary – all the information that the wiki should have. In terms of roll out, you may want to do a soft launch during registration for the fall/winter term, which occurs sometime in June. Only do this if you are ready and think students may benefit from what you have. Once you have decided

when to launch it, talk to Wooder as he will help you think of a promotional strategy. If you have any questions that are technical reach out to Pauline, she can either resolve it or contact Factor[e] and they can then help you.

## **Board Dynamics**

For one year you will spend an unprecedented and probably unnecessary amount of time with three people - your fellow board members. Whether you were friends before or not, that is irrelevant – you will form a bond with them that will last a lifetime. You each have a portfolio, platform and interests that will take up a majority of your time. Yet you four are all board members of this organization.

Board of Directors meetings, in my eyes serve two purposes. One is to discuss any issues/projects/ideas/problems that all four of you as a board of the organization need to address and the other is to act as a safe space for all four of you to discuss your own personal projects and use it as a checkpoint in both your personal and work life. You will feel that sometimes the topics of conversation have very little to do with your portfolio. If you feel this way, do something about it. You are as valuable as the other three and it is important for you to be in tune with the inner workings of the MSU. Use the other three whenever you are starting a project or you are trying resolve something. They are a resource to you and try to keep them in the loop as often as you can. They can't help you if they don't know you are going through something.

**\*\*Disclaimer\*\*** This following paragraph is a relic from Vish that keeps getting passed down from year to year – it is a classic “day in the life” of the misunderstood VP Education:

What you see: “Oh man, I’m so excited! I have this conference in Ottawa to attend where we’ll be meeting with MPs and actually influencing change. How often do we get an opportunity to interact with the people that can take our policy and put it into action. This is going to be awesome.” [End of the Week hits] “Man, that week was awesome. Got to meet with the Prime Minister’s Office, and the Finance Minister on issues related to the Canada Student Loans Program! It’s Sunday night, and I’m exhausted – I think I’ll take tomorrow off, maybe even two days just to recuperate from the long week I’ve had.”

What other people see. “Oh man, Spencer used to be so diligent, but now all he does is go on trips. He really is the VP Travel and Tourism. He’s never in the office, and whenever his conferences are over, he takes days off. What is this? I heard all he does is meet with some people, and drink the rest of the time. How come he can’t be like the rest of the board? Why did we even elect him?” While dramatized, this is the perception of the VP Ed at times, since even your own Board Members can sometimes admit to you that they don’t particular have much of an understanding of what you did last week, perhaps explaining in more details at Board Meetings during calendar updates could be a way to educate them on what you do on a day to day basis.

Having good board dynamics is essential to your success and the organization’s. By this, I am not necessarily implying you should all be best friends or be together 24/7, but rather you should all have good communication and understanding between one another. Ensuring that even, if you disagree on something, you are all progressing towards something allows for you to act as a team. Something that I did at the beginning, that I hope you don’t do, is allowing my pride to guide my actions and my interactions with the other three. I started this job thinking that I was the most important person in the team, that my work was the most important, and that no one respected me, let alone understand what I was doing. And boy, was I wrong. I never asked for help and thought I

knew everything and anything needed so I could succeed. And while this was not a problem with Jacob, due to our pre-established friendship, I did have problems with Scott and Teddy, especially Teddy.. (Disclaimer: now I have great relationships with everyone, because I did something about this wrong attitude). Me and Teddy had a rough patch during the summer and though he did try to reach out, but my pride didn't allow me to meet him halfway. Once we actually talked about it, everything went uphill and the year went great.

In regards to the portfolio of the three here is a low down on how I interacted with them. How you interact with your board will be different, no two boards are the same. Hope this helps you guide how you may decide those interactions to be.

Teddy: We interacted a lot in anything OUSA related due to the president's role as second spokesperson in provincial advocacy. Teddy and I found our groove by him being the story teller and me being the knowledge keeper whenever we lobbied together.. We were a great team and we worked well together. You and Ehima will need to figure out your own groove. He helped me out a lot in the education team reform as he provided an outsider perspective while still seeing the end goal of better support for the department. We originally started working on the peer tutoring network together, but due to my workload, he took over the project.

Jacob: Unlike past previous boards, Jacob and I worked very closely this year, not only due to our past friendship but due to common interests in many things. First due to my interaction with PTM's (see "Interaction with PTM" section), I always ensured that he knew what conversations I was having with them when it came to services. Having run for president, he had a natural inclination for this portfolio and he provided a lot of support to me – something I will always be grateful for. Jacob had an interest in CASA and he was my go to person for a lot of those discussions. He helped me prepared all the reports – having two heads when dealing with this topic was really helpful. Our biggest project that we did is obviously Change Camp. We created this event from the ground up based on the smaller scale event that SCSN had run in the past. We created a proposal, convinced university partners and ultimately planned and implemented it.

Scott: We didn't really do any projects together aside from committees or board that all four of us were on. He did come to CASA for lobby week and he was great at it. I think that him experiencing the work we do for a week allowed him to see a bit of our world. Aside from asking him a million questions about my budget, he also provided me feedback on things – after all, we share a window.

## **Interaction with Part-Time Managers**

Part-time Managers are the students responsible for ensuring that the MSU's Services, an integral aspect of this organization. This year, I made a personal goal to engage as often as I could with the PTM's. Not necessarily to talk about a service's operation or direction but to talk to them as Board member who they could go to if they needed help. With that said, I made sure to not infringe with Jacob's responsibilities as manager or Scott's oversight on the finances. With that said, I did interact with the following PTM's (aside from TAC, SCSN and Advocacy Coordinator) a lot more than the rest.

- Diversity Services: Interacted with Sarah and Nishan about Perspectives on Peace, providing feedback and advice on it; as well as had discussions surrounding the Abilities service and other aspects of Accessibility.
- SHEC/PSL/QSSC: These three services are very close to my heart due to the nature of peer support. I always went to them for feedback on the Mental Health Strategy as well as during #MacTalks. Constantly interacting and talking to students who

interact with students who have mental health experiences was an incredible resource for me.

- Spark: As this service came from a Spencer's platform there were lots of times that I interacted with Jimmy. Mentorship in general has become a focus for Forward with Integrity. I brought Jimmy to the meetings with the Associate Deans of the Faculties (as faculty-specific mentorship is now under their plates) to discuss how Spark fit in the overall picture. They were always very receptive of Jimmy's work and really liked the niche Spark filled. I would suggest that you continue this.

How you decide to interact with PTM's, I leave to your discretion, but I do suggest that you try and build good rapport with them!

### **Interaction with Full-time Staff**

One of the things I never thought would happen when I started this job was how impactful and meaningful my interactions would be with the wonderful full-time staff of the MSU. There is this misconception that the VP Education does not need to interact with the full-time staff, mostly due to the nature of the education portfolio. The reality is that you're a Board of Director for this organization and that through your supervision of John, the full-time staff will see you as such. While your work and project related interactions with full-time staff will be mainly with Wooder, Jess and John, I strived to have a very cordial and good relationship with as many full-time staff as I could. It is very easy to interact with those in the office but we often forget that there is full-time staff throughout MUSC (and off-campus – child care center). I often talked to them about life and through that, I built good rapport with them and often got really good advice from them too! I soon realized how those interactions can be meaningful to the full-time staff as well. These are people who have dedicated their life to serve McMaster students and the Board showing interest in their life, interests and worries – goes a long way.

### **Teaching Awards**

Aside from the Advocacy Coordinator, you also supervise the Teaching Awards Committee (TAC) Coordinator. The purpose of Teaching Awards is to promote excellence in teaching and learning at McMaster by recognizing instructors who have contributed greatly to the undergraduate learning experience. There is an award for every academic division and those are chosen through the online surveys that are filled by the general body. From then we have 5 special awards that require a nomination package (each one has a unique one; you can look at the Operating Policy for more detail) The awards are: 1) Merit Award – awarded to instructors who have recently arrived to Mac (1-2 years); 2) Lifetime Achievement Awards – for instructors who have been at Mac for more than 10 years (usually close to retirement); 3) Pedagogical Innovation Award – to an instructor who has done something extraordinary in the classroom. Before I go into the last award, you should also be aware that we also award excellence in Teaching Assistants – these are selected through broad student input.

The last one is one that I find close to my heart – the Community Engagement Education Teaching Award. With the help of the Network for Community Campus Partnerships and Mina, I created the description and nomination package for the award. With the emphasis on recognizing Community Engagement at McMaster, I thought the MSU can help in this through TAC. The Network and the AVP Faculty were very grateful of this and I think it's something we can build upon. Last year, the Network helped a lot in choosing last year's winner. Since all of our established awards have been around for a while, they usually receive quite a good turnout. Since this was the first year of

implementation, we didn't get quite the turnout we wanted. I suggest you put an emphasis in advertising this.

This year I was pretty lucky to have had Mina as Coordinator. She was incredibly well organized and prepared for things well ahead of time. The implementation of teaching awards can be pretty straightforward but that does not mean innovation cannot occur. Mina had the idea to use candy as a tool of advertisement and in my opinion it was quite successful. She increased the social media presence of TAC and now more students are aware of the awards. For the winter term, we had nominations open for 3 weeks (due to the reading week lull), rather than 2 and we had a higher turnout than last year. If you want to continue this you will need to change the Operating Policy. Something I do regret is not being as supportive or being there for Mina as I could have. I believed that since she was so competent, that she didn't need me. And while everything was a success, I reflect that I could have built a close relationship with her. I suggest you keep close attention to this PTM, and not just your education team.

### **President's Page**

The President's Page (or Prez Page) is used by the Board to inform and talk to the student body about a variety of issues and initiatives. The Prez page is printed in every Silhouette issue and the content is contained to a page's worth. Topic will be determined each week by Board with the guidance of the communications team (Wooder, Public Relations Assistant, Communications Officer, and Social Media Coordinator). The content of the page and the tone will vary depending on what Board wants to communicate. It can range from a pure informational piece (Change Camp/Year End Celebration advertising) to conversation pieces (What it takes to be a VP/Check-ins for students).

Last year, Teddy had the greatest amount of Prez Page articles (it is the President's Page after all) but I wrote the second most. With that said, how you and the team break Prez Page responsibilities apart is up to you. I particularly enjoyed writing them, albeit I always submitted them a bit late (don't do that!). Some of the topics that I did, but my no means do you have to the same, were the following: Mac's Money Centre, Municipal Elections, Teaching Awards, OUSA General Assembly (both fall and spring), #MacTalks, Discover Your City Week, and Change Camp.

### **#MacVotes – Municipal and Provincial Elections**

Within my first week on the job, provincial elections were called – I know, a fun way to start. As you are very well aware, #MacVotes has received glory and praise from everyone. While I am very proud of this; its success is due to the larger collective effort (yes, including you – thank you).

Before actual implementation of material occurred, I met with the Elections Group (comprised of Rez Life, SSC, SOCS and IRC). This group is used to inform those groups about what the MSU is doing in regards to advertising – most of the responsibilities for election awareness are the MSU's. Sean does communicate with the respective contacts for elections and will give you useful information. Rez Life, SOCS and IRC are three groups where you can get volunteers for promoting the elections – use them. In general you should meet a couple of times before the election and ensure everyone knows what your plan is to get out the vote.

In terms of organizing a debate you will have to organize the atrium display and everything that is part of the debate. Contact the Sil so the debate is livestreamed. Contact Avtek for the equipment, once you have booked the space in MUSC. Oh yeah, I would contact MUSC as soon as you can and hold a variety of dates and when you contact the candidates with the options. Pick the day where most can attend – in reality, they will all

come to whatever date you decide, but still make it seem like their input is wanted. I contacted the four main parties and all 12 mayoral candidates, since you're the VP Ed, build rapport with all the candidates, you never know who may win.

Use the #MacVotes page for gathering all the information

The provincial election was our first try at this and it was a good learning experience. Since Election Day occurred during the summer, we faced the reality that we needed to interact with students using social media since the student body is severely reduced during the summer. We decided that we needed one brand and one way to interact through social media - #MacVotes came out of this decision making process. For this election we used all the information that OUSA provided and it proved to be very useful. I didn't spend much time on analyzing platforms and that was very helpful in terms of saving time. Alex did some amazing infographics that we used to tweet - I strongly suggest you do the same - they are very effective (and they look nice too). I wrote a piece on the Silhouette since Prez Page was not running during the summer - you won't have to do this since the election is on the fall. For this election we created a video that talked about the importance of this election - it was fairly successful and students enjoyed it. Due to it being the summer, the Advocacy Street Team couldn't really interact with many students. When all was said and done, our riding got the highest voter turnout in the province. Since Ontario Elections doesn't track down demographics we will never know if #MacVotes greatly contribute to this - for all intents and purposes - it did ;)

The municipal election was a different beast all together. It was at the end of October, full student population here and lots to get done. In terms of promotion, we did everything we did for the provincial election and more! We had the social media presence and even had lawn signs - do them again - they are a great way to show the community that students care and will vote. This election took a lot more time in terms of preparation since OUSA was not helping us this time. Your committee did a lot for me in terms of analyzing stuff since I didn't have time to do it - great use for EA. One of the things that was different and something you will need to do it as well is the use of the street team. I think students talking to students about the issues of an election is a really effective way to increase awareness and engagement. The volunteers were great the social media of so many students talking about elections was great. Overall it was very successful and the social media presence we got was phenomenal.

In terms of the upcoming federal election, you have something I could have only dreamed - polling stations. You have been given the keys to the kingdom and I hope that things do change - not for the MSU's benefit, but because civic engagement is something that needs to increase. I think if you have engaging volunteers to escort students to the polling stations you will be successful. You will find that the Advocacy Coordinator and EA commissioner (not SCSN since this is federal) will be the two individuals who will greatly help you for this. Ensure that you all know what you will be doing and things go smoothly. In terms of creating promotional material, the templates should be in the Communications Officer's server. Oh yeah, the Communications Officer will be a great ally in the battle of student engagement. Ensure Mike is kept in the loop at all times.

## **Valedictorian**

To echo Spencer Graham's words "To be honest, I never understood why this was the VP Education's responsibility, but alas, it is". Ditto to that. You are in charge of organizing both fall and spring Valedictorians selection processes. The Fall valedictorian selection process is different than the Spring. You will have to play a part in both, however, so stay on top of this as best you can. Both actually crawled up on me and I had to act quickly. I would suggest putting timelines for yourself so you are reminded when to start planning.

For the fall convocation, graduate students make up the majority of graduates, and as such, many of them will also apply for valedictorian. Graduate Studies coordinates the selection process. This year I was actually the designate who sat on the selection committees for both ceremonies. Up to you if you want to be on them or you can always designate someone to do. Personally I enjoyed them and I think it's a cool experience to undertake, especially since you will not be in the selection process in the spring process. There are only two ceremonies in the fall, but all of this information can be accessed via the Valedictorian package on the server. Peter or Vanessa will probably ask you to help advertise nominations, so help them in any way you can (or refer them to Wooder).

Your responsibilities for Spring valedictorian selection are greater. Begin the Spring process of Valedictorian as early as February because there are many selection committees that need time to meet after the nomination period has been exhausted. I CANNOT stress this enough. Put this in your calendar or you will forget about it. I did. Don't be me. You will receive emails from the faculties asking about information. While it can be annoying, if you can avoid this, everyone wins.

The first thing you'll want to do is refer to the Operating Policy on Valedictorian Selection and kind of just go from there. Let the Faculty Associate Deans offices know in advance when nomination packages are going to come out and close. Their emails are in a listserv on your email, so use that to contact them! Though the listserv should be complete, make a point of asking if there are any people from that faculty who didn't receive the information necessary, and then add their contact info to the listserv. Once the nomination package is out, you may get emails from students asking for clarification on things. While some questions may seem silly since the answers are in the package, always respond with kindness.

Once all valedictorians have been selected, safe keep them for University PR to access them and then post them on the MSU website. Wooder has a template for announcing the winners – let him know when the winners are selected and he will take care of the rest. You could even send them congratulatory letters – this was suggested by Spencer, I did not do that though. Be very vigilant and ask for faculties to send the names and positions of their committees to ensure they are following the policy (this applies in other general areas for the policy too). In regards to the undergraduate reps, I chose SRA members who were interested in the position and ask for a short paragraph explaining why they wanted to do this. I suggest you do the same. In regard to the graduate students, email the GSA and ensure that they actually contact the associate dean's offices. Keep a check on them. They had bad communication this year.

Since this award can have a huge personal impact on people, please ensure that you are using all possible channels to promote. The biggest request you can make to associate deans (perhaps by attending at a physical meeting) could be that their staff respect and strictly adhere to the outline valedictorian policy since in the past there were several instances of Faculties wanting to bend or break the rules intentionally or unintentionally (although I didn't experience any bumps myself). In previous years we've had quite a few annoyed faculty offices caused by the MSU not following through or conducting this prestigious process early enough – Spencer told me this, I'm unsure as to what actually happened.

## **Finances**

I'll admit it, I never became an expert in our finances, Scott or the accounting office always helped me out. Make sure you fill out Purchase Orders ahead of time. Dan will thank you for it. Here is a breakdown in the accounts that you have and how you should use them.

6604-0305 Educational Initiatives: The main account from which any initiative can be funded for that you or your team would like to create. This account also covers any cost that your Advocacy Coordinator and Advocacy Street Team need. This account is solely used by you (or Advocacy Coordinator) and you have 100% freedom on how you want to use it. Here is a list of projects that were funded by this account: Street Team Polos (buy them ASAP); #MacTalks Materials including T-shirts; Change Camp; some aspects of Discover Your City; and any printed material I needed.

6616-0305 Expense Account VP Education: This account is used for any expense you have outside of projects. I used it for meals with university administration or external partner. Any appreciation meals for the team, PTMS or others were also covered by this account.

6901-0305 Travel – Conference BoD: This account is shared by the entire BOD but the reality is that you will use most it. Any transportation, food, or expense associated with you travelling that you will use will come from here. Additionally, any delegate fee that bills you for their conference will come from this account.

5905-0305 – OUSA Membership: The account that covers our OUSA fee. Just make sure our bills are paid. OUSA will email Jess the fees and she will handle it – yes, she is amazing. But just ensure you know when that occurs.

6595-0305 Election Awareness: This account will cover any cost associated with the #MacVotes campaign. This include printed materials, cost of debate, lanyards, lawn signs, etc.

### **Hamilton Post-Secondary Advisory Group**

HPSAG is a great opportunity for the MSU to do some local provincial lobbying. The MSU has HPSAG down to a tee. Wooder will coordinate all the meetings and when it comes to Mac, Wooder will coordinate lunch. In terms of the asks, it is up to you and the rest of the Board to determine the priorities. Often times, we usually echo what OUSA is already asking, with McMaster examples. It is your job to draft a rough agenda (the content comes from OUSA) and ensure that you inform Wooder what he needs to expand. Every once in a while, we will include a McMaster or Hamilton specific ask. The MSU usually drives the conversation but Mohawk and Redemeer can also have great asks (every once in a while).

### **Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance**

Your days from being the lowly intern have made you well prepared to be a board of director for this organization. Not to mention you are now President – look at you go! (and yes, I did add that sentence once I found out you had won). I don't have to mention to you how great OUSA is, how effective, or how well respected it is; you already know this. Both you and I had extensive knowledge of OUSA before starting our positions and thus I won't go into detail about how we interact with all three parties, how great our research is or how influential we can be. While I'll do instead is elaborate on my experiences regarding the many aspects of my duties and projects with OUSA.

## *Home Office*

Something that I think is so cool that we get to experience is having to work with two teams of full-time staff, one from the MSU and one from OUSA. Home office always has incredibly talented people comprising its staff. You should build a good working relationship with all of them since they each will make your job a lot easier – and it is all dependent on good communication. The research team is so knowledgeable, but they are not Google. If you require a brief or specific research about something, contact them and they can prepare something for you. They will be a great resource when you author a paper and ensure that you communicate often with them. Operations Coordinator is great for organizing all the events for OUSA, since you don't have to plan a GA this year, your work interactions may be minimal regarding Mac specific things, but since you are now president it will probably increase (take out the 'probably', it will). The Director of Communications is a great resource to use. Jas will not only set a lot of media opportunities for you but she will also teach you a lot, both regarding your personal communication skills as well as how to handle the media. The Executive Director will be the one you work closest to since you are now president. Sean will be your partner in all the lobbying meetings you do. For me, Sean was a great resource, always having an answer to a question I had, no matter how silly it was. Ultimately Sean has become a dear friend and I will never be able to thank him enough for what he has done for me. Enjoy your next year with him. Treasure it and cherish it.

## *Policy Papers*

You know all about the research that goes into a paper but here is my experience with authoring one. First, pick a topic that you are passionate about, have some expertise and will not bore you to write about. For me that was student health, in particular mental health. (When we went to Stratcon I pretty much gave no one the option to not let me write it lol. Wait. You were there, so you knew that). We are giving around 2-3 months to create a draft from which research will then finalize. I'll be frank; I could have done much better time management in ensuring the paper was worked on throughout the time I had. Instead, I procrastinated and rushed to complete it. I finished it on time, but research had a hard time with me. They are great resource but we shouldn't abuse them. If you can make their life easier, it is simply by communicating with them on your progress and ensuring they are kept in the loop. Also references – Danielle will not like it if they are not done properly. I only wrote one paper since I had to host GA come the spring. Not sure how you want to proceed with this. Also if you can ensure that you give the opportunity for at least one Mac student to contribute to the papers.

## *McMaster in OUSA*

OUSA is comprised of seven schools. Seven different perspectives, seven unique university experiences that have all come together to improve the experience of Ontario undergraduate students. You are the only board member who is in the board of two organizations and that is quite a unique experience. With that said, that means that you have to think with two different hats, a McMaster one and an OUSA hat. Something I learned very quickly was balancing my McMaster opinion, how it fit in the bigger picture and when to speak up at an OUSA meeting. Sometimes these two hats will not agree. For example, OUSA's stance in Online Learning is not that of the MSU's. OUSA wants to promote online learning and consider an online education like an on-campus one. The MSU believes in the blended learning format (psych 1x03) and we really value the on-campus component to it. At the end of the day, the MSU pays your salary and you represent over 22,000 undergraduate first. Through experience you will find your own way of dealing with balancing this intricate dual responsibility.

One of the first experiences with this will be at StratCon when you and the rest of SC will determine this year's priorities. You will see that some will benefit Mac better while others not so much. Ensure that there is nothing detrimental for Mac. At the end of the day you will decide on priorities that will benefit Ontario students.

### *Steering Committee Meetings*

I found SC meeting to be very therapeutic and enjoyable. They occurred once a month, either in Toronto or wherever GA was held. At every meeting the exec updated us in the musing of their portfolio as well as Sean on Home Office's doings. I was never afraid to ask Exec questions as it was their duty to be accountable to the rest of SC. In your case, things will be reversed. Ensure that you are accountable and transparent to the rest of SC. During the meetings I was always very opinionated and ensured everyone always knew what I was thinking. Not being part of Exec didn't really bother me. I ensured that the Mac perspective was always present. In regards to the agenda, Sean and Jen prepared it – thus you will be in charge of this. We also used SC meetings to discuss what was occurring in our campuses. Often the issues we all experience are the same – these are great opportunities to try and find synergies.

### *General Assembly*

Having attended three GA's before starting this job, I was very familiar with them and that is also why I was excited to host one. In terms of GA's you know the drill, you know the schedule, nothing to say here. What I will talk about for General Assembly is how to pick your delegates. I bet you're dying to know. In terms of delegate selection, each school is allotted one delegate per 3,000 students. We usually get 8, but in the past have had 7. Every school has their own unique way of picking delegates, ours is a combination of open applications and guaranteed spots. For us we have the following positions that always go: 1) VP Ed 2) President 3) EA Commissioner 4) UA Commissioner 5) Research Assistant (for you it will be Provincial and Federal Research Assistant) 6) Advocacy Coordinator. After that you can pick two delegates from the MSU membership. This year I did something different and brought 2 observers at every GA. I did this because I wanted to get more students to be exposed to OUSA. You may or may not want to. The application process for the other delegates is as follows. You create an application – you can find the past couple of years of applications in the server. Once you have finalized it put it up on the website for around 2 weeks, at the end of the second week narrow the candidates to around 4-5 interviewees. Then hold interviews at the start of the third week, use the EA Commissioner, P&F Research Assistant and Advocacy Coordinator (good experience for them and they will provide good perspective). I suggest you continue what I started, do focus groups once you have a delegation picked and gather student feedback on the topics of the policy papers.

### *OUSA Survey*

This year you have an OUSA survey year. The regular cycle for this is year one – survey dissemination; year two – UA analyzes the survey. Yeah, that's right; UA is the committee responsible for this survey. When I was commissioner I was in charge of promoting the survey. Get Mike to create the promotional material for it and then let Blake promote it. Mac has always been a great leader in getting a good response to it – that is your legacy to continue. Your job for this year is to ensure we get a great response and then, next year's UA commissioner will analyze it.

### *OUSA Blogs*

You did a great job for the blogs – be proud of that. I could have done more blogs but due to all the other Prez Page's and other things I did not meet this responsibility. I would encourage Saad to continue the work you started and allow other EA members to contribute to the blogs.

### *Advocacy week*

This week was one of my favourite all year. This week allows OUSA to make great headway in our lobbying asks. This year we had a really successful year and this was all due to everyone's contribution and hard work. You will be paired off into a team with someone not in the MSU. It is very important for you to ensure that you all are in the same page and work out as a team. Home office will prepare you very well for this. My only advice for you responding to this is to ensure that everything internal is taken care of since you'll be gone for a week.

## Community Engagement and Hamilton

I did not run on this yet it became one of my most passionate aspects of the job. FWI changed the way in which McMaster views CE. My no means does this mean that CE was not being performed either through research or teaching, but we have now looked at it through a different lens. In the last couple of years Community Engagement (CE) has become a priority at McMaster University and the development of a course that focuses on the foundations of Community Engagement is a logical step in educating McMaster students about the foundations of CE. Community Engagement is a much more complex topic than most people believe it to be. Community engagement must be well thought out, and be beneficial to all parties involved. Most importantly, the community needs to be involved in all steps of any initiative or project surrounding community engagement.

Engaging the community requires a unique and careful approach that must consider the needs, knowledge and lived experience of the community before engagement even begins. This course must serve as the first step to teach students how to appropriately engage with the community and allow students to critically assess how their work will benefit the community before, during and after their engagement. It is important to consider that for students (and effectively the university) to engage within the community several acknowledgements need to be made and addressed.

### *Network for Community Campus Partnerships (NCCP)*

As a recommendation from FWI Task Forces, the Network was created. This Network aims to coordinate all community engaged research, education and initiatives at McMaster. The Network has monthly meetings, and it is comprised of representatives from every unit at McMaster. You will discuss the many initiatives going on campus but also act as a team to implement many different initiatives, such as Change Camp. The membership of the Network is then divided into various working groups to work on different aspects of the Network's work: Engagement and Events, Communications and Website, CE Course, Recognition and Central Resource. I was part of the Engagement and Events – Change Camp; Communications and Website – how can we communicate CE initiatives to students and promote MSU CE initiatives; and Recognition – the creation of the CE teaching award. The Network is filled with great people and I encourage you to build relationships with as many as you can. I strongly suggest that you bring your Community Engagement Coordinator once the position is filled.

### *Change Camp*

This is one of the things I am most proud of. This project went through the full cycle, inception, convincing partners, planning, and finally its implementation. To be fair, I had Jacob and going through this process with a partner who was as passionate as me made the process so much easier. Jacob actually ran on improving Change Camp when he run for president. One October night Jacob and I were working late in the office and we had this epiphany that through the Network we can actually improve Change Camp. We dropped everything that night and drafted a proposal that I then presented to Sheila Sammon the CE Director and Dave Heidbrech Coordinator of the Network. It was a tough sell but we convinced them that this was worth implementing. We then brought it to the Network and got lots of feedback that truly made the event better. Once we also convinced Susan about this we create a planning committee comprised of two members from Mohawk, two from the city, two from the MSU (Jacob and I) and two from the Network (Sheila and Dave). We divided all the tasks between all of us, with that said the actual logistics and planning before the event was done by Jacob and I. In terms of future planning, all the materials, all the reports, are in your server. What you and the rest of the team need to decide is how you want to proceed now that a lot of people are aware of it. Do you want to increase in size? How many more partners to do you?

Another thing about Change Camp is that once you receive the report, you should take some recommendations and try to implement them. Try and contact community partners and see were synergies can occur. Once you have picked one or two recommendations, make sure you report on the progress of the recommendations through our social media channels. The idea of the report is to hold those participants who attended accountable to their ideas. And the MSU can facilitate those connections.

The planning and reporting section of the recommendations is something that I think should be given to the CE Coordinator. This initiative is something that, in my opinion, is what this position should be doing.

Finally, if you have any questions regarding this, feel free to always contact me.

### *City of Hamilton*

The MSU for as long as it has existed has worked in increasing student engagement with the city, with its opportunities both social and economically. My approach to engaging with the city was through CE, and not through the political side. That I think is something that will differ between me and you. And that is okay. For that reason I cannot give you extensive advice on how to approach this. Last year, Teddy had the most contact with Aidan; Ehima and you should decide how you want continue this relationship.

### *For Ward One*

This was an initiative created by Brian McHattie to engage Ward One citizens in deciding what community projects should be funded through the \$1million allocated for community projects. Essentially, he wanted to create a SLEF model for the community. Jeffrey Doucet was the initial MSU representative, and then this year Scott and I shared this responsibility. In regards to their progress, this winter we decided as committee to relook at the progress so that higher engagement and higher turnout could be attained. In terms of how you should be involved, I suggest you tell your CE Coordinator to attend these meetings. The work done by this group is important but I do think that you don't necessarily have to be involved but can definitely delegate it.

### *Discover Your City*

Discover You City has become our staple in Hamilton student engagement. This is something that we should all be proud of and that continues to grow year after year. This year Josh expanded the program. We added a summer passport that was comprised of picking locations in Hamilton and having student take selfies, use the hashtag #DiscoverYourCity and be entered into a contest for a gift card. We had lots of coverage in the Sil, and if you would like you can definitely expand this. In terms of our Discover Your City week, this year we made a great partnership with Debbie Spence from the city. She is a great advocate for student engagement and I suggest you meet with her as soon as you can and talk about an engagement plan for the year. This year DYC week happened in February and Debbie helped out with promotion and even got us a DJ for ice skating. While DYC is fairly popular I do think there is ways that it can be improved on and that is something you and Daymon should definitely be talking about.

## McMaster University and the Vice President Education

### **The McMaster Institute for Innovation and Excellence in Teaching and Learning (MIETL)**

If you did not know, MIETL is the former Center for Leadership in Learning (CLL). MIETL is meant to be the beacon of teaching and learning at McMaster – it will propagate the great teaching we all know and love. To lead MIETL, Arshad Ahmad our AVP Teaching and Learning (this position did not previously exist), was appointed as Director; Arshad is a leader in teaching and learning, both in Canada and globally, he is also a 3M Fellow. MIETL has spent the past little bit finding itself as well as finding its niche within McMaster. Its staff has grown exponentially in the last year; this speaks volumes to the monetary commitment that McMaster has invested in MIETL.

Since the MSU advocates for excellence in teaching and learning, it is logical to try and find ways in which MIETL and the MSU can collaborate in. This year I worked with them in two ways:

1. Teddy and I participated in a variety of discussion that pertained to the future of Teaching and Learning. We not only represented the MSU but we were also exposed to lots of brilliant people. It was very interesting and I hope that you also participate in things like this.

2. “I would be a better learner” campaign. Arshad and Chari both contacted me in September asking if the MSU was interested in running a campaign to ask students what would make them better learners. I thought it would be a great idea – Jess then implemented this campaign (the results are in the server). Concurrent to this Chari was asking Faculty what would make their students better learners. At the end of October, Jess, Jimmy and I made up a panel of students and faculty to talk about the results. It was a great imitative and I enjoyed it.

At the end of Term One, MIETL decided to form Research Working Groups comprised of faculty, staff and students to determine research topics that MIETL should undertake in the near future. This was a great undertaking as the working groups had large turnouts and really interesting and riveting discussions occurred. Since you were involved in them, I think you have a good grasp on their purpose. I would strongly encourage you to follow the progress of this and see where the MSU can contribute a student perspective to their work.

I believe that in a couple of years MIETL will be a leader in Canada regarding Teaching and Learning. How the MSU fits in this big picture will be determined once

MIETL has a solid place at McMaster. Arshad is a great guy and mentor, I encourage you to have a great relationship with him.

### **Enrollment Management Team**

The Enrollment Management Team is a very interesting committee to be in. It is comprised of the associate deans (and/or assistant deans) of all the Faculties (and programs), the registrar, admissions, recruitment and the Dean of Studies. Its main purpose is quite diverse – but actually Sean wants to re-evaluate it. In essence, it is there for every representative in the team to be informed about admissions and enrollment in all the programs. In the summer you will discuss admissions and how many students are coming – it is really neat information to see. After September, you will see discussion centered on making the targets for next year’s enrollment targets. Discussion will evolve to the admission process, applications and the cycle begins anew. Through this discussion I often provided my opinion whenever it was warranted or requested. In the admission discussions, I often talked about the ‘right feel’ of students making the right choice when attending a university and how the MSU plays a big part in that.

Other discussions that occurred were focused on retention from first year to second year and how residence may or may not play a role in it. If you want my biased opinion, our system is broken. Students with a 90%+ average will succeed whether they are on campus or off campus. It is the students who have an average below 80% that need the support systems that residence offers. Other factors such as socioeconomic status, first generation, mental health, etc, are often at play here that did not allow them to achieve a higher average to guarantee residence. I highly encourage you to look into this.

One of the great things I enjoyed about these meetings was the ability to network with the members in this team as their portfolios may overlap with issues that pop-up throughout the year.

### **Mental Health at McMaster**

I have often being called ‘the mental health guy’ and often, I take this name with pride. For personal reasons, improving mental health for students has been a passion of mine. I started my journey in this when I was UA commissioner and Spencer allowed me to take the lead on the MSU’s Mental Health Campaign – something I will forever be grateful for. Through the planning of the “Today I Feel” campaign, I met Allison Drew-Hassling, who had recently been appointed as the Student Mental Health Strategy co-lead. From her, I learned about the plans for the strategy and discovered how the MSU could greatly contribute to it.

#### *Student Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy*

My part in the strategy consisted of providing constant feedback to Allison and Dr. Catherine Munn (the other co-lead). In the summer, we collaborated together and organized a small town hall where around 30 student leaders who were either involved with mental health initiatives/services or who had lived experience, came together and provided feedback and ideas on what the strategy should address. Additionally throughout the year, Allison and Catherine would come to me, present their ideas and I would provide feedback. As the Strategy was starting to take shape, we invited students (especially peer support PTMs) to continue providing feedback. Once phase one of the Strategy was finalized, it involved into two things – the dissemination of the strategy and the Mental Health Advisory Council.

## *#MacTalks*

After the Strategy had been finalized, Allison, Catherine and I agreed that it would be beneficial to launch the Strategy at the same time as the MSU's mental health and wellness awareness week. From January until the week itself, we worked a lot on the scheduling, the branding, and the message of the Strategy itself. Two of the events that we co-organized together were Art with Impact (it was really successful and I suggest you continue to run it again next year) and the formal launch (the launch in the Atrium).

Something that I spent a lot of time on was the actual name of the week #MacTalks since "Today I Feel" has unfortunately made some students feel uncomfortable and I wanted to avoid that this time around. After talking to many, many, many people (EB, SRA, AAC, PTMs, etc.) we determined that #MacTalks was as inclusive, and up to interpretation, as we could.

Something that has now changed and will affect you if you do continue this is that the MSU is no longer associated with Moods Disorders Society of Canada (MDSC) and thus we no longer will use the BLUE ELEPHANT. This was a decision that I made due to MDSC wanted too much control of the MSU and would not let us use the simple blue elephant. They wanted us to have their logos everywhere and we had to get their approval for simple posters. If we didn't do this, they constantly stated "how unethical we were" despite many other organizations having elephants in their logos (i.e. LCBO). Due to this, after consulting with Allison, I decided to just leave the logo and do something else. While this is sad since students really like the blue elephants and have been around for a while; despite this, I thought it was in our best interest to do this.

Buy T-shirts, students love t-shirts.

## *Mental Health Advisory Committee*

Due to my involvement in the Strategy, I was invited to be the undergraduate representative for the Advisory Committee. This advisory committee is the highest form of governance for the Strategy; it is comprised of: AVP Student and Learning, AVP Faculty, Provost, Dean of Health Sciences, Director of SWC, Jane Aronson, and the two co-leads. This group provides guidance and oversight on the strategy. It is an interesting and neat body. I only went to two meetings and since the strategy was just being released, discussions were not focusing on how the implementation is working – something which you will actually look at.

## *Academic Accommodations*

You have already started the work in this but here is some background. As you know our academic accommodations policy has not been updated in a very very long time. Currently the policy is very restrictive and doesn't serve those students who needed. Accommodations are only given to students who have been medically diagnosed with chronic mental health illness. In reality, mental health concerns can manifest themselves at any time, for variable periods of times. Students who demonstrate mental health concerns for short periods of times (a couple of months), are often not medically diagnosed and thus cannot receive accommodations that they should be receiving. My hope is that this policy addresses academic accommodations and thus reduces MSAF usage and now academic concerns for anyone experiencing mental health concerns, gets the accommodation they need. 2

TIPS: Mental health is a very broad and comprehensive. From day one to my last day, I was always learning something new. I read A LOT – I suggest you do. Start with the OUSA policy (someone cool authored it I hear), then move to these two following resources – they were great reads –

*Mary O'Hagan, Céline Cyr, Heather McKee, and Robyn Priest, " Making the Case for Peer Support ," (report to the Mental Health Commission of Canada Mental Health Peer Support Project Committee , 2010).*

*Post-Secondary Student Mental Health: Guide to a Systemic Approach , "Canadian Association of College and University Student Services and Canadian Mental Health Association (2013).*

## **Accessibility**

When I was elected into this position I never thought I would spend time discussing accessibility. First, this was a huge learning curve and I am very happy I got to learn as much as I do – after all, learning about this is how we become better people. Accessibility is a complex, intricate and delicate topic that needs to be addressed very carefully. Accessibility as a term, is often associated with physical accessibility; in reality, accessibility is meant to ensure that *anything*, whether is a structure, event, or organization, is accessible to all regardless of ability.

### *Accessibility Forum*

This was the first MSU-run event that allowed students with disabilities to voice their concerns regarding their university experience. This was run by Diversity Services and UA. I provided guidance and advice in the implementation of this event. It was a ribbiting success and I hope you all continue this. This event allowed Sarah, Alan and I to inform the accessibility policy and see many issues that need addressing. A rough draft of a report can found on the server. This needs to be finalized.

### *McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC)*

This body is in charge of overseeing McMaster works regarding accessibility and how it complies with AODA standards. In past years, the MSU was not represented in this body. After meeting with Roger, he asked Anne Potter, the chair of MAC, to start inviting me to the meetings. The first time I went I presented the early results of the report from the Accessibility Forum. They are still waiting for the final copy. This body just got funding for many projects – you can find details on the MAC email folder. I think that this is a great body to provide the student perspective and also see how the MSU can contribute to ensuring accessibility is met. One thing that I will say is that you and the rest of the board really think about will represent the MSU at MAC. With you spending time externally, and the sporadic times this body meets, I suggest you choose someone who will really contribute to it.

### *Accessibility Policy*

Alan and Sarah are the true heroes to the great policy the MSU has. With this standing policy, you and the MSU can ensure that the university knows our stance on certain aspects of accessibility.

### *Abilities Pilot*

After hearing the experiences of students with disabilities I know that a service that provides a community and a means to share experiences must be created. Between Nishan, Sarah, Natasha, Alan and Jacob we worked on the Abilities proposal. Due to miscommunication on all of our ends we did not bring up the proposal to the SRA. By the time we started working, I had quite a bit of knowledge in this issue and was able to provide guidance and assistance in the conversations. You may want to play a similar role this year.

## **Forward with Integrity**

Forward with Integrity has re-defined our university mission and initiatives. Patrick's letter has disseminated and mobilized almost every person in this institution, most who are unaware they are meeting the FWI mandate. FWI has four main themes: Student Experience, Internationalization, Community Engagement and Research. Two of the most obvious synergies for the MSU to have been involved with were Student Experience and Community Engagement. If you didn't know, right after Patrick wrote the letter, four task forces were created, one for each theme, and faculty/staff/students made a report with various recommendations. Some of the recommendations have also been implemented – The learning portfolio, the Network for Community Campus Partnerships, new AVP International affairs, a website ([fwi.mcmaster.ca](http://fwi.mcmaster.ca)).

FWI has re-invigorated many people at McMaster; it has created many new projects that are now being felt everywhere (over 80 projects have been funded through FWI). I would suggest that you get very well acquainted with FWI and what it stands for. Be familiar with the saying "McMaster is a student-centred, research-focused institution". (Find out what it means to you).

To stay in touch with what FWI is working on, I suggest you create a partnership with two very important people: Laura Harrington, FWI Project Manager, and Erica Balch, FWI Public Relations. I have worked with these two people for over 2.5 years, and they are two of the most intelligent and supportive people I met in my time here. This year, we agreed that it would be great to regularly meet to not only update each other on FWI and MSU projects but also to see where collaboration could occur. For example, UA and I gave a lot of feedback on the Learning Portfolio. Additionally, last year Teddy and I were involved in creating a program for Welcome Week where a speaker came in and talked to first years about the importance of goal setting and reflection (something I do think you should continue).

## **Career/Co-op/Experiential Education Offices**

This section will be important since you have decided to focus on this – which I actually think is great. I started looking at Career/Co-op/Experiential Education (from now on I shall refer to them as CCEE's) offices when I was UA commissioner. Before I go into detail into what I did, I'll give you a bit of background on the offices here at Mac.

To start, just so you know, all 6 (student success center + 5 faculty offices) receive funding from students ancillary fees. This means that there is a contract with student groups as students have agreed to pay these fees because they see them as beneficial (MSU with SSC; the rest have one with each faculty society). We also have a decentralized model, where every student pays fees to student success, and students in the 5 faculties (science, social science, business, humanities and engineering) pay a second fee for their offices.

*Student Success Center (SSC):* Through the student services fee, the career's department in SSC receives funding to run its operation. SSC serves all students, services such as career coaching, resume critiques, interview preps are run through here. SSC organizes large employment fairs both on campus and off-campus. OSCARPLUS the place where co-ops are run through is organized through this office. One of the problems with this office is that students who use their faculty offices often never access SSC, yet they are paying for their services how we address this.

*Science Career and Co-operative Education Office (SCCE):* The faculty CCEE office in Science offers the typical career services, experiential education opportunities but it also arranges its co-op program. They have a good relationship with the MSS and often report

to them about their yearly operations. This office is funded approximately ~50% from students (not sure on the number so don't quote me on it). The office also teaches the career course for the Faculty.

*Engineering Co-op and Career Services (ECCS):* A really efficient and well-run office. They offer typical career services and run the engineering co-op program. They also have a good relationship with the MES. This office does not offer or deal with many experiential education opportunities. This office is fully funded by engineering students. The office also teaches the career course for the Faculty.

*Centre for Business Career Development (CBCD):* The office in Degroote that focuses on career development. They don't have a co-op program but rather an internship one. They have a good relationship with the DCS since it is also fully funded by students. This office also teaches their career course.

*Experiential Education Office (EE):* The office in Social Sciences that is in charge of dealing with experiential education office as well as career development. This office does not have a co-op program but offers some minor internship opportunities. This office has done a really good job in instilling a sense of pride with experiential education in the faculty. They are approximately half-funded by students.

*Humanities Target Learning and Experiential Education Center (HTLC):* The youngest of all the offices; it is only around 3 years old. This office only has 2 staff members while the rest have pretty comprehensive teams. This office focuses on 'career conversations' to expose students to careers that humanities students would benefit from. This office doesn't do any co-op and has minor internship opportunities. They are 50% funded by students.

This past year, Sean invited me to a variety of meetings with all the directors of these offices were present and we discussed the fact that there is this, not so secretive, disjoint between the offices and how to address this since ultimately everyone is here to benefit students. Due to a focus on mental health, careers got put in the backburner. I think you should rejoin these conversations and see if the system we have in place is the right one for Mac. McMaster students are either fully or partially funding these offices and they should be held accountable. This is an interesting topic and I'm excited to see how you may take it.

## **Faculty Interaction**

While the VP Ed tends to deal with senior admin, especially AVP's who tend to look at broader institutional priorities, it is also important for the VP Ed to build good relationships within the Faculties, in particular, the Faculty Deans. I personally had two real great working relationships with the Dean of Science and Dean of Humanities. Before I expand on why that occurred, I'll explain as to why I did not have such relationships with the other four.

*Health Sciences:* the Dean of Health Sciences is actually a Vice President of McMaster and thus has many other responsibilities than a regular Dean. The MSU only represents two programs within the large cornucopia of programs they offer – Bachelor of Health Sciences and Nursing. These two programs are fairly well respected and have a great educational experience for their students. Not saying you shouldn't care about their educational experience but, in layman terms – they don't need much advocacy help.

*Engineering:* Engineering is another strong Faculty at McMaster. They continue to be an innovator in engineering education and strive to meet institutional initiatives such as Forward with Integrity. The Faculty has a really good relation with the McMaster Engineering Society (MES). Past VP Academics have been phenomenal and are really in

top of their stuff. MES representatives have great relationships with other staff in the Faculty as well. This great faculty society representation has caused for us (the MSU) to not be as active in the Faculty. With that said, there will be many other issues that you have better expertise on that you may find yourself weighing on from time to time.

*Social Sciences and Commerce:* Unlike the first two Faculties, I'm not sure as to why I didn't interact with this Faculty as much. Both of these Faculties have solid faculty societies but I am unsure and unaware about how their relationships with staff/faculty is – might be interesting to investigate. I have had minor interactions with both the Deans and Associate Deans and if you want to foster said relationships it might be worth doing, if you are interested in issues pertaining to them.

### *Science*

Having come from the Faculty of Science, my time in the MSS) and having fostered many great working relationships, I spent a lot of time focused on this Faculty. One of the major reasons why I weighed in heavily was because the Dean, Robert Baker, created a Faculty of Science Plan (after much consultation). This plan has set a plan for the next couple of years as to how the Faculty will evolve to address not only its growing deficit but also meet McMaster's vision. The plan includes some of the following items: revamping of the Life Science program; the elimination of the Medical Physics department; a restructure of TA allotment (more on the "Teaching Assistant Training" section); and the creation of a school of Interdisciplinary Studies. Once this plan was released, I drafted a response (which can be found on the server) and then met with Rob. I encourage you to ask the status of the implementation of this plan as this is impacting McMaster's largest Faculty. Lastly, I met with the Dean to also discuss issues with contract instructors.

### *Humanities*

My interactions with the Faculty started when I was University Affairs Commissioner and Spencer Graham ensured that I became involved with the 'Transforming the Humanities' taskforces. From there I got really well acquainted with department heads, Anna Moro – Associate Dean, and ultimately Ken Cruikshank, the Dean. What motivated me to be so passionate about Humanities was the unjust stigma that Humanities students feel regarding their degrees; this coming from not only society but their peers. I think that a Humanities degree, not only allows a student to develop great skills, but also contributes greatly to society. With that said, it is no secret that the Faculty has various problems: very small and stretched budget, not a lot of course offerings, not a lot of experiential education opportunities, etc. Through 'Transforming the Humanities' many recommendations were made, some of which are going to be implemented come September. For example, there will now be two new mandatory courses for first years that deal with inquiry and communication skills. Aside from the academic skill development, they will also provide a sense of community to these students – something that was much needed. Additionally, I also helped and had many discussions with both Anna and Ken about many issues. They really want to improve the experience for Humanities students – I enjoyed these relationships. I encourage you to reach out to them and see how you can help.

## University Budget Submission

I have included an excerpt from Spencer's report. I think this is something that the MSU should be doing and something that the whole board needs to work together if it's something you want to do.

*"Something that this year's board thought of too late was having greater formal influence on McMaster's budget. This was mostly inspired by our government submission for the provincial budget, and essentially we figured – why not do the same for the university's budget? Since it was too late in the budget to do this, Jeff and I wrote a Prez Page on the university budget and how it should prioritize undergraduate-focused issues like experiential education, space, entrepreneurship, teaching-stream faculty, etc. So essentially what you guys should do (mainly you and the President, but VP Finance and Admin too, if they want to!) is borrow the same idea and pick 4-5 high priority items that require more money, and make the case for them, both through a formal submission in booklet form, but also through a formal presentation to PVPD.*

*Why is this important? Effective advocacy requires processes where we can repetitively hammer home our priorities and reach a large audience. With one presentation/submission will be able to simultaneously influence:*

- *The President's high-level priorities;*
- *The Provost's discretionary pool of funding for academics;*
- *The VP University Advancement's project/donations priorities;*
- *The VP Administration's priorities when it comes to food, space, the bookstore, printing, etc.*
- *PVPD's collective control over the University Fund;*
- *The deans' strategic priorities and departmental allocations.*

*Here is a timeline of how this could work:*

- *August: Begin to develop priorities and do research: Why is this important? How much is already being spent on this?*
- *September: Assemble the packages and presentation with your communications team. Wooder has now been through this with the government submission, so he will know what is expected.*
- *(Late) October: Have the board do your formal presentation to PVPD, and accompany this (timing-wise) with a public release and promotion of our pre-budget submission (advocacy campaign, prez page, social media, you know). This is around the time when various managers are beginning to assemble their budgets for approval in January and February. Spend no longer than 10-15 minutes presenting, and prepare for questions from the group. Demonstrate your understanding of how the university and the budget work. Be respectful, but don't let anyone on PVPD try to make you feel like you don't know what you're talking about.*
- *(Early) November: Follow up by sending along a 1-2 page letter to the next PVPD that thanks them for their time and subtly reminds them of our priorities.*
- *December: Seek out the students who sit on budget committee (the info should be online). Find them, bring them together for a meeting where you explain what the MSU is doing with the budget presentation/submission.*
- *January: Now, budget committee overlooks each department's expenditures. Get them to show you the budget and examine it with them as soon as they receive it. Remind them that they are accountable to students and to question the budgetary decisions - for example, if certain decisions were/weren't made, ask questions and hold the university accountable.*

- February: Follow up with individual administrators who made interesting budgetary decisions (i.e. those who took our recommendations, or those who chose not to).
- April/May: Release a press release about the budget when it comes through Senate and Board of Governors. Praise good decisions. Be critical when the university missed opportunities. Let the Provost know what your messaging will be beforehand."

### **McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)**

For background – the MSAF was actually created back during the H1N1 crisis to allow students to not come to campus without physically coming in. After that, the MSAF continued being offered at McMaster. As you know during Term 2, the Dean of Students, formed a committee to re-evaluate the use and purpose of the MSAF (you can find the agenda and minutes on your email/server). One of the things that bothered me was that the MSU was not brought into the conversation until the last meeting. By that point, the Associate Deans had already made up their mind regarding the changes. For reference here were the three changes: 1) the change of name to include non-medical reasons – great change; 2) the change of the percentage gap from 30% to 25% - not very opiated for this; MSAF's in the range of 25-30% had minimal implementation but this could also allow for midterms to have lesser percentages 3) the change from 5 days to 3 days – the bad change.

The last change was the most controversial and the one the MSU is most against (I will not talk about the SRA motion, because in my opinion, it is was redundant, unnecessary and made uniformed). Taking a step back, in the previous change the 5 day period did not include weekends and thus if a student timed it right, a period of 7 days could be created. This was an administrative nightmare. Regardless I do not think that the reduction to 3 days was beneficial to students nor did it acknowledge those students who actually need an MSAF. I tried suggesting changing it to 5 days *including the weekend*, since recovery of a physical or mental concern does not halt during the weekend. For the first time in the job, I felt my voice was not even being acknowledged. Despite the MSU's opposition, undergraduate council passed this. With that said, after talking to Sean, nothing can be formally done for this year. I still encourage you to keep a line of communication with him and re-open this conversation.

### **Admin Con**

Admin Con is a very cool and unique opportunity that you all should take advantage of. It is one of the few times when so many of higher administration will be in one room. In attendance you have Patrick, Mary Williams (VP University Advacement), Roger Couldrey (VP Admin), David Wilkinson (VP Academics and Provost), Arshad Ahmad (AVP Teaching and Learning), Sean Van Koughnett (AVP Students and Learning and Dean of Students), and Susan Searls-Giroux (AVP Faculty).

For us, we used these meetings to update each other on big projects that we were focusing on but also used it as informal lobbying. If there was an issue that pertained to a specific admin, we had always brought it up before. Do not put them on the stop – not good, also not polite.

One of the cool things last year that occurred from this was David's and Roger's suggestion to make a report on 'unconventional learning spaces' and then submit it to them. This was a cool research task between Joe, Alan and I. When I submitted it they gave really good feedback. Things like this are cool since they originate in Admin Con, and once it's finished, everyone is happy. (Note: you can find the report on the server).

## **Library Advisory Council**

If you didn't know McMaster actually has two library systems; the health sciences library and the library (comprised of Thode, Mills, and Innis). Since the MSU has minor interaction with Health Sciences, we only interact with the Library system. Thus, the Library Advisory Council acts as the body that the Vivian, the University Librarian, reports the activities and projects that Thode, Mills and Innis are up to. This group meets once per term. The membership is quite diverse and it is a great networking opportunity.

In my first meeting, it was brought up that the Library was doing their plan for the next couple of years. I was asked to bring students to a consultation meeting to talk about the library, many SRA members went (including Dan), and I think they really took their input greatly. I would follow up with Vivian and see the status of this.

## **MOSAIC**

MOSAIC was the answer we were all waiting for, the thing that would save us from MUGSI and SOLAR. Unfortunately, that was not the case. In all honesty MOSAIC is not that bad, it has all the solutions that we wanted but the transfer of systems was not as smooth as everyone hoped for. Things like online transcripts, better student information and course registration have been implemented and hopefully will work. As I mentioned to you times before, the transfer of MOSAIC, did slow down the admission process – this will hopefully be resolved by next year.

Every month last year, Melissa Pool and Wanda McKenna came to inform John, Scott and I about updates on the implementation. One of the most important meetings was about the communication strategy for students – we gave feedback and it worked out really great. You may want to continue these meetings since it worked out pretty well.

Something that you might be interested in doing is how you want to approach gathering student feedback on MOSAIC. It is apparent that students want to voice how they felt about the transaction. Plus since course registration hasn't really happen, which will be a challenge, you will need to find a way that students can voice things with.

## **TA Training**

TA Training – the beast that the MSU has had to deal with for the last couple of years. In the ideal world, Teaching Assistants would be trained before starting the job; they would have undergone sensitivity/anti-oppression training as well as pedagogical training. Alas, that does not happen. The MSU knows that the student experience in the classroom is deeply affected by the quality of a TA. So how do we address that?

Last year David and Spencer tackled TA training by interacting with MIETL and coming up with a certificate that TA's could take to improve their teaching skills. This was pretty successful except for one thing – it was optional and not mandatory. Which means this only really impacted a couple dozen TA's. Whenever opportunities such as this come up, the converted are often the only ones who come. Trying to reach the target population of those who are unengaged is hard.

This year I had many conversations with the Provost regarding this. Because of the mentality of CUPE, he informed me that if any training was going to occur, it needs to be paid. When you take this into account and multiply it by the number of TA's by their wage – it becomes a lot of money. One suggestion that you might want to look at is reallocating the 130 hours a term that TA's get and re-allocate those hours to expand more than the 3 hours of mandatory workplace training. This would mean that the

instructor would have to look at ways that the TA work less hours and then have more training.

In regards to the two types of training, anti-oppression/sensitivity and pedagogical, I would prioritize the former. I heard from QSSC many times that TA's would not use preferred pronouns or would use oppressive languages. This is not acceptable. How are students expected to learn if they are not feeling safe in the classroom? In my opinion no matter how great of teachers they are, if a student doesn't feel safe, the student will not learn anything in the classroom. I also feel strongly about the fact that this training is making the TA be a nice, reasonable and decent human being. Why is it the responsibility of any employer to ensure their employees are decent human beings? If the TA's are not, then they should not be employed in the first place. Alas, that is just my opinion.

Something that did have a lot of progress this year was TA training in the Faculty of Science. Dean Rob Baker, as part of the Science Plan, relooked at how TA's serve the Faculty. He looked at how TA's are allocated teaching assignments. Often this was done randomly – as long as graduate student got a TA-ship, everything was good. Many problems with TA's can be created when the TA has little knowledge or experience with the course content. By looking at how TA's are assigned their teaching loads, maybe better teaching experiences will occur. Most importantly, he wants to create a culture where instructors are in constant communication with the TA's. Unfortunately there are instance when the TA ONLY meets with the instructor at the beginning of the term and at the end – something which should not be occurring. By ensuring that instructors have a great communication and support system with the instructors TA's can get help and perform better than if they were not supported. I really like this and I spoke with the Provost to bring these changes up to the other Deans. I encourage you to follow this approach.

Since this year is also contract negotiations, you will find yourself in a position that is pretty lucky and fortunate position to be in. I am excited to see how you expand the work that the MSU has done for this.

## **Student Affairs**

Student Affairs is the university department that the MSU has the most interactions with. Within Student Affairs you have the following units: Student Wellness Center (SWC), Student Accessibility Services (SAS), Athletic and Recreation, the Registrar, Admissions, Recruitment, Housing and Conference Services, International Student Services, and Off-Campus Resource Centre. Student Affairs provides services that are outside the purview of Faculties. All board members will interact with Sean and Gina. With Sean I interacted whenever it was Ombuds related or with the MSAF. I was involved with the preliminary conversations surrounding career services and Sean was the lead in that. Gina and I worked together with the Mac's Money Centre.

Here are the following departments/initiatives that I interacted with last year.

### *Mac's Money Centre*

This is a project that I did not think I would get involved in. Spencer and Gina had talked about it in his year but nothing had really materialized. After solidifying some money to hire assistants, Gina really wanted to mobilize this initiative. I was able to provide lots of guidance for this and what information would be relevant to have on the website. I participated in lots of meeting to ensure if Enriched Academy would be useful for McMaster students. Jess organized the 'Dollar Daze' week with Gina and I thought it was pretty successful, we provided the people power and student affairs provided all the

materials. Marauder's Den was an event that we collaborated on and it was one of our most successful events, perhaps due to Bruce Croxon coming to talk (past Dragon's Den dragon), and it was really well received. You may want to integrate the Mac's Money Centre website to talk about financial assistance through your Talk Tuition point.

#### *Student Wellness Centre (SWC)*

While I did not necessarily do any projects with SWC, I had a really great relationship with Rosanne Kent, the Director of SWC. SWC provides all the counselling that was very relevant with my involvement in Mental Health. One of my initial projects when I was in UA was to get a Registered Dietician in SWC – while this is definitely beneficial to students, the emphasis on mental health halted my progress here.

#### *Student Accessibility Services (SAS)*

I had a previous relationship with Tim Nolan, the director of SAS, and he guided me a lot of my knowledge regarding Accessibility. SAS is only funded through the government and thus the service they provide is limited by government funding. They also get a lot of criticism due to the fact that 'accessibility' is in their name, and everyone assumes they should fix all the accessibility issues on campus. The reality is that SAS is only in charge of academic accommodations. I suggest you try to find opportunities to work together.

#### *Spectrum*

This is another one of Spencer's babies. He invested a lot of time to ensure that there was funding for this so McMaster could be exposed to entrepreneurial opportunities. I will admit, I do not have an entrepreneurial way of thinking, so I did not get as involved as you probably will. With that being said I did help the program out by ensuring that as many of their events were in 1280. 1280 can provide a more informal environment for people to network and learn about entrepreneurship. With your entrepreneurial interest Spectrum will be a great partner for you.

#### *Student Services Committee*

The student services committee oversees the allocation of the services that the Student Services Fees covers. In particular: Career Services, Counselling Services, Athletics and Recreations, SLEF and USIF. This committee is comprised of four universities representatives and four MSU representatives. This year our biggest project was re-writing the CAF agreement to ensure that undergraduates are also

# Vice-President Finance Transition Report 2015

By Scott Mallon

This transition report is a comprehensive review of job requirements of the Vice-President Finance of the McMaster Students Union, drawn from bylaws and operating policies as well as past practices. Topics covered include duties of the role, reporting, committee responsibilities, the SRA, human resources, and ongoing projects.

## Overview

Dear Mr. Vice President,

Congrats on the swanky new job! This year will be filled with ups and downs but by the end of it you will walk away from the hallowed halls of MUSC 201 a changed person.

The role of VP Finance is the most technically demanding and exhaustive positions on the Board of Directors. You will constantly making decisions on a daily basis that could have a large impact on the organization as a whole. Whether it is supporting a hundred thousand dollar renovation or approving a volunteer recognition dinner for fifty bucks there is going to be an impact on the performance and morale of the MSU as a whole. With that being said, make sure to not overthink everything you do. You are in the position for a reason, so trust your decision making abilities and run with it.

The other three Board members will be your rocks, best friends, worst enemies, etc but make sure to take time to get to know and appreciate all the staff and volunteers of the MSU. They are the ones that make your vision a reality. The full time staff have great stories and smiles so get to know them. Most of them also enjoy a cold beer or nice glass of wine.

This transition report is by no means exhaustive but I hope you can use it for whatever you need. If it is simply a document for you to learn what not to do that would be fine too as it will be the ramblings of an old, washed up university staffer now.

Always be you,

Scott Mallon

Vice President Finance and CFO, McMaster Students Union 2014-2015

## The Basics of the Job

### ***The Vice-President Finance of the MSU***

That's your job title: you are the MSU VP Finance and the Chief Financial Officer of MSU Inc. (pretty bad ass). You have many specific duties, and I will get to those, but first I want to start with a general description of the professional role you will be assuming.

Vice-President Finance

*5.1 The Vice-President (Finance) shall:*

*5.1.1 Be elected by the SRA from the membership of the MSU;*

...

*5.1.3 Hold office from May 1 to April 30;*

...

*5.1.7 Be a voting member of the SRA and the Executive Board, and an official observer of all other MSU committees;*

*5.1.8 Chair the Silhouette Board of Publication;*

*5.1.9 Under the direction of the SRA, maintain the books of account of the MSU;*

...

*5.1.16 Establish, with the aid of the Clubs Administrator, criteria for clubs grants based on the constitutional goals of the clubs and the MSU;*

...

*~MSU bylaw 5 – Officers*

You are the face of the organization from a financial standpoint. This includes anything that is related to money - which surprisingly includes just about everything. At the SRA you will be expected to respond to the financial performance of all of our services, as well as spending that is very far from your control. This is why it is important to be engaged with all of our services and businesses, as it will reflect extremely poorly if you are not aware of why a certain service spent money the way that they did.

As VP-Finance I took a large role in the Human Resources side of the MSU. This included being the Board member liaising with the General Manager on all issues related to compensation and HR policy. This is a delicate, but important role. It is extremely important that we compensate our employees well, while also maintaining the proper balance that is needed in our organization. Getting to know the concerns of the full time staff is extremely important to the success of the MSU as a whole. Being on the full time issues committee was a great way for me to add my two cents to the long term plan for the MSU and the staff members appreciate seeing an engaged Board member at those meetings.

You will also be responsible to the university about how the MSU spends our money. We have not had any problems in the past, but I think that this is becoming increasingly relevant with the temperature and university climate towards student groups. Processes are put in place in the MSU to ensure that money is spent properly, and I suggest that you defend the processes

fervently to university administration. Don't let them push you around. Stand firm when necessary but realize that it is give and take and don't waste your time fighting useless battles.

### **Chief Financial Officer**

3. *The Vice-President (Finance) shall:*

a) *Be the Chief Financial Officer;*

~ *MSU Constitution*

5.1 *The Vice-President (Finance) shall:*

...

5.1.10 *Present financial statements for all MSU organizations as requested by the Executive Board and supply actual account balances or budget balances to the SRA, given five (5) business days notice and the availability of the information;*

5.1.11 *Prepare for approval and administer the preliminary and annual budgets and the budget review of the MSU;*

5.1.12 *Have the financial records of the clubs audited;*

5.1.13 *Be responsible for reviewing the work of the Accounting Department;*

5.1.14 *Update the Accounting Procedures Manual and ensure that it is being followed;*

5.1.15 *Act as the custodian of MSU funds, have the right to suspend budgets (except those of the President and Vice-Presidents) until the next SRA meeting, have the right to suspend signing authority (except those of the President and Vice Presidents) until the next Executive Board meeting for Part-Time Staff or the next Board of Directors meeting for Full-Time staff; such meetings are to be held within three (3) business days of suspension;*

~*MSU bylaw 5 – Officers*

This is the real financial side of the role. As a corporate officer you are duty-bound (and legally bound) to act in the best interest of the corporation.

A lot of the tasks outlined in bylaw 5 are done for you through the accounting office. If you want, you could cruise, and let the accounting department look after anything, but ultimately, it is you that is responsible for their work. Any spending that is made by any part of this organization will be reflective of you in your role, not matter how involved you were in the process. My advice to you is to be as diligent as possible, and try to thoroughly look over all documents that are going across your desk.

### **Corporate Treasurer**

This terminology has largely fallen out of use, but it still appears on some legal documents and needs to be mentioned. Most corporations will have a structure that consists of a president, a vice-president or secretary, and a treasurer. The MSU is a bit of an exception, but you will still be considered the corporate treasurer for the MSU (and, incidentally, for CFMU). You are a paid employee in your capacity as MSU VP Finance; your role as corporate treasurer is *pro bono* but your tasks therein are a part of your job as VP Finance. This is mostly a technical distinction, but it's kind of a nice idea.

## ***The Board***

Love them. Hate them. Appreciate them. Work with them. The four of you do not have to agree on everything but you need to make sure you stay a team on all issues. Find a compromise and run with it. We were never all in favour of a 4 day fireworks extravaganza but we were able to get to a spot that turned into an unbelievable event. These people can also keep you sane. Vent in Board meetings. You cannot let things build up, especially between the four of you. If there is an issue, either professional or personal, work it out ASAP as every day you spend not working together is hurting the organization.

## ***President***

This person is head of the organization. The MSU structure is a bit strange in that the President is not “higher” than the VPs, but they are the elected official with the mandate given to them by the student body. I like to think that the students like the President’s vision and the VPs make that a reality.

I worked with Teddy a lot this year in keeping his ideas grounded. Mr. Dream Big was always throwing out crazy ideas and I always took the time to hear him out and then found ways to make his dream or some form of it happen. When you need to, work with the President and the accounting team to find alternatives. With all that being said, I am not sure you will have a similar situation this year as Ehima ran on an advocacy platform but you still need ways to fit your portfolio into his ideas. Always make sure that you and the Chief are on the same page.

## ***Vice President Administration***

If you do not have constant communication with them the MSU will turn to a huge pile of crap. You two will be in the office more than the other two could ever dream of so make sure that you hold down the fort. Talk about everything from PTMs to WW. Bounce ideas off of each other because you will often have a lot of overlap on your projects and you want to make sure that you are not being played for chumps. PTMs will sometimes try to get one of you to say yes to something that the other already shot down so make sure that you know what is going on. Always have a brief before every meeting to make sure you are on the same page and be sure to include other MSU staff that are in those meetings.

## ***Vice President Education***

Also known as VP Travel and Tourism, the VP Education spends a lot of time out of the office. With the amount of time that the VP Ed is gone, you do not develop the same professional relationship that you do with the VP-Admin or even the President. But you should make an effort to stay engaged with what they are up too, no matter how boring it may be. In addition, you should try to stay as engaged as possible on PSE issues. Having a board that is well versed in all issues across all portfolios will only make you appear stronger. If there is something specific that you are passionate about in their portfolio (i.e. transit) take a leadership role on it.

## **Important Information**

In my mind, the most valuable thing that can be passed on to you in the transition report is identifying ongoing issues that require the attention of the Vice-President Finance. These are issues that you may have addressed in your platform, or other issues that have flown under the radar and must be addressed. I have spoken anecdotally to you about most of these issues, but I would like to take the time to formally bring them to light, and hopefully keep them on your radar for this year. These include broad issues with MSU services that I wanted to bring to your attention, or specific projects that will need to be completed.

### ***TwelvEighty***

This was my favourite thing to monitor all year. 1280 will give you violent mood swings but it is a blast. The team there is so dedicated to success and are genuinely excited to make money that they will never see. Make sure you feed that fire. The renovations could really help turn 1280 back into the campus **bar**. Not the restaurant where lunch is packed everyday but the bar where people have drinks in the evening and hang out. This is the key to 1280 success. Food sales are unreal and are near capacity and club nights are making a comeback but if 1280 is to break even they need evening traffic. Do what you can and empower the staff to make it happen.

### ***Union Market***

Hooria is a star. Robyn was too. The store is finished and ready to grow. The walk in fridge will help. Continue to push to grow the store. It is our most reliable so feel free to take some risks.

### ***Underground***

Design. Design. Design. Push Sandro and Lesley to get more and more jobs. We have the best designers on campus and that is where the money is now. As printing of your typical assignments dies push the media side more and more. LFP, pull-up banners, advertising, etc. That is where the money is.

### ***CFMU***

CFMU is a fun radio station run by very hard working employees. It is a community hub that is very well respected. The only challenge is how to grow the station on campus. Push the staff to do that. It is not the radio station that can be left on all day in public spaces but rather you need to find a way to get the people who will listen to the shows to tune in. Good luck, it will be hard.

## ***Child Care Centre***

From Jeff but still relevant: *I believe that there are creative opportunities available to the MSU to partner with the University or other stakeholders to deliver Child Care to McMaster students in a more efficient way than we are doing it right now. Currently, all of the undergrads at McMaster subsidize who uses the Child Care Centre, and that just is not right. We need to think outside the box about how we can deliver this service in a sustainable way that meets the needs of McMaster students. We could also even consider having a discussion about whether Child Care is a service that the MSU should even offer. At the end of the day, having a child is a choice, and we should probably ask ourselves if students should subsidize individual choices made by their peers or members of the McMaster community.*

## ***Compass***

The renovations will help draw more people in. Compass is not supposed to make money. It is a zero cost. Keep it around that area. Help Debbie in any way you can. She comes up with a lot of secondary sources of revenue since GO went to presto. Learn them all from her and then work with her to grow the desk.

## **Services**

Services are an extremely important part of the MSU, and as VP-Finance you will interact closely with them. I would like to bring a few things to your attention.

### ***Consistency Across Services***

Services tend to develop a culture where it becomes negative to the service. They are not able to grow because of ingrained thoughts passed on by previous managers. Do what you can to change these as they inhibit the potential of the services. Some key areas are surrounding large expenditures on volunteer recognition, free food, executive perks, clothing, or excessively large one off events. Check receipts and discipline where necessary.

### ***Evolution of Services (Or Lack Of)***

Make sure it actually happens. SHEC, CLAY, PSL, Shine, Farmstand, MacGreen, Breadbin, etc etc etc. Where will they go? Work with PTMs and ask some tough questions at EB. It is necessary to ensure we are staying with student need.

### ***A Voice of Reason***

Often I think the VP-Finance plays a balancing act on the board, as they can provide the financial and corporate perspective to some of the ideas floated by other board members. This is true as well when discussing how services are evolving, or the creation of new services. Remember that it is your role to ensure that student money is

being spent **properly** and **efficiently**. If there is a clear duplication, you need to represent the needs of students and provide leadership from a financial perspective. You can say no. Make sure you do. It will work out better. You don't always have to be the good guy but more importantly the voice of reason.

### ***Outdoor Rink***

Figure out liability and you will have a rink. Don't and no one will care after a week.

## **Corporate Issues**

There are several corporate issues that impact the MSU's ability to function effectively as an organization. I thought I would take some time to walk you through them.

### ***Corporate Structure***

The General Manager position has not grown with the MSU. There needs to be a review of the structure to limit the amount of direct reports that John receives. If you continue on like it is now and John leaves our success could leave with him. Whether it is a business manager or assistant GM or restructuring of other roles, there needs to be something.

## **University Issues**

### **University-MSU Business Overlap**

A number of MSU Businesses overlap with University Businesses:

- Union Market with La Piazza
- TwelvEighty with Paradise Catering
- Underground with Media Printing Services

Chris Roberts is an angel. He legitimately wants to work with you to make campus food services better. He also loves competition. It is an awesome dynamic to have so keep it going. It pushes our services to better and theirs to be cheaper so regardless students are winning. Underground and MPS/Campus Store battle is nuts. Stand firm. Make a concession here and there and know that we are better than they are in every way. Dee will tell you that the prices are lies at Underground because we don't pay rent or utilities. That is true. But we also put up \$20M for the building so we'll call it even.

### ***Risk Management***

As we are all aware, the University is taking steps to tighten up risk management. Do not let this become risk adverse. It is so painful to work with the university in this regard because they are scared to do anything. Concerts, bedracers, ice rink, etc. Make sure you keep all that you can. There is inherent risks with any event that is run but as long as you do everything to mitigate them then you are doing just fine. Also make sure it doesn't fringe on the whole student

autonomy thing. You will have to fight for faculty societies too because they don't have the ear or respect of university admin.

## ***Financial Autonomy***

Coming out of the Redsuit investigation, the university announced more oversight of the Redsuits finances. This is a trend that is worrisome, and something that as VP-Finance, you need to ensure does not happen to the MSU. You need to keep tirelessly defending the role and autonomy of student unions, and be willing to fight loudly and publicly if it is encroached upon. Also it is better for you to crack the whip on the FS before the university does. They will often rather listen to your direction. They should all be using a bookkeeper after this year. Have fun with the roll out of the reporting policy.

## **MSU Staff**

*This section contains confidential information and is included in a separate, confidential report.*

## **University Relationships**

*This section contains confidential information and is included in a separate, confidential report.*

## **Tools are from Jeff. I highlighted anything of importance.**

Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.

On average, you will put more into this job than the 35 hours you get paid for if you are doing your job well. Fortunately, you have a lot of tools to help get work done.

### ***Microsoft Office***

The MSU network has the latest version of the Microsoft Office suite. I'm impressed enough with the software that I think it deserves notice: for example, you can publish your reports as .pdf files, make fancy powerpoint presentations, draft budgets in excel, email word documents directly through Outlook, or create nifty transition reports with cover pages and tables of contents that link to the appropriate sections (as long as the network lets you follow the links). If you talk to Pauline Taggart you may qualify for one of 60 home use licenses that the MSU owns (or used to own... I never looked into this), and since you may end up doing a lot of MSU-related work from outside the office it might be something you want to look into. On a side note, sometimes the MSU dumps old IT equipment and you may be able to pick some stuff up for free.

As an aside, the computer-based work you do will go much faster if you can learn the hotkeys and ways to maximize your efficiency. I spent three summer work terms working on excel, so I quickly transitioned onto the platform. I am not sure of your computer literacy, but if you take the time to learn how to use the program, you will only be more efficient. The same goes for Great Plains. I had no experience on Great Plains, but taking time to learn its intricacies will only make you better at your job.

## ***Emails***

You have the [vpfinance@msu.mcmaster.ca](mailto:vpfinance@msu.mcmaster.ca) account now. It comes complete with years of emails from previous VPs. I personally am not very organized, so I did not spend much time organizing my email (except for big projects like the budget) but if organization is your thing, you will benefit from setting up a lot of folders. I know this has worked well for certain people, and you may as well try it out.

You can check the email pretty easily from the office or the committee room computers. To check it from any computer not part of the MSU network, type in msumail.mcmaster.ca into a browser and then log in. There are differences between browser access and network access. I'm not a huge fan of the browser interface, it is kind of confusing for attaching files and whatnot, and there are a few features that you can't access remotely, but I am sure you will use it occasionally.

## ***P:\BOD\_PRIV***

This is your shared folder on the MSU network, which only the Board has access to. It's got a lot of useful files that can give you a sense of the history of the organization as well as providing templates for your reports and other documents. You can only access these files from a computer on the MSU network. You will see most of my files in the 2014-15 folder. You will find this helpful for digging up documentation for projects that are outstanding. I think I did a pretty good job of saving most of my stuff to the network. **Put a shortcut to your folder on the desktop!!!**

## ***Website***

You probably won't need to spend much time on the website, but you may want to update your profile page and all the finance-related pages. It doesn't take much to keep this up-to-date, so you should update it whenever new information becomes available. You can also lean on the Communications Officer and Wooder to come up with creative ideas of ways that you should update and communicate what you are up to in your role.

## ***Expense Account***

Some lines of the MSU budget are devoted to your use. **Use your expense account to thank staff and recognize excellence.** In general the Executive spreadsheet outlines what to spend money on, so I won't go into too much detail. If you decide to purchase something, you will need to fill out a purchase order (PO) form. These are pretty self-explanatory, but if you have questions just ask around (easiest is Maggie, Marn or Kevin) for the details. It doesn't really happen often; mostly you'll be signing them.

### **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**

Outlook is our mail server. There is an additional program installed called Xobni to help you with filing your emails (mentioned this earlier. Feel free to ask around if you can't figure out how to use anything relating to email). This program automatically categorizes emails by sender and provides a reduced list of links and attachments that they have sent you. I used this in lieu of a topical folder system because most of my (and your) projects are with particular people rather than on particular subjects.

I recommend synching Outlook to your mobile device so you can check emails at home. You'll be in the office most of the time but it's helpful to be able to keep up to date on things when you're away.

## ***Great Plains***

Great Plains is our accounting software. While you don't need more than a cursory knowledge of how to operate this software the more you know about it the more you will be able to do with finances. You should know how to approve purchase orders and send them via email (I've left written instructions along with screenshots in your transition materials) as well as track down documents that are archived in the system. You should be able to locate a document by PO number, vendor ID number, department code/budget line, and date, because sometimes you'll have only one of these pieces of information available. Any questions about Great Plains can be directed to Maggie.

## ***FRx***

FRx is one element of our accounting software. It is quite useful for publishing reports and financial statements but is cumbersome and difficult to navigate. A software update should be coming out in the next year that might help with this. I recommend becoming familiar with how to design budget templates so that you can adjust the format as you'd like. If you're going to change anything talk to Maggie first, since any changes that you make to the formatting will likely affect the entire system. There are also some fields that you should not adjust because doing so will cause some pretty severe meltdowns in the software and you may lose data permanently. TL;dr: don't mess with FRx.

### **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**

Your extension is 24109. Spend a while learning how to transfer calls, access your voicemail, and change your voicemail message. You also have a long-distance access code which will come in handy. Knowing how to use your phone will make you look competent, whereas not knowing how to use it will make you look like a fool. Try to avoid that. This information is all available on the McMaster website through UTS.

### **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**

Your mailbox is on the top row in the cupboard by the front desk. Check it daily as it will often have time-sensitive information in it. You will receive cheques and POs in your office and on your computer but financial statements from our bank accounts and club applications will be put in your mailbox.

## **Full Time Staff**

Easily your most important tool. If you do not support them and help them grow and generally get to know them as people you will accomplish nothing. If you do everything on your platform this year but don't know the names of the full timers then you have failed. In my eyes the only way you could fail in this role is through disregarding them. It will take time but simply popping in to say hello will go along way.

## **Conclusion**

Teddy left me this quote on day 1 last year:

“If you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.”

You will do things the same. You will do things differently. At the end of the day you will do it right. Enjoy the time you have here as you will never have anything like it again. Find your rocks and hold on tight.

I am only a short walk away if you ever need anything.

All my very best,

Scott

**Vice-President (Administration)**  
Transition Report (2014-2015)  
Prepared by: Jacob Brodka

**Prepared for:**  
Giuliana Guarna  
Vice-President (Administration) 2015-2016

Date of Submission: *Friday May 15, 2015*

## WELCOME

Giuliana,

Once again, congratulations on being elected as this year's Vice-President (Administration). I am confident that you are going to have a remarkable year. That said, prepare yourself for the adventure that will be the year ahead. Having already experienced the first 15-or-so days in office, I am sure you are starting to get a feel for the baseline responsibilities of the position. Work will come your way quickly, spontaneously and require your utmost attention - be sure to use your free time now to think thoroughly through your plans and the collective plans of your team. It will pay off later having a clear focus of what you want to accomplish.

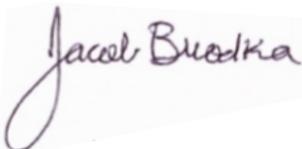
Throughout this report I have outlined for you as much information as possible relevant to the role. A lot of the core responsibilities of the VP-Admin position happen on an annual basis, which makes reports like this (and previous ones if you have a moment to scan them) valuable for historical context and lessons-learned. Beyond the information outlined in this report, I recommend taking a weekend or evening going through the computer server and binders left for you in your office. It is amazing what you can learn and see going through years of MSU history. If you are ever looking for inspiration for projects (training for example), skimming through past initiatives/ feedback is a great place to start.

The people around you is another important element (arguably the most important) of the position I want to emphasize: Part Time Managers, SRA, Commissioners, Full Time Staff, SOPs, Administrative Staff, university and community partners and administration - the list goes on and on. You interact with a very large number of groups and individuals, many of whom will come to you with questions, opportunities, etc - work hard, be attentive and be kind [be yourself] and these relationships will grow.

Lastly - be sure to not lose sight of your roots and reasons for being where you are. Have fun, take care of yourself and your team and embrace opportunities to learn and grow both personally and professionally. Remember to ask yourself, at this time next year, what will you be remembered for? Surely, it will be incredible things.

If you ever need me, feel free to email ([brodkajm@mcmaster.ca](mailto:brodkajm@mcmaster.ca)) or text/ call: 289-880-7123. I am always available - please don't hesitate to ask!

Have a fantastic term,



Jacob Brodka  
Vice-President (Administration) 2014-2015

## **THE MCMASTER STUDENTS UNION**

This section will highlight aspects of your specific role as well as larger MSU practices, policies and procedures.

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

#### *The Role:*

As the VP (Administration) you are a member of the Board of Directors (sometimes referred to as BoD). This means that you are responsible for all aspects of the McMaster Students Union. As I previously mentioned, outside of the specific unique projects you will choose to take on this year, you are expected to be knowledgeable about and execute on various core duties and aspects of the organization. It is important to take time to understand the inner workings of the organization so that you can adequately support those you supervise and interact with. This is especially important when trying to follow due-process with tasks and responsibilities.

In your role you will primarily focus on four main things:

#### **1. Part Time Managers:**

These are the student-staff managers that you immediately supervise. While support exists, you are responsible for HR, risk management, discipline, oversight, conflict resolution and generally supporting the Part Time Managers. This aspect of the job is the most difficult given the scope and diversity of services. You may have heard many folks (even me) talk about a “management style.” I wouldn’t overthink trying to develop a personal style; this will develop over time. One thing I would remind you to be cognizant of is the balance between personal and professional relationships with colleagues you both supervise and surround yourself with. They will come to you as friends and they will come to you as employees - be aware of the peer-supervising-peer element of the job at all times, especially with matters pertaining to employment, confidentiality, etc.

#### **2. SRA & Governance**

You are the Deputy Chair of the SRA and EB (take some time to polish up your Robert’s Rules of Order knowledge base). Be available and check in with Commissioners and SRA members. This past year, I was fairly reactive (an SRA member would come to me for help with a project) - you may want to take a more proactive approach to supporting these governance positions. Note that in the absence of the President, you fulfill expected duties.

#### **3. Welcome Week & Orientation**

You sit on all planning committees associated with Welcome Week: Welcome Week Planning and Implementation Committee (WWPIC) and Welcome Week Advisory Committee (WWAC). As we had a chance to quickly discuss, you should meet regularly

with the MSU team working on Welcome Week (Campus Events, etc) as well as the Faculty Cup and Residence Cup committees.

#### **4. General Student Life & Other**

There will be a wide range of projects that you will work on this year. Some of them you can anticipate (McMaster Student Leadership Conference) and others will come in time. If there is something you are passionate about doing, definitely consider it! This year, Teddy took lead on Frost Week, Homecoming and the Faculty Society Link Conference - you may want to have more of a role in these depending on Ehima's plans.

#### **5. Full Time Staff (Slowly Shifted Out of VP Admin Portfolio)**

Looking at the position historically, the VP Admin used to have a larger role in Full Time Staff issues (supposedly until Katie Ferguson's year). Since 2011-2012, these responsibilities have largely shifted over to the VP Finance. That being said, you will surely interact with them regularly if you choose to. If you aren't necessarily working with Full Time Staff members, be sure to make time in your week to engage with them. We would "manage by walking around" - allotted time where we did a walk-through of the business units/ services to just check in. We would also organize small socials outside of regular monthly full time staff meetings. I encourage you to do something similar with your team - especially early in the term when work is quieter and relationships are being built. Note that full time staff-related duties and responsibilities may also change given the interest expressed in exploring HR. There is also a full time staff issues committee for your reference (ask John/ Jess for context related to dynamics of this committee).

### **UNIQUE TRADITIONS**

There are some VP Admin traditions that you can choose to continue:

1. *Candy Bowl*: This is something that Anna D'Angela started. Stocking up a bowl in your office encourages visitors and is generally appreciated. One thing to note is that if you are going to have frequent visitors for a quick snack, be mindful of the confidential documents you may have lying around your desk/ the office. I also had many people break into my office to get candy - which was concerning for confidentiality-related reasons.
2. *Toy Shelf*: This shelf used to be to the right of the computer on your desk. It was overflowing with toys (a lot of junk too) - so I cleared it off and moved it to the large black shelf by the white board. Feel free to add to it if your heart desires. Whenever a visitor stopped by the office they would generally scope out the shelf and find something to play with. Funniest thing there is the small jar of mayonnaise (....I don't get it - but who am I to judge).
3. *Getting Dunked at the MSU Retreat*: This tradition may be lost but just in case, you get a heads up. The VP Admin always got thrown/ tipped out of their canoe into the water at the MSU Retreat. If it returns - be ready.

## BOARD MEMBER INTERACTIONS

You will spend a lot of time working with each other, making decisions together, challenging each other, etc. ***I recommend having a frank conversation about “infringing on portfolio’s” early on.*** You may already be experiencing (or noticing the other board members) being protective of what they perceive as being something that is solely their’s to handle. This can create an awkward working dynamic if you are not upfront about your thoughts. This is especially true for advocacy related objectives. I would avoid a “silo” approach to lofty goals - but that is up to you all to decide and handle. Clarity and willingness to speak will equate to your collective success - I can’t stress this enough.

Beyond this, while every team is different, here are some of my thoughts and an outline of general interactions:

### **President:**

As was previously noted, there are some regular duties that are shared (or done in lieu of the other being there) between the President and VP Admin. You fulfill presidential duties if Ehima is not present or is unable to do them. This includes chairing meetings (EB, etc) and making other executive decisions. Note that if you and Ehima are not present, EB can’t meet. Beyond these bylaw-related duties, it will be up to you to determine how much you want to assist or get involved in other presidential duties/projects. For example, this year I sat on the President’s Advisory Committee for Transportation and Parking because it was more of interest to me. Be sure not to take on too much and also remember that the President should not be prescribing duties to you. I suggest working with Ehima now on dividing up responsibilities.

*Historical note: In previous years, the VP (Admin) was also advised to be “the first line of defence” for the President when it comes to things like the SRA (i.e. John McIntyre, 2011-2012 VP (Admin) believed that the President should never have to defend themselves or the organization at the SRA, but it should be the VP (Admin) taking charge).* I am largely indifferent about this mindset. While it is important to have a united front for the majority of things you will push forward (sorting out concerns and questions behind closed doors) - you should also have personal principles that you uphold.

Your office is connected via the open window at the moment. It was closed for confidentiality; since the walls of your office don’t go up to the ceiling the impact was minimal. I will note that it was nice to chat through the window at the end of our term - but to each their own.

### **VP (Finance):**

There is a running joke that the VP (Admin) and (Finance) run the MSU. Given the overlap in responsibilities - you should regularly be discussing service finances and services in general. If any issue arises, you should both be aware (especially related to

expenses). Part Time Managers in the past have gone to one for a decision, been rejected, then gone to the other. Be sure to have a united front on decisions associated with services and service budgets. One of the most difficult things to do is tell a PTM “no.” In general, PTMs are good - but you may encounter finance-related “no’s.” Since you are both on the same page with what services are up to, you may also find yourself using Dan as a soundboard for ideas and thinking through problems.

You will also work with the VP (Finance) on higher level Welcome Week matters since they sit on the Welcome Week Advisory Committee. This year, we were able to re-allocate the orientation levy; at the end of this year, be prepared to continue this discussion (it will surely be ongoing). The VP (Finance) also interacts with Faculty Societies to review levy expenditure prior to being sent to the University for review. Given that you and Dan have Welcome Week experience, I am confident you will do well. Remember to defend student autonomy and always keep in mind core principles related to student experience. Perfect example: Bed Racers - please don't give up on this.

### **VP (Education):**

If you have had a chance to review past transition reports, they may be riddled with accounts of the VP Ed. being “on an island.” Please take interest in the work of the VP (Education) and do not let the perceived culture of isolation persist. If there is something that you would genuinely like to contribute to, talk to Spencer and coordinate how you can help. For me, I was very invested in the conversations surrounding our membership with CASA.

Something to think about is that advocacy is in no way restricted to the education portfolio. Examples: By running business units with low costs, we push the university to offer better value. By offering peer-to-peer services, we demonstrate student need to the university for essential services. Our services advocate for student interests each and every day through the work they do. I was active in opposing this restrictive thought process that has been handed down.

Beyond general contributions to advocacy-related goals you will need to coordinate with Spencer an approach to supervising and working with TAC and Advocacy Street Team. This year, Rodrigo drove vision and direction-related matters while I was there to assist in general housekeeping and HR related matters (conflict resolution, being paid, etc).

This year, Rodrigo and I also organized Change Camp alongside the Community Engagement Coordinator and a planning committee (Spencer's transition document will likely have more info on who from the Network and university administration was involved). I encourage you help with the vision of Change Camp this year, but find a way to house more general task responsibilities of with others - it took up a lot of our time doing tasks that could have been handled by someone else (room bookings, etc).

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS (WEEKLY):**

The BoD meets weekly for approximately 2 hours. The General Manager (John McGowan) and Corporate Secretary (Jess Bauman) also sit in on these meetings. Note that they can be asked to excuse themselves if you are discussing matters confidential to them (their employment, etc). These meetings are minuted for the Board's reference - these minutes are not public. For this reason, you can speak very candidly about matters at hand. This should be the room and place where you sort out concerns and questions related to decisions and projects prior to going public. Take the time to thoroughly update the others on what it is you are working on so that there are no surprise initiatives/ decisions that show up without notice. Without initial consultation, it is not prudent to work on an initiative. I would use the Board Meeting as an opportunity to think through decision that were more large-scale. Remember that many perceive your actions as collective (the Board is a unit). As you had a chance to observe, we would go through project updates, update our "*highs, lows, roadblocks and excited-for*" moments from our respective schedules and then go through agenda items and action items. John and Jess are great resources to provide historical context on matters at hand. Engage with them as needed. We had a rule that no phones (slipped slightly as year went on) and laptops were allowed at the meetings. This was simply to make sure we are all attentive and efficient - this worked well. There is no reason to be checking email/ Facebook while in a meeting.

During Board meetings, the BoD will address a few different types of items. This list was inspired in part by the list provided in the Transition Report created by David Campbell, 2012-2013 VP (Administration) and Anna D'Angela (2013-2014).

1. *Procedural*: The BoD receives many things that are more procedural in nature, such as annual staff wage increases due to inflation, requests for benefit usage, and late Health/Dental opt-outs.
  - a. **Opt Outs**: You may have students who do not opt-out from the Health and Dental Plan on time or they are looking for extra coverage/exceptions to the plan. As the BoD, you have the authority to grant these exceptions. Jess will bring all necessary documentation to a Board Meeting. It is important early on to discuss the reasons why someone would be approved for a late opt-out so that you are making consistent decisions throughout the year. When we were first faced with decisions regarding opt-outs or coverage exceptions, we would look to John and Jess for advice on past precedent. While it was difficult to say no at times when students clearly outlined a need related to their personal health, it is not good practice to stray from policy. Encourage SRA members, MSU PR and PTMs to help promote the opt-out period in September to people are aware of what they are getting if they stay with the plan and what they are opting-out of (especially to minimize confusion between opting out of the GSA plan and the MSU plan, which does happen).
  - b. **FT/PT Fee Transfers**: You may get requests from students who are looking to change from FT to PT (to get their money back) or vice versa. There are certain stipulations about this procedure, outlined on the transferability agreement we have with MAPS. There is information under the [Info](#) section of the website on what a student can do. Usually, the General Manager will take

- the lead on this, but it would be good to clarify what is available, especially if students email you to ask or if you need such information (e.g. who is eligible to vote at our GA).
2. *Discussion:* Generally any discussion coming forward to the EB/SRA, or anything that we want feedback from the group can come forward as a simple discussion item on the agenda. It is great to get on the same page about upcoming SRA-related matters prior to SRA meetings.
  3. *HR:* Anything relating to full-time staff employment, or significant part-time staff issues. As well any significant complaints from students will end up being discussed. For significant full-time employment issues that are resulting in discipline or termination, the Board will generally meet privately with the General Manager first, but approve it at the BoD meeting once a direction is set. The Corporate Secretary should not be present in any discussions involving discipline or termination of full-time staff.

### **YEAR PLANS:**

You are required to submit a Year Plan to the SRA. Get started on this early as you and the other Board members should aim to have this completed in time for the first meeting in June. Be realistic about the Year Plan objectives you are bringing forward. While there is a large clause stating that objectives and priorities shift, many (aka the Silhouette) will see straying from this as failure to execute on your job. Include elements of your platform and any other collective initiatives you intend to work on. I would refer to my year plan throughout the term to get a feeling for progress. Hold the other board members accountable throughout the year by asking for updates. Also encourage other Board members to put thought into this document.

### **TRANSITION REPORTS AND TRANSITION WEEKEND:**

You are just starting this role, but at this time next year, you will be expected to make a document just like this one. Keep a document on your desktop throughout the year called "Transition Report Reminders." Whenever I learned something or wished I had done something differently, I would add a bullet to that word document. The year is long and ever changing - you don't want to forget anything!

For transition weekend, in the past it has been semi-structured. This year, Teddy took main lead on creating an itinerary with Jess. Consider getting the President-Elect and incoming team more involved in the process of preparing this weekend to assess areas of focus. The weekend we experienced together was largely the same as what we received - perhaps your team should put more formal work into it.

### **EXPECTATIONS AS BOARD MEMBERS:**

There are a number of general expectations you should sit down and discuss with the other board members early in the term. You are all representatives of the MSU, it is important to conduct yourselves similarly in whatever workspace a given day has you in.

### *Work Hours*

- It is important for you to be in your office whenever possible for drop-ins, signing documents, etc. Get on the same page with your Part Time Managers early regarding times to stop by the office as it can be frustrating for them to stop by only to see you unavailable/ not there. While your schedule is posted outside your door, it may be good to block off time for drop-ins. If you are using lieu time or are coming in late, communicate with other full time staff and even PT staff (people notice and it can impact staff morale).
- Letting others know (even via text) that you are running late is good - you don't want the others guessing where you are. For me, mornings were toughest.
- Plan ahead of time for how you will handle lieu time after SRA meetings/ weekend initiatives.
- Accept that there will be times when you will feel overworked/ have to put in more hours.
- Use your outlook calendar and book time off using the "Attendance Calendar" - ask Pauline or Jess for assistance if you can't locate this.

### *Conduct and Professionalism*

- My only point on this would be re-emphasizing the difficulty of separating the role from yourself in your personal time. I would try and avoid work-related conversations in social settings.

### *Vacation Time*

- Book off time in advance (your schedule will fill up quickly). If you are going to be away for an extended period of time, make Part Time Managers aware and (attempt) to check emails. I would avoid taking time off around Welcome Week, January/ February (hiring will consume most of your time).

### *Office Procedures*

- You have access to the MSU office (and many other MSU spaces) at all times. We would not allow folks to be in these spaces unsupervised by a board member.

### *Cell Phones/ Electronics*

- It is up to you whether you want to give your personal cell phone number to the PTM's. This year I did, and would get work related messages at all times of day/ night. It is great to be connected 24/7 - but it is also nice to escape.
- Try and keep your phone away in meetings. While it can be difficult to avoid incoming emails and messages, be attentive in the meetings you choose to attend.

This year, and in previous years, the VP Admin would send out an email to full time staff indicating all the expectations we (the board) set for ourselves as a method of accountability. Ex. *If you are not 5 minutes early, you are late. No cell phones in meetings, etc.* Consider doing something similar.

### **DEFEND THE BRAND:**

We have a visual identity guide. The communications team (Student Life Development Coordinator, Social Media Coordinator, Communications Officer, PR Assistant) take primary lead on branding and MSU representation. Branding and advertising is a huge for services. Keep an eye out for services and part time managers that are producing their own print and media materials that don't follow our guidelines. This past year, Maroons, SCSN, CLAY got a re-brand and WGEN had a logo created. Engage with Wooder to see what logos are left for updating.

### **STATE OF THE UNION:**

Every year the communications team and Board of Directors does a State of the Union address. Keep a document on your desktop and add to it throughout the year highlighting the things you are working on/ plan to work on. This will save you A LOT of writing come time to prepare the booklet prior to the January delivery. This year, we moved the address into the MUSC atrium which I think helped with traffic. I would engage with the team early to encourage writing ahead of time as well as thinking of other ways to promote. For example: I was hoping to have more social media and online media leading up to the address. I believe Dan also wants to do Town Hall events for the budget - chat with him to see how this will fit in relation to SoTU. This event really sneaks up on you - be sure to keep on top of writing.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY:**

As was noted previously, this is a very important element of the job given the supervisory and employment-related nature of tasks. There is a shredding box for documents you would like to destroy across from the communications officer's office. Lock your doors and consider locking confidential documents (hiring, contracts, etc) in the filing cabinet. Be mindful of notes and documents you leave around your office (if anything this encourages organization). Also be mindful of the things you say - the Board and family were who I would go to to vent.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES:**

I won't speak much about this because this is a project you are planning on working on this year. Engage with John to discuss the history of HR in the MSU.

### **THE COMMITTEE ROOM:**

Last summer we renovated the committee room and by doing so made it a much better workspace that staff and volunteers tend to use regularly. The boardroom in the committee room is bookable via Outlook so as to avoid conflict. Encourage cleaning up the space and ever so often do a quick clean of the space yourself. There is still quite a bit of junk behind the VP Finance and Ed offices from the renovation. Consider getting the PTMs to dispose of materials related to their service they no longer need. Example: The dishes from the old "dish-it-out" program by MacGreen can be donated somewhere.

The printer in this space works on and off. Consider replacing it or just encouraging use of the main office printer during regular business hours (which may be the better option to avoid excessive personal use for projects and assignments). There is a door code to get from the committee room to the main office - do not give it to anyone.

I didn't mind people using the space that weren't staff or volunteers as long as they were accompanied. That said, monitor personal use of the space as it is often these folks who leave behind garbage, etc.

### **COURTESY CARDS:**

I believe you already have this in the works. For some reason, these are a HUGE deal. Ensure only those eligible receive the cards and have them printed in large sets (instead of one-off cards from people losing them). I had a few blanks that I would fill in and give if that happened.

### **WELCOME WEEK:**

Having been involved in welcome week in the past in a variety of roles, you certainly are in a good spot to support the programming and general direction. My pieces of advice:

- Ensure that we are always equally represented in forms of communication. We have a new standardized welcome week logo, but the MSU logo should also be present.
- At the higher level WWAC, ensure that you are protecting the autonomy of student groups on campus (namely faculty societies). The purpose of the committee and the parameters they set in place should not be to interfere, rather, to set up and empower student groups and organizations to succeed. Have a keen eye for this when looking over policies.
- MOU on Faculty Society Support and MOU on Orientation Levy were both updated this year. Ask Eva to send you an electronic copy for your records. You will be working with Jeremy (and the rest of WWAC) this year to continue work on a general welcome week policy.
- Risk Management is going to be a large topic of conversation this year for Welcome Week. Areas of focus that come to mind are bed racers, concerts, etc. Communicate with AI and the rest of the MSU team prior to heading into meetings and never make assumptions.
- WWAC reviews the expenditure of Welcome Week orientation spending.
- Golf carts - don't break them and consider ordering less (talk to AI about this).
- Engage with AI and campus events early to figure out a game plan for events during orientation that were typically geared towards more than just first year students. With the new move-in, upper year students will probably not be on campus until after the long weekend. This may mean events like sidewalk sale should not occur until the first week of school (something to think about).
- You know about the three strategic priorities. Engage with the working groups as this is the first year we set up bodies like this to execute on programming (which should help a lot). Traditionally, the priorities would get a little bit lost in the mix of general planning.

- The Special Projects Application is new this year - 11k to support programs and initiatives by groups who apply. At first we needed to clarify who could apply for this funding as it was not clear. Expect applications primarily from Faculty Societies and be sure to review with Jeremy and the rest of the WWAC committee once more how this will all unfold (you were at the meeting with Daniel when we discussed procedure).
- Contact Daymon (SCSN) and Spencer early to discuss what you would like to do for the community clean-up. This year it went well despite the fact that an angry community member chased students back to campus (this is a story for another day if you haven't heard it). Early in the summer we tried to re-imagine the event, but ended up sticking with the traditional set-up. The university loves this event because it is a good opportunity for positive community PR during a generally energetic time in immediate neighbourhoods surrounding McMaster. That said - let your imagination run wild!
- Faculty Society Coordinator - Have an active role in Laura's work over the summer. Outside of general support, look for ways to seek more potential. Recall how the ROP is meant to support ROAs. The MSU received more funding from the levy to pay for this position's salary.
- Football Game - I am not sure when the game is scheduled for (or if there is one during welcome week). The primary goal is to have as many first year students as possible attend the game. Athletics tends to make this very difficult as they want to have committed numbers. Do your best to see this through.
- SWAG - We distribute a SWAG bag each year (black bags) that contain an Almanac, calendar and any other materials you manage to acquire over the summer. Avoid loading it up with junk and advertising materials (students don't want this). We also print an MSU guidebook and print a Welcome Week Preview paper. Talk with Wooder and Sandro early in the summer to assess the value of these items. While some generate revenue - the staff time to produce them and relevance should also be factors to consider. Companies will reach out to you to ask to include things in the bag - assess the value and talk to Sandro from underground/ Wooder.
- Promotions Coordinator - I did not hire a promotions coordinator this year because I did not think it was necessary. This person would essentially help with calendar and swag distribution in conjunction with the Maroons. While we got the job done, I know the Maroons felt like they had more responsibility than in previous years. Whatever you decide to do, talk to the Maroons Coordinator and get on the same page.
- Maroons - the Board is all automatically Maroons. Try your best to get out and engage with them. We didn't do a great job at this, and as a result didn't develop a very strong sense of team with them.
- Shinerama - Shinerama money is stored in the accounting office at the end of each business day. Chat with Riley early on to ensure planning is going well and connect her with the Maroons Coordinator to set up an effective counting system. It often ends up being counting coins into the early hours of the morning. Shinerama is extremely competitive, be sure to stick to the deadline for money submission that you set in place. With Marn leaving, I would ask her for advice on how money should be organized. Busses for Shinerama Shine Day were not planned well this year in part due to the HSR. Try and secure busses as soon as possible - the day relies on them.

Also confirm the size and quantity multiple times throughout the summer. The board was up until 2am the day before trying to create a plan for Shine Day busses with the limited transportation resources we ended up getting. This year, there was a little bit more of a push for online donations as well - consider expanding this. Consider re-imagining or getting rid of Shine Off.

- Cups - Check the bylaws and meet with the respective committees over the summer or as welcome week approaches. You know how these work. Get the rules and expectations out as early as possible so that you can field questions in advance. Consider only releasing the top three in the standings at any given time. Some folks indicated it was discouraging to see their faculty or hall in last place. Establish a plan with the other board members, committee members and the communications officer to count points. This surprisingly took a lot of time. I heavily relied on Alex, but consider taking more of a role in this. During the week, you will have to film a brief video for closing ceremonies. Talk to AI who will put you in contact with the video company we usually use. The video does not take long to film as it is usually just over a minute or so.
- Welcome Week Assessment and Review - If you plan on changing something, set yourself up with information to be successful. The Welcome Week Survey is a great opportunity to get useful information to leverage your points. For example, this year we separated out programming and swag to determine that students like programs more. Therefore, the committee was in favour of shifting that funding towards faculty societies.
- Mac Connector - Lucas and I facilitated this. My thought process was that if we have qualified individuals to facilitate the program, why pay someone a few thousand dollars to come? I think it is more inspiring to have a student facilitate instead of someone first year students will never see again.

### **WELCOME DAY aka NEW MARAUDER ORIENTATION:**

- Talk to the SSC early to see what the plan is for this.
- Traditionally the MSU has helped lead sessions (I did a session with a professor that I have run for a number of years as well as a “Debunking Myths” panel).
- The debunking the myths panel was kept relatively informal and participant driven (we fielded questions that audience members had). It ended up being very enjoyable. During this session, there were staff reporters from the Spectator - we did not know media was going to be in attendance. You may remember that we had some pretty hilarious quotes in the paper that were taken completely out of context - so ensure you know who is in the room to avoid embarrassment.
- If there is going to be a service fair, ensure that services and the SRA have a prominent presence.
- If this day still has room for changes, try and work with the SSC to give the MSU more opportunities to showcase itself. That said, don't over commit. I had a weak response from PTMs to initially fill table spots (especially for services not operating over the summer). Reach out to PTMs early to tell them about orientation-related opportunities so that they can plan.

- The MSU has funded a BBQ for volunteers at 1280 in the past. Consider keeping this going and refer to past P/Os for order size. Talk to Rachel/ Chalene from the SSC to coordinate if this is necessary. This year, I put the MSU's logo on the lunch tickets to ensure we were being recognized for our contribution.

### **PHONE AND EMAIL:**

- You are reimbursed for your phone once every 4 months. Get a good data plan so that you are able to regularly google, check email, etc.
- Avoid letting this take over your life as there will be peak times when you feel overwhelmed with emails. This generally happens when your days are full of meetings and you don't get to emails until the evening. Establish expectations with PTMs about what an appropriate time frame is for responding to or acknowledging emails. This was the bane of my existence - get creative about ways to tackle this portion of the job.
- My last piece of advice would be to use down time during the day between meetings, etc to fire off a few emails.

### **BENEFITS:**

**Note:** Most of these benefits don't become available to you until you have worked for three months. John should facilitate a meeting with the Board and SOPs to review what is covered.

1. *Expense Account* – each board member is given an allocated amount to spend. The VP (Admin) account is \$750. There was also a general Board Expense line that you can use for things that the Board does together, such as Board Meals. Remember that this is student money you are spending. However, don't hesitate to spend it on things that you believe will help you do your job better or go back to students (e.g. taking a PTM out for lunch). Things you can spend it on include:
  - a. Work-related meals (e.g. with PTMs, with fellow BoD, with University Administrators)
  - b. Conference/Event fees
  - c. Parking (if you have to go to an event)
  - d. Buying candy for the candy bowl
2. *Health and Dental Plan* – it is different than the plan we give to students. Kevin O'Mara, Accounts Payable Supervisor (direct all questions about this plan to him). I set up an online account to submit health plan claims which was super quick and easy to use - consider doing the same.
3. *Vacation Time* – You are eligible for up to 3 weeks vacation (plus the Christmas closure, which you decide as a BoD). Use this time to keep yourself sane. I had a very hard time taking complete days off because I knew there was work that needed to be done. Consider booking half days to sleep in or take off early for the weekend.

4. Summer Hours – this is determined each year by the BoD. Essentially, the Board is able to approve a plan whereby staff work a different set of hours during the week to result in the MSU Office closing at 2pm on Fridays. As long as you are putting in the required hours during the week, don't feel the need to stay later than the closure. This is one of the perks of the summer.
5. *Other Benefits* – There are other miscellaneous benefits that I would recommend you take advantage of. Speak to Jess Bauman, Administrative Assistant or John who can give you more information/correct amounts:
  - a. \$400 Education Allowance – use this to take professional and personal development courses. A note about this - some people will submit really random course requests...set expectations early.
  - b. 4% matched funds to an [RRSP](#) – you are eligible to contribute 4% of your salary to an RRSP and then the MSU will match you with another 4%. It might seem silly to consider saving now, but it is totally worth it. Someone from the Investors Group (the company that the MSU was with at the time of my job ending) will meet with you 1:1 to determine what type of account you should have.
  - c. Interest Free Computer Loans – if you want to update your computer, you can. The payment will just come of your paycheque in instalments which you can set up with Kevin. I purchased a new laptop and had the price deducted from my pay cheques over the course of the year - which was very small.
  - d. Cell Phone Reimbursement – as I mentioned, you need to be available 24/7 (talk, text, data) so you might want to invest in a good plan. This reimburses you for the amount you will use your phone over the course of your job.
  - e. Free McMaster Pulse Membership – you get a 12 month pass by going over to the pulse office in DBAC and setting it up.
  - f. Business Cards – not really a benefit, more a requirement of the job (however it is quite sweet). Keep them with you, especially at events. You never know when you will need to give one away. Anyways, if you ever need more, Underground can run them off.

## **MONEY**

As the VP (Admin) and more generally as a corporate officer of the MSU, you have the ability to expend funds on behalf of the organization. If you are unsure about which budget line to use ask Dan or accounting. If you want some historical context for expenditure, there are folders in the office with past P/Os - this information can also be pulled up electronically by accounting. I would do this for large scale things like training.

### *Budget*

This will hopefully give you a good idea of where money should be expended:

**Exec 6147-0305: Volunteer Recognition:** could pay for Student Recognition Night (confirm this with Jess) and any expenses that Campus Events can't pay for from their budget lines for Egnog or Sangria. Could also pay for other volunteer recognition events you dream up!

**Exec 6301-0305 – SRA – Annual Campaigns; Exec 6303-0305 – SRA Special Projects:** These two lines are used by SRA members (especially Commissioners) for any campaigns they are looking to run or ideas they may have. Let SRA members know that it is available, but it is up to the discretion of the BoD (in particular the VP Finance) what it gets spent on. Regardless, communicate early that the same rules apply for spending from this line as with any other line (e.g. seeking approval BEFORE spending).

**Exec 6402-0305 – Awards & Meetings - SRA:** pays for any food bought for SRA meetings and any supplies needed. You witnessed the pizza debacle - set clear expectation prior to long meetings to avoid this unnecessary expense.

**Exec 6403-0305 – SRA Summer Meetings:** this is the line that paid for SRA training in June and any expense that arise for the Summer SRA meetings. Confirm with Dan and the Accounting Office to see if this line still exists and if so, how much is allocated. I know we re-jigged the budget lines related to training (they may now be consolidated).

**Exec 6405-0305 – Exec Meetings:** apparently this pays for Executive Board (EB) transition meetings. Confirm that it still exists for 2014-2015. Victoria and John took lead on EB orientation.

**Exec 6410-0305 – PT Merit:** Self explanatory - confirm with accounting how much is in this line.

**Exec 6603-0305 – Special Projects:** The catch all page for the BoD, this page is used for any of the projects the BoD may take on that need to be paid for. A lot of the MSU's Welcome Week expenses that you control can come for this line. Have very clear expectations about this budget line with your fellow board members as there have been instances where board members would commit funding from this line without consulting others.

**Exec 6612-0305 – Expense Account:** each BoD has their own expense account, but I classified this line as paying for any BoD expenses where we were a larger group (e.g. transition dinner with the new BoD, events you may all attend, etc.).

**Exec 6615-0305 – VP Admin Expense Account:** your personal expense account. Use it to pay for conference/event fees you may attend, taking SRA members or PTMs out to lunch and buying candy for the candy bowl.

**Exec 6801-0305 – MGMT Training:** pays for PTM Training (for summer) and also for

the Student Leadership Conference delegate fee for all of the PTMs and the SRA, given that it was a required training for the PTMs (about \$12 a person if I recall correctly). Again, review with accounting and Dan what has happened with budget line consolidation for training.

**Exec 6802-0305 – March Transition Training:** pays for BoD Transition Weekend

**Exec 6901-0305 – Travel – BoD:** the line where you would pay for any travel you may do (i.e. gas reimbursement if you drive somewhere)

**Adm 5715-0305 – Rent expense – Equipment:** pays for any equipment rentals (i.e. Welcome Week walkie-talkies, golf carts, projectors)

**Adm 6402-0101 – Awards and Meetings:** pays for any other organization awards or meetings as needed

**Adm 6801-0101 – MGMT Training:** pays for any FT staff training

## **SIGNING CHEQUES/ STANDING ORDERS AND PURCHASE ORDERS**

It is important that you understand how the PO system works so that you can communicate to your PTMs (or at least know who they should talk to for help). If you are unclear, ask Kevin, Marn or an Accounting Clerk to explain. It also helps if you know the system so that when you need to pay for things, you are able to do it yourself.

As a member of the BoD, you have the authority to sign cheques, standing orders and POs. However, it is usually best if you let the VP (Finance)/GM sign all of these things and only sign as a last resort. I would sign the off cheque if the others were not around. This also ensures that no expenses that were previously turned down are sneaking through another board member (which would surprisingly happen). If you do end up signing, or something seems suspicious - hold off and talk to Dan and/ or John.

## **KEYS**

Do not lose your keys or lend them to anyone (they may lose them or go into spaces they are not authorized to be in). You will get a swipe card to access all swipe card areas as well as keys to your cubicle, all MSU owned and operated spaces (except 1280) and cabinets. There are also a number of door codes (for places like CFMU, SRA Office) that you can get from Victoria (I also left you a sticky note with them). You will pay a deposit to cover your keys which will be returned to you at the end of the year should you still possess the keys.

## **OFFICE SUPPLIES**

If you feel like you are missing office supplies, the first line of defence is asking the Office Clerk. You can also place orders with Lyreco. The Office Clerks at the front desk

have the catalogue – just return it when you borrow it. I think I only did this twice as we generally had supplies around the office.

## **EGGNOG & SANGRIA**

The VP (Admin) is the Board member responsible for planning these events. Al and Jess did most of the work. The biggest thing I would highlight about these would be:

1. Set the dates **EARLY** and communicate them in advance. Sangria this year was advertised extremely late. I had a fairly inactive role in assisting with these, consider having more of a role to help.
2. Some people keep suggesting that volunteers (hundreds...) should attend Student Rec Night. It may be better to re-imagine these two events to better recognize volunteers.
3. Consider how you can shift away from these being alcohol-centric. Attendance may increase if there is more to do outside of socializing, pictures and karaoke.

*Historical Note on Sangria:* It was created in lieu of a traditional (and unnecessary) Student Recognition Night after-party. This after-party was held either after SRN or on another night. Ask Al/ Jess for context if you plan on brainstorming a better way to host a volunteer-related event.

## **RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

**IRC** - They are in a period of “renewal” for lack of a better term. Engage with Residence Life and the rest of the Welcome Week Advisory Committee to address gaps related to IRC and orientation (should there be any). Do all that you can to ensure Bed Racers survives. Consider asking Alumni to participate in the conversation.

**SOCS** - Every year they ask for us to sponsor their Sleepover during Welcome Week. Since this happens annually, I don’t understand why they don’t budget for it. Generally the board has an opportunity to run over and speak to the students - but it may not be necessary. I pulled the history of our support for this event last year, consider doing the same and reviewing whether or not we should support with monetary or kind contributions (or at all). This year and last year, we provided snacks from UM. I also encourage you to go directly to the SOCS president and exec when that is who you want to chat with. Jennifer Kleven (Manager of OCRC) is not necessarily the person to go to for SOCS related business.

**MAPS** - I didn’t have any VP-Admin specific interactions with them. Majority of interactions and conversations involved the whole board. Consider continuing conversations related to service-usage by part time (and grad) students.

**GSA** - See above...similar to MAPS, I didn’t deal with them directly. They are relevant for CAF agreement-related discussions which you and the Board will surely continue with Sean V. and the GSA. Recall the presentation at SRA from Sean and Teddy.

## **NETWORK**

I had a pretty cluttered desktop this year and wouldn't really organize my files into folders on the server. I encourage you to keep organized so that future VP Admins can easily make reference to past information. I often found myself going into past folders for information and inspiration.

Encourage part time managers and commissioners to save their information on the servers. When I was commissioner, I remember having nothing to work with and it was incredibly frustrating. For PTM's this can be done as a reminder during a PTM meeting.

There is a lot of spam and malware that comes through the network. Be conscious and encourage others to be conscious of what they are clicking, downloading, etc.

## **OFFICE WINDOW BANNERS**

You are responsible for this. This year I put numbers on the windows which made it easier for me to communicate via email what spaces were booked and available. Alex (Communications Officer) also helped a lot with window bookings. Something we didn't get around to doing is creating an email account (similar to the meeting rooms) on outlook so that spaces can be booked through outlook (office clerks could just approve it and monitor). This is a simple task that would get very frustrating at times - I highly recommend moving forward with this idea (or another if you can think of one).

## **SPACE ALLOCATION AND AUDIT**

All of the review documents are available in your office. Have a look through them to get a feel for the positives and negatives associated with each of the organization's work spaces. With respect to shifting spaces around, you were present at the Board meeting when we discussed giving WGEN MSU owned and operated space to operate out of full-time. I recommend bringing this forward to the first EB meeting.

## **AODA & RISK MANAGEMENT**

This year we shifted to online approval through the EOHSS online portal. Ask John for the password and link to the portal (I don't remember off the top of my head since I had the password auto-saved). The MSU has been in charge of our own risk management since 2013. I encourage you to get well versed with the portal and ensure PTMs feel comfortable using it. A neat feature is the opportunity to offer feedback. Check this portal out regularly as sometimes you do not get an email notification about new events.

As part of a larger discussion, Risk Management is something that the university and we want to continue to work on. Essentially, the EOHSS office is overloaded with lower-level approval and they are looking for ways we can mitigate this. Work with John to ensure that all departments are going through the risk management process to cover yourself from a liability standpoint. It is amazing what one person can miss.

**PLANNING FOR ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST**

HRES developed one that is a bit outdated. I tried to enforce that it be completed similar to Risk Management forms. Consider revamping this as it proved to be useful a number of times.

**SWIPE CARDS vs TRADITIONAL KEYS + A NOTE ON SECURITY**

Talk to Victoria about the potential to keep moving towards more swipe access doors. The last five (including myself) VP Admins did not add any additional swipe access points. Security suggested to me that we plug the key holes in on the main office doors so as to only allow swipe card entry. Every time someone opens that door by key security is notified and must be sent over to ensure there wasn't a break in. I would not follow this recommendation because it is extremely convenient to have key access in case of emergency to the main office. Furthermore, if you are going to access other spaces after business hours (such a Underground) - there are silent alarms that go off. Give security a call to let them know who you are, when you are going to enter the space and how long you will be. They may still send someone, but it helps.

**STUDENT RECOGNITION NIGHT (SRN)**

I did not do much of the planning for Student Recognition Night - Jess took lead on this project. I was involved in decision making (food, etc), award decision making, table assignments, site visits. That said, you can take more of an active role if you choose to. This was the first year that we took the event off campus for purposes of capacity and charm. I think the move was positive and generally well received. The only complication that arose was with shuttle busses which were booked through HSR (but didn't come...).

One discussion piece is who should be in attendance. The focus is students - but we also invite university administration.

Invite the Master of Ceremonies in September so that they are aware of the event. They sort of know it is coming but a formal invite and letter is always nice to receive. That way, you can spend a lot of time prepping them on their roles and responsibilities. Also, consider sending out a "Save the Date" to people whose calendars fill up early or who are important guests (e.g. Honorary MSU Members) so that you know they are available.

You will request a donation from Karen and the Office of the President. Template letters are in my files. They never say no and technically the Office of the President co-hosts the event so it really is a formality. Alumni sponsored to no-show shuttle busses.

You will run the J. Lynn Watson Award and MSU Spirit Award selection committees. Arrange a meeting with the Speaker (Inna) to discuss how these awards and the others will be advertised and coordinated. For me, Mike was a huge asset as he took lead on promotion and organization all in one go. Organize a meeting with all of the committee

members for about 1-2 hours. Once you have decided a winner, let Victoria/ Jess know so that she can order the awards and let Jess know so that she can invite nominees to the event.

The video slideshow that announces nominees gives the evening a special feel in my opinion. Work with AI and Jess to coordinate and continue this.

Meet with the past MSU-President host in advance to go over the itinerary AND video slideshow in advance. This year, he kept saying things were being skipped over and that the video was having technical difficulties - meanwhile there were no issues.

Jess can help you find a photographer for the night. Pictures are a MUST. Find someone who is relatively low in cost yet still takes high quality pictures.

## **FULL TIME STAFF**

### ***HIRING:***

The excerpt below is from 2012-2013 - it does a good job outlining your options and things to work on in this process.

*There are two ways to hire new FT Staff: Public Posting or a Head Hunter.*

- 1) Public Posting: John will coordinate the posting of the position on websites like Charity Village, localwork.ca and in the Hamilton Spectator, and you'll generally have it open for 2-3 weeks. For some context, you will usually receive between 100 and 300 applications for FT positions, so it definitely takes a lot of reviewing and shortlisting, but you'll find that it's not that hard to get it down to 5 candidates, as long as you set out criteria for what you are looking for beforehand. The hiring committee generally consists of McGowan (or the supervisor), a Board of Directors member and either a second BoD member or the outgoing staff – depends on whether they are leaving on their own accord and the relationship with that staff member. John will help with interview questions and has a very strong interview process that he likes to follow.*
- 2) Head Hunter: This is a bit rarer, but is especially important with some positions. Basically, this is hiring an external company to search for potentially strong candidates for you. This is absolutely necessary if hiring for the General Manager position, and it was also done for the Food and Beverage Manager the second time around to try to find someone stronger with specific skills. You have to pay a flat fee retainer in case they find no one, and generally a percentage of the salary if they do find someone.*

*Always consider their skills, but also their potential and how they would work in this environment. It is a lot easier to make more money anywhere else, and so the MSU is often a stepping stone for younger staff. Consider this in your hiring process, as it is doubtful you will find a perfect candidate. The most important thing in the hiring process*

*is supporting them once they begin, which is something we do poorly. There should be training sessions and there should be regular check-ups, which is where we often fall short as an organization.*

## **DISCIPLINE AND EVALUATION**

We would bring up discipline-related inquiries in Board meetings. John, as the direct supervisor of full time staff should be involved in all conversations and actions associated with full time staff discipline. We do have an operating policy that you can reference that outlines our procedures (verbal warning, written warning then further action - while more serious cases can jump steps). While you are generally disconnected from the operations end of the business units, ask questions about how things are going to Full Time staff (the other board members should do the same). It helps build a positive relationship with them and gives them access points to air grievances they may not necessarily want to bring to John.

Note that if you are unsure about how to handle discipline with Part Time Staff - ask the Board for assistance and talk through your plan to address the issue at hand.

## **CHILD CARE CENTRE:**

I will be quite honest in saying I didn't engage with the Child Care Centre often and don't know much about their operations, problems, etc. If you are curious about plans for the future and the current state of the centre - ask John.

## **MSU & YOU RADIO SHOW:**

This show is hosted by you and the other members of the Board every Monday from noon-1pm. At first we were very concerned about content, but it ended up being more comfortable as time went on. The staff at CFMU is very helpful if you have questions about how to run the controls, play advertisements, etc. If you are not able to make a time slot, record the show in advance (just let Ingie/ Jamie know).

## **FULL TIME STAFF ISSUES COMMITTEE:**

There is supposed to be an SOP on this committee which I don't think happened this year (or the year before). I am also not sure how often they met (perhaps ask Dan as Scott may have passed along more information about this committee). Chat with John and Jess to get some insight into the specifics of the committee and some their past work - there could be room for improvement. I would also check past transition reports to look for themes related to this committee. While I didn't have any formal role on the committee this year, it is important to have some context should it be brought up in a Full Time Staff meeting.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS:**

**Summer Letters** - The print materials associated with orientation will need a letter from each board member. This doesn't need to be too long, but be sure to communicate with the others so that you are not delivering the same message. First year students will look to you as leaders, give them something inspiring!

**President's Page** - We would meet as a board with the communications and PR team every week after our Board meetings to discuss the President's Page in the Silhouette as well as any other relevant topic. We pay for this page each week as it is useful for communicating messages, upcoming projects and initiatives, successes, etc. In general, we would brainstorm topics for the weeks ahead so that we know what is coming down the pipeline. The team will have deadlines for you - try and meet them so that they have time to do the work they need to do, such as design work, prior to submission (we were all pretty bad at times). At times these meetings also became quite silly. Try and stay on track as this really extended meeting times for no reason.

**Social Media** - Part of the communications team is the Social Media Coordinator. Watch the social media channels to alert them about spelling errors and broken links that would come up from automated tweets/ posts. If this becomes a big problem, talk to Wooder. Also be mindful of things you are posting on your personal accounts - I am sure you have seen social media explode into debates after major MSU happenings.

**Website** - You have access to every part of the website. Keep your section up-to-date. This was something I got flak from the Sil for - regular SRA updates are not enough. The public wants more regular communication and interaction with students - think of creative ways to do this with the website (Pauline is a great resource for this). Teddy was good at keeping a blog, not a bad idea - just don't let it take up too much of your time.

## **STAFF SOCIALS AND OCCASIONS**

Jess takes responsibility for planning Staff Socials and does a really good job of planning unique experiences. These staff socials are a great opportunity to bond with Full-Time Staff outside of the office and get to know them personally. Go to as many as you possibly can! As well, ensure FT staff are invited to events like Egnog, Sangria and Student Recognition Night. Beyond these excursions, take lead with Jess on organizing small on campus get-togethers (something as simple as baked goods and coffee). We did this early on in the term, which really helped connect the staff.

In terms of recognizing personal and professional milestones (e.g. birth of a baby, working for the MSU for X number of years), there is a policy that outlines the procedure for it. We would generally discuss forms of recognition at Board meetings to ensure we were all on the same page. Usually there is a donation or a gift given to this person or a cause. Again, Jess does a good job tracking this information and will usually let YOU know what needs to be done.

## **CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT**

This is planned by the Shine team, Maroons, Wooder and AI. Ask if there is anything you can do to support this initiative. I didn't have any formal role in organizing it and was also unable to attend due to sickness. Regardless of your skill level, get out there as it is a great opportunity to interact with the staff team.

## **BIRTHDAY CARDS**

These are circulated for signatures and a few times got lost. Try and avoid dropping off cards amongst piles of paperwork for someone to find weeks later.

## **PART-TIME STAFF**

Make sure you are aware of when service managers start and end for transition, hiring and pay-related reasons (CLAY starts in October, Farmstand ends in November, etc). There should be a few template documents on the server that outline terms. Something I found interesting was trying to handle PTMs who were doing work for their service AFTER their term had ended. For example: Horizons was hosting reunions. This did not go through risk management approval and technically should not be funded. Have an upfront discussion about this should it occur.

## **HIRING**

This will consume your January - February. Chat with Jess, EB and the PTMs early on to outline how exactly this will work (reviewing applications, posting dates, closing dates, etc). Release the schedule for hiring as soon as possible as there will be folks who may want to get involved in presidential elections (candidates, volunteers, etc).

Once you have confirmed the schedule, then take it to EB to strike the hiring committees (most committees have at least 1 EB member, 2 if a PTM is reapplying). In advance of the meeting, I would recommend sending out to EB the schedule and asking them to think about what positions they want to hire for or are available for. We created a google doc to coordinate all of this.

Use one of your PTM meetings to talk about hiring and take time to review Job Descriptions. Some of them are outdated and you will not hear complaints until they are live on the website (too late).

Try and organize interview training with the PTMs and EB. Some may never have been through this process before and it is important that they do a good job and are professional. An important note to include would be an emphasis on confidentiality. For some reason, people on hiring boards feel the need to talk to their peers - which is completely unacceptable and compromises the integrity and professionalism of the process.

Before interviews happen, give hiring boards an opportunity to chat about the interview questions. I tried changing questions to be more behaviour- description focussed. I would consider continuing to improve the process.

For reviewing applications, have the EB member and PTM review applications in your office. Do not let them take applications outside of this space. If we were running a perfect system, unless a candidate told people they have applied - the only people who should know are those on the hiring board. Aim to interview no more than 3 candidates. There were a number of times this year that PTMs or members of EB couldn't narrow down their selections - so I had to step in. While it would be great to interview everyone, that is not logistically feasible. Remind the PTMs and hiring board about the quantity of interviews for other positions that have to be conducted.

Once you have selected a candidate (which either happens immediately after all the interviews are done or after a bit of reflection time), inform the successful candidate first. I let Jess take care of this. Some past VP Admins have called successful candidates. Try and make a decision relatively close to when you conducted interviews. Some hiring boards wanted to "go off and think for a few days" - that is not needed. As a group review pros and cons, etc - often it will be you that needs to facilitate the decision making process. Once the successful candidate has accepted let all the non-successful candidates know the outcome of the interview. They may want feedback which I gave via in person meetings (I think I did two this year) and email. If you and your fellow hiring committee members take good interview notes, providing this feedback isn't that challenging.

Have a meeting with Jess before hiring begins to divide up responsibilities - it is essential for you to be on the same page. Don't assume that certain things will get done as every VP Admin takes different levels of responsibility for facilitating hiring.

This year, we had an awkward situation where there was one applicant and they knew because someone on the hiring board said so to their peers. Again, emphasize confidentiality and interview single applicants - they should not know they are the only one.

Some hiring boards require folks from university partners (student wellness, security, etc). Reach out to them early to ensure they are available prior to booking time slots.

If you interview candidates and they are all not suitable for the position - discuss with the hiring board coaching one of the better applicants or re-opening. While re-opening can be awkward, it is essential that the right people are in these positions. If you do re-open encourage advertisement as the quality of applicants may be diluted the more you re-open (until you find a diamond amongst the rubble).

A PTM can reapply for their job. Should they choose to do so, they must still apply online and go through the process. Ask them to let you know should they choose to do so, so that you find a replacement for them on the hiring board (usually another EB

member). However, they do not technically have to do this until after they have applied. If a returner is hired, still have them complete a transition report for record-purposes.

Once the new team is hired, invite them to the office to sign and review their contracts. I had the office clerks do this so that incoming PTMs could come in and sign regardless of if I was present in the office. That said, if you do this, leave a document at the front desk outlining everything that has to be done step-by-step for the office clerks to follow.

My final note on hiring would be about consensus. Rarely (if ever) did we go into a “vote” as a hiring board. Instead, if there is disagreement, take the time to get on the same page. If there is a case where this is not possible, do what needs to be done.

## **DISCIPLINE**

This is something we have discussed. Essentially my pointers are:

- Treat every Part Time Manager the same with respect to discipline-related expectations.
- Set expectations early with the PTMs and consider getting them involved and invested in setting expectations (I did this as part of PTM training).
- I have sample letters in the file folders for services - there are also past ones available on the server. Depending on the context and level of discipline consider getting another board member involved in the process (for example, if a PTM spent 6000% of their budget - perhaps you and Dan could have a conversation/ write a written warning).
- When I did a written warning, I would meet with the PTM to review the letter with them, then give it to them. I would candidly discuss what has happened and then we would chat about how it could be different moving forward. I recommend delivering it in person instead of sending it via email.
- Document all of your conversations clearly for your records. This is important for liability and discipline. You want to be able to make reference to expectations and decisions you have set out in the past.
- If you are unsure about how to handle sensitive personal issues, ask John and HRES for advice. HRES was a fantastic resource for me this year when PT employment issues arose that were more sensitive in nature.

## **YEAR PLANS**

You may have already circulated the template that has existed for quite some time. Use summer training as an opportunity for PTMs to network and think about what they want to work on for the year. Consider taking time to implement a mid-year review of these documents. I was not a huge fan of them simply because it is very difficult in the early stages of your job to outline what you hope to accomplish over the course of a year (you get new inspiration, opportunities, learn more, etc).

## **EB REPORTING**

Work with Victoria or see past templates to set up a PTM reporting schedule. Send out the schedule to PTMs as early as possible along with report expectations, a sample report and any other advice you have. A lot of PTMs are very anxious about these reports early-on, do your best to make them feel comfortable. I told PTMs that they could send their reports to me in advance if they wanted me to take a look before it was circulated to EB. Have them submit final reports to you AND Victoria. Sometimes I would get it and Victoria wouldn't - which created a communication mess/ incorrect agendas, etc.

## **MID YEAR EVALUATIONS**

Decide how you want to facilitate these. I had service executives evaluate PTMs and PTMs evaluate me. This information was then used by me to provide feedback where necessary. Schedule 1v1 meetings with PTMs early and use these as an opportunity to touch base, provide feedback, solve problems, etc. It was VERY difficult to get service executives to fill out feedback forms. Ask PTMs to make this part of an exec meeting and have them fill it out on the spot. These can remain anonymous - service executives could bring their forms to the front desk in the MSU office and office clerks would put the forms in my mailbox. The feedback you get as VP Admin is also very grounding. Take it seriously and brainstorm ways to fix highlighted problems or areas of improvement. I was very candid with PTMs at our monthly meetings about perceived areas of improvement - there is no need to be defensive or awkward - the only way to address areas of improvement is to openly discuss solutions or provide context. You can find templates for feedback forms on the server - they haven't been updated, feel free to tweak if necessary. Coinciding with this internal mid year evaluation period was the Silhouette report card evaluation - they reached out to selective managers and asked very pointed questions. I don't have any advice, just giving you the heads up.

## **MONTHLY MEETINGS**

This year, this was continued. They would generally occur at the end of every month on Sunday at 6pm (on the weekend without an SRA meeting). Give as much notice as possible as PTMs get upset if they don't have multiple weeks notice. These meetings were difficult at times. Outside of housekeeping and general updates, I would try to facilitate sessions about management that were received with varying enthusiasm. The meetings would be about 1.5 hours. Set up a plan for bringing snacks - I ended up bringing snacks to meetings because that is what the team preferred. In the past they cycled through everyone to provide snacks. Our final meeting was a potluck. These meetings can be EXTREMELY awkward and I don't know why. Perhaps it is the peer-to-peer management dynamic. There was always moments of awkward silence, or times when an activity I organized was met with little investment from the team. Remember that they are all students coming in on a Sunday - make sure what you have planned for them has purpose and avoid meeting "fillers." I found activities that got them talking about their experiences and learning worked best.

## **TRAINING**

## **APRIL TRAINING**

This is the first year in recent history where this training was shifted to allow the incoming (you) VP Admin and SLDC facilitate. There have also been years where outgoing VP Admins have been heavily involved and not involved at all. I think it is best to have the incoming VP Admin have a large role in the facilitation of this - it is just hard to coordinate given the transition and timing. I would avoid at all costs just having the SLDC coordinator facilitate this training - it is important to position the VP Admin in a leadership role and as the go-to person. Traditionally full time staff are also introduced to the team during this training. Collect feedback afterwards to gauge how this year goes and engage with Wooder mid-way through term 2 to start planning for this training come time for you to finish the job.

## **MAY TRAINING**

This is an idea that was discussed last year. If you are not able to cover everything you need to cover in the "April" training - consider inviting the summer PTMs (and potentially others) to another training that could focus on finances, communications, etc. Ultimately, better prepared PTMs makes your job easier.

## **JULY TRAINING – MSU REREAT**

Allot time during the retreat to do PTM-specific session(s). Also use it as an opportunity to have PTMs interact with the governance wing of the MSU. The SRA meeting is usually optional for PTMs - consider making it mandatory. Aside from this, it is up to your team to decide what to focus on for PTMs during this weekend. I used this weekend to set expectations, set large goals and start brainstorming ways for services to collaborate.

## **AUGUST TRAINING – PTM TRAINING**

This training has varied in length from 1.5 days - 2.5 days. I would take some time to sit down, look at past itineraries and then think through everything you want to cover. Then try and fit that into whatever time works best (don't restrict yourself). I booked rooms for this with housing and conference services - check in if you want to switch the day, etc. Don't lead the training by yourself. The other board members facilitated sessions and socialized during down time. I also had the communications officer facilitate a session on communications during dinner. I used 1280 for the majority of meals and set up a projector screen in the space to facilitate sessions. This was well received as people get tired of sitting in MUSC rooms.

Try and organize some social time - this year we went to festival of friends in Dundas. Also enforce mandatory attendance. There will always be a number of people that request missing it for reasons ranging from family vacation to medical emergencies. Let them know about the date well in advance.

## **PAYROLL**

As the Corporate Secretary, Jess will help you with the creation of contracts for the PTMs. Kevin O'Mara deals with all payroll questions, comments or concerns. If a PTM ever has any payroll specific questions, direct them to Kevin. If a person's job status changes at all (e.g. fired, leave of absence, etc.), inform Kevin right away. Encourage staff to get all payroll information in on time to make Kevin's job easier.

There are several periods where most of the PTMs are not paid – Reading Week, Christmas Break, and Spring Break (in April). Only SWHAT, EFRT, and PSL are paid during those times as the services run. Confirm before these periods begin with Jess about who is and isn't getting paid and remind Kevin.

If at any point you suspect a PTM is not doing their job, try to be more proactive about suspending their pay. It can be very difficult to keep tabs on the work of everyone - but do your best and consult with the board if you are ever unsure about how to proceed with a situation.

This year I also made sure that PTMs were paid for mandatory summer training - in past years they did not get paid (which I think is a poor practice as an employer). Ensure that only hours that are spent in session are counted - they are not paid for social time. Review this with Kevin.

## **BUDGETS**

It is important for you and Dan to communicate and have a strong understanding of the service budgets, trends in expenditure, etc. I would direct the majority of questions to Scott as he ultimately had final say. If there is a decision that is made regarding expenditure (for example - saying no to a purchase), make sure that you and Dan are on the same page to avoid miscommunication. We also continued term two budgeting documents for PTMs to identify risks and opportunities associated with their services. On this document we also inquired about volunteer recognition expenditure in case you want to take a look (should be on Dan's server).

## **1v1 MEETINGS**

I would attempt to keep PTMs after the monthly meeting to organize these all in one go. It can be very hard coordinating meetings that work with everyone in a timely manner, but it is necessary for more formal one-on-one check ins outside of casual check ins and less frequent reporting. Stress that these are mandatory to maintain a sense of formality.

## **SOCIALS**

I did not take lead on any socials - this could be something for you to look into. Consider this and other forms of recognition that we offer. Secret Santa or “Holiday Gift Exchange” is a tradition - with the swap usually taking place at Eggnog.

## **SERVICE EXECUTIVES**

Stress the importance of proper training of these individuals and offer assistance to PTMs if they are having trouble developing proper training. I only formally interacted with these individuals in discipline-related situations. Be sure to review discipline-related processes with the PTMs and always be available to assist them with this (as it can be difficult to handle). I don't remember if it was you or another person who suggested organizing socials or a conference like meeting of service executives - it could be beneficial for sharing tips and best practices. One of the major things that I noticed was service executives hired for design and communications not following the style guide or branding standards - keep on top of this. I made “exemptions” a few times to save some money on printing multiple colours as per the request of PTMs - thinking back, I never should have done that because it opened up a floodgate of requests to break our standards.

## **TRANSITION**

Use one of your monthly meetings to go over transition criteria and details with part time managers. If a PTM completes their transition report by a certain date and to a satisfactory standard, they are eligible for one week “transition pay”. You set the date (I would suggest beginning/mid-April to allow for buffer room for the people who don't do it on time) and you set the standard. I would recommend that this continues because money is a good incentive and a good transition report can be a critical document to ensuring a new PTM's success.

## **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

This year during elections PTMs were not required to take a leave of absence as long as they were not a candidate. It was an expectation that they were to not be campaigning while actively fulfilling their duties as a PTM. Converse with elections department when they are discussing rules to make sure you are on the same page with respect to what you would like to see.

## **KEY DEPOSITS AND CONTRACTS**

When PTMs (as well as SRA Commissioners and Caucus Leaders) first receive their keys, they are required to give a deposit to Victoria. Victoria will ask you to set a deadline for when keys should be returned for most PTMs and SRA Commissioners and Caucus (excluding a few that work during April). Be firm with this timeline as much as possible. These folks sign a contract and need to follow it.

This year I revamped with Victoria the expectations on the contract for space usage - it was the SRA/ SWHAT office that sparked the change thanks to the difficulties of having a shared space. It is important to have people sign these contracts so that you can make reference to them if rules are violated (people sleeping and leaving garbage in the SRA office).

## **SUMMER VARIABLE CAPPED HOURS**

We discussed this during transition. Make sure you have a clear understanding of all those who are eligible (Operating Policy 2.2). I created a google doc spreadsheet for each eligible manager to track their hours. This was useful because I could monitor the work and hours instead of waiting for surprise excel document submissions via email. I recommend communicating with the PTMs when the approval date will be for summer hours. Approving them twice over the summer works well for efficiency while still taking into consideration the cash-flow of student employees eligible for compensation. Be sure to send these hours to Kevin so they can be incorporated into payroll and don't forget to pay managers for mandatory training.

## **REFERENCE LETTERS**

I found myself reminding PTMs near the end of our terms that they could reach out to me for references. I wrote a few and was also a reference for professional schools.

## **FRONT DESK STAFF**

The office clerks report to Victoria. Consult with Victoria when you want to delegate tasks to them. Moreover, think of creative ways to use them as they are often sitting and reading a book. I got them to assist with assembling packages for conferences, amongst other small tasks. To be honest, I think it is appreciated when they engaged and have something to do.

## **GOVERNANCE**

In this section are some of the nuances of the Student Representative Assembly (SRA), MSU Inc., Executive Board (EB) and the standing committees.

### **SRA:**

- Sharpen your Roberts Rules of Order skills and call members of the assembly out if it is not properly used and the Speaker doesn't enforce it.

Part of your role as the VP (Admin) with the SRA involves documentation and ensuring that meetings run smoothly. This includes things like:

- YearPlans and Transition Reports for Caucuses and Committees (templates are available on the server).
- Preparing Training (SRA training and the MSU retreat).

- Setting the Meeting Dates (coordinate times with Victoria in the summer and she will take care of booking council chambers - which we almost lost this year because of the condition it was left in after very long meetings).
- Order food for late meetings (this shouldn't be necessary in my opinion - if you give enough notice people can come with food).
- Member accountability - do not be afraid to ask questions of other members (encourage it!). I wish I did more proactive accountability checks this year. I think the house leader position that existed in the past and was suggested again is a terrible idea. We have mechanisms in place to hold members accountable as elected public representatives. If anyone has issues with these mechanisms, perhaps they should avoid public office [*end rant*].
- You are the deputy speaker of the SRA and MSU Inc. You will chair meetings if a ruling is challenged, the chair is deferred (for MSU Inc. the president may want to be involved in the discussion) or if the speaker is not present. If you are ever unsure about proceedings, the Administrative assistants are a fantastic resource.

## **SPEAKER**

- Work with Inna early on to make sure she is comfortable with the Assembly or has any questions. Near the end of the term, Mike had studied the rules so much that I would go to him for advice.
- Get the Speaker involved in SRA training. Go over RROO and other essential skills with the Assembly. Consider working with the speaker to create a take-away resource for members to use in meetings as training is often forgotten over the summer. The rules on the back of the name cards is a great step towards more proper proceedings.
- Variable capped hours for the Speaker are brought to the SRA for approval. I recommend giving them the same template PTMs are using. You can then bring these hours forward for approval to the SRA at the end of the summer.
- The speaker also has a large role in GA planning. I didn't really have a role in this - but make yourself available for support.

## **CAUCUSES AND COMMITTEES**

- As a past caucus leader, you know the level of interaction that takes place with VPs. Ultimately it will vary based on the projects the caucus or committee is working on.
- With Commissioners and their Committees, each VP has their own relevant committee that they will work with.
- It is a little bit of an awkward dynamic because you do not supervise them, you should however support them. I was more reactive than proactive this year outside of training and initial preparations.
- Consider asking the commissioners for your four respective standing committees to cc you on committee meeting emails so you can see what they are discussing and attend if you choose.
- Consider meeting with all of the commissioners for housekeeping purposes. This is something I did not do, but may help with everyone being on the same page and accountability.

## **YEAR PLANS AND TRANSITION REPORTS**

These things should be done by both Caucus Leaders and Commissioners. There are templates for both of these on the server.

For YearPlans, give time to plan these out at SRA Orientation and more time at MSU Retreat (if needed). As well, they go to the Assembly for approval so that other members know what these groups are doing. Some of the Year Plans were EXTREMELY weak. If that is the case, don't be afraid to contest passing them.

For transition reports - I wish I was more active in asking for them and had circulated templates so that they could be completed for early/ mid March. If you do coordinate meetings for commissioners - this would be an opportune place to get everyone invested in this process.

## **MEETING TIMES**

SRA meetings have regularly taken place approximately every other Sunday during the school year (along with two summer meetings). Sit down with Victoria to set up the schedule and try and take into consideration major events (Super Bowl Sunday, etc). Council Chambers is the room that we use. Perhaps this year you should consider looking into an alternative space. That room can get quite hot and is not ideal for large turnouts. We almost lost the room in the final meetings of this year because people were not cleaning up their garbage. After everyone leaves, do a quick scan of the room with the Speaker and Administrative Assistant. In a perfect world, there should be nothing left to grab. For meetings that are expected to run late, either you or the speaker should give clear notice. People felt entitled to pizza this year when they knew well in advance that the meeting would be running longer than usual (with campus eateries still open). Encourage packed meals and lunches for those complaining about the cost of food on campus. If you run longer than the HSR operates for, have taxi chits prepared or ask people to hang on to their receipts.

For the summer meetings in June and July - attendance is still in effect. They normally take place at SRA training and the MSU retreat. Develop a schedule so as to maximize on-time attendance. Regardless - the speaker should start at the scheduled time (I still laugh thinking about the time Mike started the meeting at the retreat with barely anyone in the room).

Something to consider for all meetings, especially LONG meetings, is that you need to be cognizant of the Administrative Assistants and the Speaker, ensuring they take breaks (especially the Administrative Assistants). Legally speaking, the Admin Assistants aren't allowed to work more than 12 hours straight and they are not required to work past midnight. So, if it looks like its going long, remind the SRA of this.

## **EMERGENCY MEETINGS**

An emergency meeting can be called by the Vice-President (Administration) or by a petition of the SRA (this is outlined in our Bylaws). These meetings are different because attendance does not count at these meetings and there is no “10 days notice” required for the meeting as per usual. Near the end of the year there is always a lot of projects people are trying to cram through for approval. If you add another meeting, recall that that meeting will likely also get loaded with agenda items. I would avoid using this unless it truly is an “emergency.”

## **OFFICE HOURS**

Every year this is a topic of debate. I am honestly indifferent at this point so long as caucuses are demonstrating that they are working to engage with students (whatever that method may be). Removing the SRA space at Executive Board in conjunction to the WGEN switch we discussed may make this debate more focused - allowing members to engage students on campus wherever they choose. If you can think of a creative solution for this, implement it early and attempt to hold members accountable.

## **SRA ORIENTATION (SRA AND MSU RETREAT WEEKEND)**

Again, take a look at past itineraries and feedback + consult with your Board to establish the tone and direction you want to take. Consider asking the SRA what types of things they would like to see in the training as that may give you a good indication of where to focus (especially since it is a very new assembly). Send the dates out early so that you can avoid scheduling conflicts. It was also very frustrating to book rooms on campus and have people sleep at home. I think there is still a benefit to booking rooms - just be prepared to have members bail or have a prepared response when they “ask permission” to go home.

## **JUNE TRAINING - SRA ORIENTATION**

During Anna’s year, the name was changed to Orientation instead of training for the following reason (which I agree with):

*The reason why we moved away from SRA Training to SRA Orientation was because we felt as a BoD that while there is some ‘training’ that goes on, this weekend should be spent more so engaging members in discussion and preparing them for success. It is a subtle change but I think it made a difference in the approach we took to building sessions.*

Coordinate with housing and conference services to establish days for the training and give advance notice. I held dates for you - inquire and make changes if necessary. For the past two years, the length was extended to two nights which allows for more material and sessions to be incorporated.

Get the Speaker involved in this training to go over Assembly procedures. Also think about building in breakout sessions on whatever timely feedback topics are at hand.

This is also a good opportunity for the Board to teach about the MSU as an organization in general (it has a lot of intricacies). Finally, consider building in time for caucuses and committees to start working on their plans for the year.

Similar to any meeting you run, avoid “filler” sessions and ensure that what you are doing always has a purpose. While these trainings have varied slightly from year-to-year, don’t be afraid to do something new. For example, past transition reports make reference to guest speakers, etc.

My final note (which is relevant to all trainings) is to not forget about social time and to consider planning social activities that are not necessarily alcohol-centric (which has been raised as a concern in the past).

### **JULY TRAINING – MSU RETREAT**

- There is an SRA meeting this weekend as well.
- Collaboration between PTMs and the SRA is essential during this time as it is one of the few times during the year that everyone will be together.
- Find a venue that you like as soon as possible and place a hold on the date. During the summer these space book very quickly. The Kempenfelt Conference Centre worked really well for the price and accommodations. Regardless of where you go, make sure they are truly (site visit if you have to) accessible and willing to accommodate dietary restrictions.
- Anti-Oppression training should happen during this weekend since everyone is together. I won’t get too much into this as we have discussed this and I believe you are starting to establish a game plan with HRES.
- SOPs & Campus Events Assistant have been invited in the past. If these individuals are going to come, be sure to create sessions and programming for them - otherwise, it is just a vacation paid for by the MSU. This is especially true for the Campus Events Assistant.

### **BY-ELECTION TRAINING**

The Speaker took lead on this, but that does not necessarily need to be the case this year. Chat with the speaker to figure out a plan for supporting members of the assembly that will join late.

### **VLOGS**

This is also something that comes up every year with varying interest. Our policies indicate that they should be completed - so technically they should be done. That said, if you don’t plan on enforcing these, make a move to eliminate them from policies. My personal opinion - as long as members are reaching out to their constituents, the medium doesn’t really matter. VLOGS also bogged down the communications officer with a lot of work so as to avoid low quality videos being released. Chat with the

communications officer and introduce them to the assembly should they need any media related help.

## **READING MINUTES**

Victoria and Jess will take minutes. They are usually completed on time and are a great resource for referencing past conversations. Try your best to read to minutes to make sure they are accurate (they most likely will be). I started strong and got worse as the year went on - do your best to keep up!

## **APRIL ELECTIONS**

My only advice for VP Elections is to make yourself open and available to prospective candidates and always be available to the new Assembly should they have questions about your position. Your job is to have the best person elected as your successor (subjective - but it is the task at hand). Prepare questions for candidates in advance instead of scrambling during the actual meeting.

## **O CANADA**

The VP-Admin plays the national anthem at the start of every meeting. Show up early to load it on your laptop and skip YouTube ads - or sing it a cappella!

## **MSU Inc.**

Essentially, MSU Inc. is the SRA. The only difference is that the President chairs MSU Inc. (and you are the Deputy Speaker of this body). Anytime you see "Full Members" in bylaws or policies, it is referring to MSU Inc. Anything that is coming forward related to the corporation or large financial matters (e.g. expenditures), you would be in MSU Inc. Review [Corporate Bylaw 3](#) for more details on the purpose and role of MSU Inc. versus other governance bodies (such as EB or SRA).

Take some time to familiarize yourself with corporate bylaws and general policies. The Board of Directors has the power to approve certain policies. For example: This year we approved an *Accessible Customer Service Plan (AODA Policy)* which very few people knew about - see the bottom of the General Policies web page on the MSU website for reference.

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

You are a voting member of EB and the deputy chair. If you and the president are not available, this meeting can't occur. This meeting follows Roberts Rules of Order but is more relaxed. Sometimes, it is too relaxed, so ensure that meetings are moving along efficiently. The President, alongside Victoria Scott, keeps track of attendance of members. If members are showing up late or not at all, they will lose their seat. This information will be communicated to members at the training, but it is important to

check-in with the President and encourage them to remind members who are getting close to that point of losing their seats. Victoria is very helpful in keeping track of this information but it isn't your responsibility to inform members (that is the role of the President as Chair).

EB reports to the SRA at every meeting. The report writing will rotate through all the members of the committee. The quality of these reports has varied in the past, try and set clear expectations and perhaps develop a template so that there is some continuity. Naturally, the committee talks about a lot and I found that members would report with varying levels of detail.

Every member of EB will sign a confidentiality contract for when you go into closed session to discuss things such as employment matters (discipline, wages, etc).

As I previously mentioned, you are also responsible for creating an EB report schedule for PTMs with Victoria. Give them a template and sample reports. Also offer advice and be willing to accept reports early to provide feedback. Outline for PTMs exactly how these meetings will work (some PTMs were very nervous) and also let them know that they can leave after they are finished presenting. Try and encourage PTMs to be present to deliver the report so you don't always have to do it on their behalf. This helps if there are questions - they can be answered on the spot. This should be mandatory unless you have a legitimate reason like class. It may be good to schedule reminder emails or send them in general as sometimes PTMs would forget to submit.

Committee of the whole, as you have seen, is where we discuss the reports that were presented to us from services (questions, concerns, thoughts and forward thinking are the prompts I generally used). If there is feedback from this portion of the meeting, be sure to relay it to PTMs. We tried doing committee of the whole for reports from just the current week and just the previous week - decide with the committee what would work best for your thought processes.

EB in the past has been very "service" focussed. This year we introduced committee of the whole for advocacy. I recommend continuing this. Also, encourage John and Dan to give updates about the business units.

### **EB "RETREAT" - On Campus**

John and Victoria will take lead on this. If you are interested, ask about getting involved in itinerary development. In general, this is handled well by both of them and positions them as being resources if needed. I had no role in planning or developing this retreat and actually learned a bit by participating.

### **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

These tend to be a little bit messy. In advance of posting positions, communicate with Part Time Managers and personally review JD's so that you can make relevant changes

and get it passed at EB. Jess is a good resource if you are unsure what to look for/ include. In the past, job descriptions for new positions have passed prior to changing the executive structure in the operating policy. This is a bad HR practice. Also, avoid posting job descriptions that are “pending EB approval” - by engaging with managers in advance, this can be avoided.

The hours and wage associated with positions on Job Descriptions are handled by EB and the finance committee respectively.

## **BYLAWS AND POLICIES**

Take some time to familiarize yourself with them so that you can make reference to them when items of business are trying to be passed that are either redundant or in conflict. Again, ask to be cc'd on committee business so that you can stay up to date with what they are working on (avoid surprise SRA agenda items).

## **McMASTER UNIVERSITY STAFF AND DEPARTMENTS**

This section highlights the personnel and departments who you will work with or encounter in your role, as well as any projects that you may work on with the institution.

As the VP (Admin), you do interact with some members of University Administration but not as much as other members of the BoD. You will mostly work with people on Welcome Week or other collaborative projects that come up.

As we discussed, I found myself interacting primarily with senior administration at Admin-Con or social events (Ex. David Wilkinson). That said, your projects may warrant a closer working relationship

During the summer, you will likely have many introductory meetings - use them as an opportunity to chat about your vision for the year.

## **STUDENT AFFAIRS**

### **Sean van Koughnett, Dean of Students and AVP Student and Learning**

I worked with Sean primarily on space for WGEN, higher level Welcome Week discussions and through the Student Services Committee. He is a great asset for Student Affairs and is very open to meeting should you have a problem that needs to be addressed.

### **Gina Robinson, Director of the SSC and Associate Dean of Student Affairs**

Gina co-chaired WWAC with me this year. Since this is no longer happening, you will likely interact with her much less.

**Eva Bodrozic, Executive Assistant**

Eva can help you set up meetings with Sean and provide historical context for SLEF and USIF projects at the Student Services Committee. She keeps minutes at this committee - be sure to review them to make sure that conversations and decisions are accurately reflected in records.

**Michele Corbell - Student Success Centre (SSC)**

You will interact with Michele quite a bit at all levels of Welcome Week planning. She is also a resource when seeking historical context related to orientation.

**Jeremy Sandor, Manager of Student Leadership and Development at the SSC**

You will co-chair WWAC with Jeremy this year and work with him when developing the McMaster Student Leadership Conference. He and I met outside of regularly scheduled meetings to get on the same page with respect to certain aspects of orientation policy. You will also be working with him on a Welcome Week general policy which we did not get around to completing.

**UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT****Karen McQuigge, Director of Alumni Advancement**

I primarily interacted with Karen when looking for ways to incorporate Alumni into the various events and initiatives that the MSU does (and vice-versa). Teddy probably interacted with her the most given Alumni's involvement in Frost Week and Light Up the Night amongst other traditional events (Homecoming, etc). I attempted to start a conversation about the MSU getting involved in Mission2Mac early in the summer - but this conversation fell to the wayside.

**Gord Arbeau, Associate Director of Public Relations**

I didn't interact with Gord very much. As a note for public relations - monitor the daily news and other forms of media to ensure that the MSU is being recognized for events and initiatives. He is supposedly also responsible for signage on campus (possibly in conjunction with Roger) - which may be important for you to know for MACycle (Wooder and I discussed upgraded overhead signage).

**ADMINISTRATION****Roger Couldry, VP Administration**

Similar to some of the others, I had very little interaction with Roger outside of Admin Con and social events. Depending on how you choose to divide up tasks and projects

amongst the board - you may interact with him more. Big items of business would include Risk Management as well as the Community Rink project funded through SLEF.

## **SECURITY SERVICES**

**Terry Sullivan, Director of Security and Parking Services**

**Cathy O'Donnell, Manager of Security and Parking Services**

Cathy and Terry are good resources for large scale events on campus. It is good to keep them in the loop if something out of the ordinary is happening (it will be appreciated). I had a chance to interact with them at President's Advisory Committee meetings for Transportation and Parking (I attended these meetings instead of Teddy) - consider doing the same thing as I often had insight to offer with respect to services. I also had a chance to sit on a hiring board for Special Constables which was a very cool experience. They truly appreciate the student perspective and want to create a positive atmosphere for students on campus. Reach out to Cathy early to make sure she is available to sit on relevant hiring boards.

## **EVENT ATTENDANCE**

Try and attend (or have at least one Board member attend) the events that you are invited to. They are generally a good opportunity to network and stay updated with campus campus and community initiatives. You are also the keeper of the prized MSU pins should you or anyone else from the organization attending events/ meetings need one.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

- I never got around to completing a sustainability audit. I tasked it to MACGreen and it was never completed. Consider reviving this as it could give life to MACGreen and highlight areas in our work spaces and business units where we can improve practices. I am almost positive as I type this that our policies suggest that this happens annually.
- The MSU Office is a plastic bottle free zone - call people out on this.
- There have been a number of failed sustainability initiatives in the past (composting, etc). If you are looking for advice, contact the Office of Sustainability. Kate Whalen was my point of contact early in the term - but her position changed to be more academic focussed. If you are interested in chatting with her - I am sure she would be up for it. I also interacted with Shaheed from facility services to clear accounts associated with the closing of the MSU's role with the Teaching and Community Garden.

## **COMMITTEES:**

### ***ADMIN-CON***

“The Student-Administration Consultation Committee”, known as “AdminCon” is a meeting that happens every two months with the MSU BoD, MAPS, GSA, University Administrators (the President, Provost, VPs and AVPs when available) as well as the IRC. For Admin-Con, take some time to prepare what priorities you would like to collectively mention and prioritize with the Board.

### ***STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE***

The voting members of this committee are the four BoD and four University Administrators (Gina, Sean, as well as the AVP Faculty Susan Searls-Giroux and the University Librarian Vivian Lewis). Currently, John attends as well and Eva (who takes minutes). This year, the committee worked through SLEF recommendations, approved Welcome Week Levy changes and worked on the CAF agreement (which will be an ongoing discussion this year).

### ***STUDENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE***

This committee will be chaired by Scott (cool!) and has representation from the MSU (Clubs, Campus Events, Maroons), A&R, the SSC and Res Life. Teddy took lead on dealing with committee since his projects were heavily related (Frost Week, etc). Continue to push for this committee to actually work together to accomplish strong programming as past years have been unproductive (updates on what each respective area is doing).

### **HAMILTON COMMUNITY:**

The *Leadership Summit for Women* and *Change Camp* immediately come to mind:

**LSW** - Teddy was on the planning committee for this and I helped on the actual day of the conference since he was unable to attend. Discuss amongst yourselves who will sit on the planning committee and continue to support its growth.

**Change Camp** - Rodrigo is likely giving Spencer an in depth outline of transition related notes for Change Camp as the Community Engagement Coordinator had a large role. The event was very successful and there is interest from Susan Searls-Giroux and Network to continue it this year. Similar to the LSW, chat amongst yourselves to discuss who will sit on the planning committee. The committee will also be able to provide context for how things went this past year (Dave H. and Shiela Sammon from the Network for Community Campus Partnerships are fantastic).

### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

If there is one thing this year taught me, it is that dreams don't work unless you do. You are a hustler, and I excited to see all the amazing things you will do this year!



# MEMO

*From the office of the...*

## Vice-President (Administration)

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TO: Executive Board  
FROM: Vice-President (Administration)  
SUBJECT: Amendments to QSCC Job Descriptions  
DATE: May 11, 2015

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Dear Executive Board,

The SRA approved changes to the QSCC Operating Policy at 15C. Attached are the updated job descriptions to reflect these changes, created by the outgoing and incoming QSCC Coordinator and reviewed by both myself and last year's VP Admin.

The executive structure has been in place for a number of years, but the positions did not have job descriptions.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Yours,

Giuliana



# JOB DESCRIPTION

Volunteer

**Position Title:** QSCC Administrative Executive

**Term of Office:** September 1 – April 30

**Supervisor:** QSCC Coordinator

**Remuneration:** Volunteer

**Hours of Work:** 6 hours per week

## General Scope of Duties

The Administrative Executive will be responsible for internal administrative and organizational initiatives within the QSCC and its social space. Duties include but are not limited to assisting with volunteer training and coordinating, library maintenance, and other tasks as specified by the Coordinator. The ideal candidate is organized, has great mediation skills and has a good working knowledge of QSCC policies and operations.

## Major Duties and Responsibilities

Category	Percent	Specifics
Administrative Function	60%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aid the Coordinator in organization of Volunteers</li> <li>▪ Aid in training of Desk Shift Volunteers</li> <li>▪ Assist in finding volunteers to cover shifts in the event of illness or other scheduling conflict</li> <li>▪ Responsible for taking minutes at Bi-Weekly executive meetings</li> <li>▪ Organize and maintain the QSCC resource library</li> <li>▪ Assist with the organization of all volunteer recognition</li> <li>▪ Assist with room bookings, MUSC space, banner, space, etc.</li> </ul>
Communications Function	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relay shift schedules to volunteers, the executive, and the Coordinator</li> <li>▪ Ensure that rooms are booked in advance of training to give executives and volunteers plenty of advance notice</li> <li>▪ Maintain strong communication with Coordinator, fellow executives, and volunteers</li> <li>▪ Communicate promotional opportunities to the Promotions Executive and Coordinator</li> </ul>
Other	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Be an active member of the QSCC community</li> <li>▪ Other duties as directed by the Coordinator</li> </ul>

### **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

- Knowledge of Microsoft Office programs, email, and internet search engines
- Excellent organizational skills
- Attention to detail
- Ability to balance multiple duties
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Strong communication skills
- Be aware of QSCC collaborators on campus and the surrounding Hamilton area
- Working knowledge of the QSCC operations and policies is required
- An understanding of Safe Space

### **Effort & Responsibility**

- Effort required to ensure the internal scheduling of QSCC runs efficiently and smoothly
- Maintaining confidentiality of all individuals accessing the QSCC and peer support services.

### **Working Conditions**

- Most work will be performed in the QSCC office (shared space)
- Time demands may exceed stated hours of work

### **Training and Experience**

- Training will be provided by the QSCC Coordinator

### **Equipment**

- Shared use of the QSCC computer
- Shared use of the QSCC phone



# JOB DESCRIPTION

Volunteer

<b>Position Title:</b>	<b>QSCC Athletics Executive</b>
<b>Term of Office:</b>	September 1 – April 30
<b>Supervisor:</b>	QSCC Coordinator
<b>Remuneration:</b>	Volunteer
<b>Hours of Work:</b>	6 hours per week

## General Scope of Duties

The Athletics Executive will be responsible for all athletics initiatives of the QSCC, including but not limited to captaining QSCC intramural teams, securing and promoting Trans\* Friendly Swims, and promoting positive space values within Athletics and Recreation at Mac. The ideal candidate is passionate about inclusion in sports, dedicated, friendly, self-motivated, and can attend all QSCC intramural games.

## Major Duties and Responsibilities

Category	Percent	Specifics
Supervisory Function	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and run intramural teams for QSCC throughout the year</li> </ul>
Financial & Budgeting Function	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the QSCC Coordinator to complete any and all financial forms for intramural teams</li> <li>Retain financial information to receive reimbursement from the Coordinator</li> </ul>
Communications Function	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate problems within athletics initiatives to the QSCC Coordinator</li> <li>Work with the Coordinator and/or collaborators to ensure athletics initiatives are meeting the needs of LGBTQ+ students</li> <li>Maintain strong communication with the Coordinator, fellow executives, and volunteers</li> </ul>
Advertising & Promotions Function	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all athletic initiatives of the QSCC are advertised through collaboration with the Promotions Executive.</li> </ul>
Other	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with McMaster Athletics about initiatives including, but not limited to, "Trans Friendly Swims"</li> <li>Attend Bi-Weekly Executive Meetings</li> <li>Be an active member of the QSCC community</li> </ul>

## Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Organizational and time management skills required

- Strong teamwork skills
- Skills to work independently and manage others
- Highly approachable
- Comfortable talking to a wide variety of people
- An understanding of Safe Space

### **Effort & Responsibility**

- Responsible for overseeing all QSCC athletics
- Communication with University departments, especially McMaster Athletics and Recreation
- Responsible for maintaining an appropriate and positive image of the QSCC and MSU
- Maintaining confidentiality of all individuals accessing the QSCC

### **Working Conditions**

- Intramural location may vary, and are often in the evenings
- Time demands may exceed stated hours of work

### **Training and Experience**

- Training will be provided by the QSCC Coordinator

### **Equipment**

- Shared use of the QSCC phone
- Appropriate safety equipment to be used during all athletic events



# JOB DESCRIPTION

Volunteer

**Position Title:** QSCC Desk Shift Volunteer

**Term of Office:** September 1 - April 30

**Supervisor:** QSCC Coordinator

**Remuneration:** Volunteer

**Hours of Work:** 2 hours per week

## General Scope of Duties

As a QSCC Desk Shift Volunteer, your main responsibilities will be welcoming people into the centre, checking in/out library books and maintaining our Safe Space Policy. To be a volunteer, you will be required to attend one safe(r) space training, hold two 1 hour desk shifts in the QSCC per week, and be an active member of the QSCC community.

## Major Duties and Responsibilities

Category	Percent	Specifics
Reception Function	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communicate problems with the QSCC Coordinator and the Administration Executive</li> <li>▪ Greet users of the QSCC</li> <li>▪ Answer and direct inquiries from all individuals contacting the QSCC via telephone or walk-in</li> <li>▪ Maintain a neat appearance of the QSCC office area</li> <li>▪ Other duties as directed by the Coordinator</li> </ul>
Clerical Function	80%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff the QSCC's front desk</li> <li>▪ Check in and out books from the resource library</li> <li>▪ Monitor the space and sure that Safe Space policies are being upheld</li> <li>▪ Other duties as directed by the Coordinator</li> </ul>

## Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- An eagerness to learn about LGBTQ+ issues
- Interpersonal skills required to effectively interact with individuals
- Resourcefulness is required to provide information about the QSCC, University, and resources available
- Attention to detail
- Excellent organizational skills
- An understanding of Safe Space

## Effort & Responsibility

- Able to keep the QSCC open while the MSU office is open
- May be requested to aid in an event or tabling
- Ability to multi-task
- Maintaining confidentiality of all individuals accessing the QSCC

### **Working Conditions**

- Work is performed in the QSCC office
- Shifts are in pairs

### **Training and Experience**

- Training will be provided by the QSCC Coordinator

### **Equipment**

- Shared use of library computer
- Shared use of the QSCC phone



# JOB DESCRIPTION

Volunteer

<b>Position Title:</b>	QSCC Health and Wellness Executive
<b>Term of Office:</b>	September 1 - April 30
<b>Supervisor:</b>	QSCC Coordinator
<b>Remuneration:</b>	Volunteer
<b>Hours of Work:</b>	6 hours per week

## General Scope of Duties

The Health and Wellness Executive will be responsible for maintaining an open discussion on sexual and mental health within and outside the QSCC. Duties include advertising events related to health, organizing and training of Peer Support Volunteers, ensuring all information offered by the QSCC is current, and working with the Athletics Executive and Intersecting Identities Executive on various events. The ideal candidate will be familiar or will familiarize themselves with health services offered by McMaster, self-motivated, strong leadership skills, and approachable.

## Major Duties and Responsibilities

Category	Percent	Specifics
Supervisory Function	45%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizing peer support times</li> <li>Work with the Coordinator to train QSCC staff in peer support</li> </ul>
Financial & Budgeting Function	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the QSCC Coordinator ensure that the peer support training budget aligns with the QSCC service budget</li> <li>Retain financial information to receive reimbursement from the Coordinator</li> </ul>
Communications Function	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Coordinator to ensure peer support is meeting the needs of students</li> <li>Collaborate with other Executives, Coordinator, Campus Partners, and Hamilton Partners</li> <li>Maintain strong communication with the Coordinator, fellow executives, and volunteers</li> </ul>
Advertising & Promotions Function	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborating with the Promotions Executive to promote events, workshops, and applications</li> </ul>
Other	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote anti-oppression policies within the QSCC space and events.</li> <li>Attend Bi-Weekly Executive meetings</li> <li>Be an active member of the QSCC Community</li> </ul>

### **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

- Awareness and understanding topics associated with the QSCC (ie cissexism, transphobia, heteronormativity, ableism, etc)
- Knowledge of LBGTQ+ identities and services in Hamilton
- Knowledge of related health services on and off campus
- Knowledge of QSCC initiatives is preferred
- Good one-on-one communication skills
- Strong organizational skills
- An understanding of Safe Space

### **Effort & Responsibility**

- Continuing knowledge of topics related to the position
- Able to function well with people in crisis
- Maintaining confidentiality of all individuals accessing the QSCC and its peer support services
- Effort required to contact health professionals on and off campus and maintain a professional relationship
- Be aware of health-related events going on at McMaster and in the Hamilton area

### **Working Conditions**

- Space location may vary based on need of individual peer support case
- 
- Time demands may exceed stated hours of work

### **Training and Experience**

- Training will be provided
- Executive is expected to do continuing training for their role either independently or with aid from the Coordinator, including Mental Health 101 and Question Persuade Refer (QPR)

### **Equipment**

- Shared use of the QSCC phone
- Shared use of QSCC Coordinator office



# JOB DESCRIPTION

Volunteer

<b>Position Title:</b>	<b>QSCC Intersecting Identities Executive</b>
<b>Term of Office:</b>	September 1 – April 30
<b>Supervisor:</b>	QSCC Coordinator
<b>Remuneration:</b>	Volunteer
<b>Hours of Work:</b>	6 hours per week

## General Scope of Duties

The Intersecting Identities Executive will be responsible for creating an inclusive and oppression free culture within the QSCC through events, training, and advocacy. The role of Intersecting Identities is to promote inclusion and diversity within and outside the centre and ensure the complexities of intersecting identities are considered in all QSCC initiatives, and to facilitate and organize the QSCC Book Club. The ideal candidate will be familiar or will familiarize themselves with anti-oppression concepts, be dedicated to inclusion, and self-motivated.

## Major Duties and Responsibilities

Category	Percent	Specifics
Financial & Budgeting Function	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the QSCC Coordinator to ensure that budgets for Intersecting Identities programming aligns with the QSCC service budget</li> <li>Retain financial information to receive reimbursement from the Coordinator</li> </ul>
Communications Function	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aid the Coordinator in reaching out to potential collaborators and other organizations at McMaster and the surrounding Hamilton area.</li> <li>Communicate problems within the QSCC to the Coordinator</li> <li>Maintain strong communication with the Coordinator, fellow executives, and volunteers</li> <li>Work with the Coordinator, Promotions Executive, Collaborators or other involved parties to ensure that all events, initiatives, and collaborations of the QSCC are accessible and inclusive whenever possible.</li> </ul>
Advertising & Promotions Function	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the Promotion Executive and the Coordinator to ensure that events, initiatives, and collaborations being promoted are reflective of the diverse LGBTQ+ community at McMaster.</li> </ul>
Other	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Run monthly LGBTQ+ themed book club meetings</li> </ul>

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|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Create and review initiatives of the QSCC to ensure the service is inclusive to all members of the LGBTQ+ community, keeping a particular focus on intersecting identities.</li><li>▪ Attend Bi-Weekly Executive meetings</li><li>▪ Be an active member of the QSCC Community</li></ul> |
|--|---|

### **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

- Strong working knowledge of anti oppression policies
- Strong communication skills
- Knowledge of LGBTQ+ identities and services in Hamilton is an asset
- Knowledge of QSCC initiatives preferred
- An understanding of Safe Space

### **Effort & Responsibility**

- Continuing education on a diverse range of topics relating to diversity and intersecting identities with a strong focus on how they relate to the LGBTQ+ identity
- Maintaining confidentiality of all individuals accessing the QSCC

### **Working Conditions**

- Time demands may exceed stated hours of work
- Duties primarily take place in the QSCC office but may take place outside the space, and even off campus

### **Training and Experience**

- Training will be provided
- Executive is expected to do continuing training for their role either independently or with aid from the Coordinator

### **Equipment**

- Shared use of the QSCC phone



# JOB DESCRIPTION

Volunteer

<b>Position Title:</b>	QSCC Newcomers Executive
<b>Term of Office:</b>	September 1 - April 30
<b>Supervisor:</b>	QSCC Coordinator
<b>Remuneration:</b>	Volunteer
<b>Hours of Work:</b>	6 hours per week

## General Scope of Duties

The Newcomers Executive will be responsible for all Newcomers meetings held by the QSCC. This includes booking rooms for all Newcomers meetings, organizing and training Newcomers Facilitators, promoting Newcomers and meeting times and locations. The ideal candidate is compassionate, can facilitate discussion, has leadership skills, and has a strong working knowledge of safe space policy.

## Major Duties and Responsibilities

Category	Percent	Specifics
Supervisory Function	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with the Coordinator to supervise facilitators for Newcomers Meetings</li> <li>Aid in training of Facilitators</li> </ul>
Communications Function	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate problems to QSCC Coordinator</li> <li>Work with the QSCC Coordinator to ensure Newcomers Meetings are meeting the needs of students</li> <li>Maintain strong communication with the Coordinator, other executives, and volunteers</li> </ul>
Advertising & Promotions Function	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Promotions Executive to ensure that relevant information is properly circulated to relevant communities</li> </ul>
Other	40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize and oversee workshops, discussion groups, and other such meetings on a weekly basis, usually in the form of Newcomers Meetings</li> <li>Attend Bi-Weekly Executive Meetings</li> <li>Be an active member of the QSCC Community</li> </ul>

## Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Prior experience attending or planning leadership conferences or workshops is an asset
- Strong communication skills, and teamwork skills
- One-on-one communication skills is an asset
- Being aware of LGBTQ+ and Mental Health resources on and off campus Knowledge of QSCC initiatives is preferred
- An understanding of Safe Space

### **Effort & Responsibility**

- Continuing knowledge of topics related to the position
- Responsible for maintaining confidentiality of all individuals accessing the QSCC, and peer support services
- Expected to interact closely with groups of students

### **Working Conditions**

- Meeting location may vary
- Time demands may exceed stated hours of work

### **Training and Experience**

- Previous leadership experience is an asset
- Training will be provided by the QSCC Coordinator

### **Equipment**

- Shared use of the QSCC phone



# JOB DESCRIPTION

Volunteer

<b>Position Title:</b>	QSCC Newcomers Facilitator
<b>Term of Office:</b>	September 1 – April 30
<b>Supervisor:</b>	QSCC Coordinator
<b>Remuneration:</b>	Volunteer
<b>Hours of Work:</b>	2 hours per week

## General Scope of Duties

The role of Newcomers Facilitators is to encourage discussion and engage participants at Newcomers meetings. Facilitators will also be responsible for maintaining safe-space and resolving any interpersonal conflicts that may arise. The ideal candidate has excellent group mediation skills

## Major Duties and Responsibilities

Category	Percent	Specifics
Communications Function	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain strong communication with the Newcomers Executive</li> <li>▪ Report to the Newcomers Executive</li> <li>▪ Communicating problems to the QSCC Coordinator or Newcomers Executive</li> <li>▪ Attend two Newcomers Meetings a month</li> </ul>
Facilitation Function	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Facilitate the Newcomers Meetings as needed</li> <li>▪ Attend at least two Newcomers meetings per month</li> <li>▪ Enforce the Safe Space policies of the QSCC within Newcomers Meetings</li> </ul>

## Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Prior experience attending or leading leadership conferences or workshops is an asset
- Excellent speaking, listening, and facilitation skills
- Strong communication skills, and teamwork skills
- Comfortable with one-on-one as well as group discussion communication
- Being aware of LGTBQ+ and Mental Health resources on and off campus
- An understanding of Safe Space

## Effort & Responsibility

- Continuing knowledge of topic related to the position (provided by the Newcomers Executive)
- Maintaining confidentiality of all individuals accessing the QSCC, and Newcomers services
- Expected to interact closely with groups of students

### **Working Conditions**

- Meeting location may vary
- Time demands may exceed stated hours of work

### **Training and Experience**

- Previous leadership experience is an asset
- Training will be provided by the QSCC Coordinator and the Newcomers Executive

### **Equipment**

- Shared use of the QSCC phone



# JOB DESCRIPTION

Volunteer

**Position Title:** QSCC Peer Support Volunteer

**Term of Office:** September 1 – April 30

**Supervisor:** QSCC Coordinator

**Remuneration:** Volunteer

**Hours of Work:** 2 hours per week

## General Scope of Duties

As a peer support volunteer, you will be asked to attend a full-day training session, which will be announced after the selection process has been completed, attend monthly/bi-monthly meetings, and be available at least one-hour peer support session per week. The peer support volunteers shall actively listen, provide emotional support, and refer students to on-campus or off-campus resources depending on the needs of the individual.

## Major Duties and Responsibilities

Category	Percent	Specifics
Communications Function	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Working with Health and Wellness Executive to organize peer support times</li> <li>▪ Provide support through in-person peer support sessions</li> <li>▪ Attend all training sessions</li> <li>▪ Conduct peer support in the framework used by the QSCC</li> <li>▪ Report to the Health and Wellness Executive</li> <li>▪ Uphold confidentiality policies</li> <li>▪ Communicate problems to QSCC Coordinator or Health and Wellness Executive</li> <li>▪ Attend monthly Peer Support Volunteer meetings</li> </ul>

## Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Empathetic
- Desire to assist others
- Strong communication skills, and teamwork skills
- Comfortable with one-on-one communication
- Being aware of LGBTQ+ and Mental Health resources on campus and the surrounding Hamilton area
- Commitment and dedication
- An understanding of Safe Space

### **Effort & Responsibility**

- Continue education with Health and Wellness Executive
- Maintaining confidentiality of all individuals accessing the QSCC, and peer support services.

### **Working Conditions**

- Location varies based off needs of peer support case
- Hours of work vary based on the needs of individuals accessing the service

### **Training and Experience**

- Relevant training is preferred
- Training will be provided by the QSCC Coordinator, and the Health and Wellness Executive

### **Equipment**

- Shared use of the QSCC phone



# JOB DESCRIPTION

Volunteer

<b>Position Title:</b>	QSCC Promotions Executive
<b>Term of Office:</b>	September 1 – April 30
<b>Supervisor:</b>	QSCC Coordinator
<b>Remuneration:</b>	Volunteer
<b>Hours of Work:</b>	6 hours per week

## General Scope of Duties

The Promotions Executive will be responsible for the planning and execution of all major events of the QSCC, including, but not limited to Gayzer Tag, Drag Show, the Mixer, and MacPride. In addition this position will be responsible for external initiatives of the QSCC, including but not limited to advertising, social media and website communications, and the Ally program. They will also be responsible for all tabling initiatives of the QSCC by organizing table shifts and table content. The ideal candidate is organized, has event planning experience or skills, is comfortable interacting with individuals individually or in large groups, and has leadership skills.

## Major Duties and Responsibilities

Category	Percent	Specifics
Financial & Budgeting Function	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the QSCC Coordinator to ensure that promotional budgets align with the QSCC service budget</li> <li>Retain financial information to receive reimbursement from the Coordinator</li> </ul>
Communications Function	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aid the Coordinator in understanding the QSCC's promotional needs.</li> <li>Aid the Coordinator, Executives, Collaborators, and others in promoting/advertising initiatives.</li> <li>Communicate with Underground on a regular basis to ensure materials being produced are what is wanted and needed</li> <li>Maintain strong communication with the Coordinator, fellow executives, and volunteers</li> </ul>
Advertising & Promotions Function	70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aid the Coordinator in keeping the website up to date</li> <li>Ensure all promotions of the QSCC are accessible</li> <li>Promote the events, initiatives, and collaborations of the LGBTQ+ community at McMaster and surrounding Hamilton area.</li> <li>Operate the QSCC Ally mailing list.</li> <li>Ensure that any and all promotional material produced by</li> </ul>

		<p>QSCC follows the MSU Visual Identity Guide and are primarily created by the Underground</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Responsible for submitting all advertisements to be circulated through various MSU channels, including but not limited to <i>The Silhouette</i>, the MSU webpage, and the campus screens network</li> </ul>
Other	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aid the Coordinator or independently plan major events of the QSCC. The events include, but are not limited to: Gazyer Tag, Drag Show, MacPride, and Mixer/Formal.</li> <li>▪ Participate in Bi-Weekly Executive Meetings</li> <li>▪ Be an active member of the QSCC Community</li> </ul>

### Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Very good organizational and time management skills
- Good teamwork skills
- Interpersonal and communications skills to foster positive relationships within and outside of QSCC
- Artistic and creative skills
- Knowledge of QSCC initiatives and events is an asset.
- An understanding of Safe Space

### Effort & Responsibility

- Effort required to think creatively
- Effort required to design and implement promotional campaigns
- Establish and maintain professional connections on and off campus
- Maintaining confidentiality of all individuals accessing the QSCC

### Working Conditions

- Most work can be completed in a shared office space
- Time demands may exceed stated hours of work

### Training and Experience

- Training will be provided by the QSCC Coordinator
- Previous experience with LGBTQ+ issues is an asset.

### Equipment

- Shared use of the QSCC phone
- Personal computer



The MSU Space Audit was conducted in the fall term of 2014. Below I have briefly summarized some of the problems and potential actions items that were highlighted by Part Time Managers through the Space Audit.

### **MacBreadBin**

- not enough storage space for food (used some of MacGreen's cabinet)
- metal cabinet shelves are bending under the weight of canned goods
- confidentiality issues when filling out vouchers on a computer in shared space.
- storage of promo materials is difficult as they are large
- no way to store fresh produce

### **Diversity Services**

- space is inaccessible and small
- lack of storage space (new Bridges equipment, ball pit, Pangaea materials, etc).
- no key access to committee room during 2014-2015 year
- limited ventilation and old carpet

### **EFRT**

- limited airflow
- out of date bathroom in need of renovations
- limited storage space

### **MACgreen**

- storage of promo materials is difficult as they are large

### **PSL**

- inaccessible and far from bus stops

### **Student Community Support Network**

- number of people in the committee room at times

### **SWHAT**

- sometimes room gets crowded during a shift

### **Elections**

- extra lockable cabinet
- rearranging furniture to be more inviting



### **Maroons**

- not a lot of foot traffic

### **QSCC**

- no space for confidential meetings
- hard to see social space
- lack of foot traffic

### **TAC**

- individual cabinet (not shared with advocacy)

If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact me.

Best,

Giuliana Guarna  
Vice President (Administration)  
McMaster Students Union  
905 525 9140 x 23250



Hello Executive Board,

During their 2014-2015 term's, Teddy Saull and Jacob Brodka worked diligently in partnership with the university to secure a permanent space for WGEN. In addition, EB set a deadline of finding permanent space for WGEN as May 1, 2015. As of May 1, 2015 the university was unable to find a space suitable for WGEN. As such, both the outgoing and the current Board of Directors propose the following changes in space allocation to ensure that WGEN has a permanent operating space for the 2015-2016 year.

**SWHAT --> Sharing with the Maroons**

**WGEN --> SWHAT Office**

**SRA --> committee room during normal business hours**

Both the outgoing and the current BoD felt that this proposal was the best way to ensure that all services had the space that they required for daily operations. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me!

Thank you in advance,

**Giuliana Guarna**

Vice President (Administration)

McMaster Students Union

[vpadmin@msu.mcmaster.ca](mailto:vpadmin@msu.mcmaster.ca)

905 525 9140 x 23250



# MEMO

*From the office of the...*  
**MAROONS COORDINATOR**

---

TO: Members of the Executive Board  
FROM: Nicole Vandenneuvel  
SUBJECT: Maroons Office Space Allocation  
DATE: Wednesday May 20th

---

First of all, congratulations on your respective roles on sitting on this board and I'm excited to use this body as a critical piece to ask important questions about my service and how we can improve moving forward. I am writing this memo because I have a few concerns with regards to the Maroons Office space allocation proposal that I would like to have addressed when considering how to allocate space effectively.

## CURRENT USAGE

Over the past several years the Maroons have gone through a pretty important rebrand and culture change that has shifted the demands placed on the service. As this board may be new to what we do as a service I'd like to provide some background. The Maroons operate under three pillars:

- a) Athletics: to promote spirit among athletic events at McMaster University; this involves leading cheers at varsity games and setting up a free intramural program for first year students, McMaster undergraduate students and Maroons Representatives to participate in.
- b) Social: events planned by the service to 'bridge the gap' between the McMaster student population and the MSU. This pillar includes events like RepFest, campfires, movie nights and the First Year Student Formal which was planned through our Social Committee, probably our most active of our three committees of consistently engaging with first year students through weekly social meetings held at our office. This past year our attendance for these social meetings was approximately 20-40 first year students per meeting.
- c) Promotions: utilizing our social media and physical resources to help promote the many services the McMaster Student Union offers to students.

The Maroons Office is primarily used for three reasons:

- a) A resource space for students looking to get involved with both us or the community to come and reach out and ask questions. Although we have no formal tracking of this number, with over 25 office hours a week, I'd estimate we get 2-3 students a day for drop ins asking questions. This year, when applying for this position and consultation with both Jimmy Long and Mike Gill I'd like to improve this aspect of our space through collaboration with Spark and First Year Council using **joint office hours**.
- b) Storage space for rep equipment. Although this doesn't seem like a major concern, housing 6+ flags, a variety of drums and noise makers as well as face-paint, poster making supplies and countless Shinerama and Terry Fox supplies, this space is crucial to have access to at all times. The reality of this service is we frequently get asked to attend events on incredibly short notice and having access is vital to maintain campus presence and pride.
- c) Meeting space, workspace and team building atmosphere. This office serves as an effective meeting space for our 7 person maroons executive team and as a workspace to be able to accomplish service work while engaging with students and reps in the office. With the Maroons, volunteer retention and team morale is of the utmost importance for the service to remain effective. As such, this space is really great for team-bonding and building a strong team dynamic.

## CONCERNS

- 1) **Not Enough Space:** Although I think that Serena and I, who get along very well would work fine in a space together, having SWHAT, Maroons, Shinerama and engaging with Spark and FYC would make this space incredibly crowded. This office is very small and having potentially 4 PTMs working in there at the same time could have a negative effect on all of these services. Further, for SWHAT to continue their great volunteer retention they will need to have a table setup for board games and other activities, something not conducive to the space in it's current configuration.
- 2) **Welcome Week:** With all three of SWHAT, Maroons and Shinerama operational for welcome week this will present a few different problems. Welcome Week is our services' busiest and most hectic time of the year, where the office is a crucial piece of the puzzle. On the average night, Maroons will start debrief between 11PM and 1AM. Without the ability to use the office during this crucial time, we would be forced to use another room in MUSC. With only one key and the Maroons Coordinators responsibilities from the week differing significantly at times from the team (Res Opening Ceremonies, Airbands etc.), the Maroons executive wouldn't be able to readily access the office, presenting a potential health concern in severe circumstances. Access to this office is incredibly important during welcome week.
- 3) **Athletics + Social Committees:** During the year, two of our biggest ways to engage with students is through our athletic and social committees. To accommodate for class scheduling, our social committees are usually located at MUSC B111 (The Maroons Office) into the evening (7-9PM). It's valuable to have these meetings in this location to showcase the space as a resource centre. Further for athletics the ability to access the office into the evening to keep reps belongings and flags/drums/facepaint etc. is important.
- 4) **Collaboration:** Finally, the last concern I have is simply the utility of putting these two services together. Although once again, I don't foresee a problem with regards to the working relationship between part-time managers but I think it's an odd combination to put together two services who do not share a similar purpose or vision. Further, putting a service together like Spark, FYC or Horizons would be more valuable to all services involved due to this exact reason.

## RECOMMENDATIONS / SUGGESTIONS

When writing this memo and formulating my thoughts, I wanted to write for the purpose of getting all my ideas out there such that in the meeting I would be able to articulate myself effectively. As WGEN is in desperate need of a space, I didn't want to make this report without suggesting potential alternatives.

- 1) **Spark/FYC Collaboration.** As previously stated in this memo, I think there is an incredible amount of growth and potential for collaboration between the Maroons, Spark and First Year Council. If space is an issue, I might suggest that moving Spark and First Year Council into the Maroons office would make more sense when grouping our service spaces together.
- 2) **Investigate spaces that are only used for 9-5PM.** The space for SHEC may be an effective space for SWHAT considering the safe space doesn't run into the evening and doesn't have the hectic program scheduling of the Maroons. Further, as traffic was identified as a potential downside of the space, I think SWHAT moving into our space will have a negative impact on the number of walks given, but ultimately that is for this Board and the PTM to consider.

This space is a valuable component of the Maroons functioning as a service and although I completely understand the rationale for why this space allocation proposal was brought forth, I believe it would be a dis-service to not voice my concerns as to how this change could potentially negatively impact my service. If you have any questions with respect to any of the aforementioned items in this memo, please feel free to ask, I am very passionate continuously improving the way this service operates and how it services students in a positive way.

Thank you,



**Nicole Vandenheuvel**  
Maroons Coordinator  
[maroons@msu.mcmaster.ca](mailto:maroons@msu.mcmaster.ca)



# Memorandum

*From the office of the...*

## Maroons Coordinator

---

TO: Members of the Executive Board  
FROM: Nicole Vandenneuval, Maroons Coordinator  
SUBJECT: Operating Policy 1.9.4  
DATE: May 20, 2015

---

Hello,

I have attached the edited version of the Maroons Operating Policy 1.9.4 with the tracked changes. These changes include;

- Minor wording changes to include increasing McMaster pride and spirit both on campus and within the McMaster community
- Changing "Spirit Leader" to Coordinator, as the term Spirit Leader has not been used for several years
- Changing the "Coordinators" to Executives, for the same reason as above and to avoid confusion
- Adding in the Public Relations Executive (which is a new position formed this year)
- Changing the selection process of executives as they are hired by the incoming and outgoing Coordinator and the outgoing executives for their respective positions (not a non-returning representative)
- Changing Welcome Week Representatives to Maroons representative as the Maroons is a full year commitment and within that adding a line about responsibilities throughout the year

Best,

**Nicole Vandenneuval**  
Maroons Coordinator  
[maroons@msu.mcmaster.ca](mailto:maroons@msu.mcmaster.ca)



## Operating Policy 1.9.4 – Maroons

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To promote campus spirit and McMaster pride amongst McMaster undergraduate students;
- 1.2 To facilitate leadership opportunities for students;
- 1.3 To represent the McMaster Students Union at events on campus- and in the greater McMaster community events.

### 2. OPERATING PARAMETERS

- 2.1 The Maroons shall be a completely student-run service of the MSU dedicated to increasing the level of student leadership, school spirit, and pride;
- 2.2 The Maroons shall facilitate a leadership committee for students to plan, ~~and~~ execute and attend events that promote school involvement, spirit and pride on the McMaster campus and in the community;
- 2.3 The Maroons shall work with the Shinerama/Terry Fox Campaign Coordinator to provide support and volunteers for the Shinerama campaign and during all of Welcome Week;

### 3. PERSONNEL STRUCTURE

- 3.1 The Coordinator (~~Spirit Leader~~), who shall:
  - 3.1.1 Be responsible for managing all activities of the Maroons and represent the MSU as an Orientation planner for Welcome Day and Welcome Week;
  - 3.1.2 Perform duties outlined in the Maroons ~~Spirit Leader~~ Coordinator job description;
  - 3.1.3 Be hired by a hiring committee truck by the Executive Board that shall consist of:
    - 3.1.3.1 The outgoing ~~Spirit Leader~~ Maroons Coordinator;
    - 3.1.3.2 The Vice-President (Administration);
    - 3.1.3.3 One (1) Executive Board Member.

Approved 97R (Mar 15/98)  
Revised 98N (Jan 24/99)  
Revised 03P (Mar 14/04)  
Revised 04F (July 25/04)  
Revised 08P (Feb 8/09)

Revised 09P (Feb 28/10)  
Revised 12B (Apr 15/12)

- 3.2 The Social ~~Coordinators~~Executive (2), who shall:
  - 3.2.1 Be responsible for planning and running social events for students and the Maroons with the help of the Social Committee;
  - 3.2.2 Perform duties outlined in the Maroons Social ~~Coordinator~~Executive job description;
  - 3.2.3 Be selected by the incoming and outgoing Maroons ~~Spirit Leader~~Coordinator and ~~one non-returning Maroons Coordinator~~the outgoing Maroons Social Executives through an application and interview process.
  
- 3.3 The Athletic ~~Coordinators~~Executive (2), who shall:
  - 3.3.1 Be responsible for promoting Athletic and Recreational activities for the McMaster community with the help of the Athletic Committee;
  - 3.3.2 Perform duties outlined in the Maroons Athletic ~~Coordinator~~Executive job description;
  - 3.3.3 Be selected by the incoming and outgoing Maroons ~~Spirit Leader~~Coordinator and ~~the outgoing Maroons Athletic Executives~~ ~~one non-returning Maroons Coordinator~~through an application and interview process.
  
- 3.4 The Promotions ~~Coordinator~~Executive, who shall:
  - 3.4.1 Be responsible for advertising and promoting the Maroons and events with the help of the ~~Promotions Committee~~Street Team;
  - 3.4.2 Perform duties outlined in the Maroons Promotions ~~Coordinator~~Executive job description;
  - 3.4.3 Be selected by the incoming and outgoing Maroons ~~Spirit Leader~~Coordinator and ~~one non-returning Maroons Coordinator~~the outgoing Maroons Promotions Executive through an application and interview process.
  
- 3.5 The Public Relations Executive, who shall:
  - 3.5.1 Be responsible for advertising and promoting the Maroons and events with the help of the Promotions Committee;
  - 3.5.2 Perform duties outlined in the Maroons Public Relations Executive job description;
  - 3.5.3 Be selected by the incoming and outgoing Maroons Coordinator and the outgoing Public Relations Executive through an application and interview process
  
- 3.5.6 The ~~Welcome Week~~Maroons Representatives, who shall:
  - 3.6.1 Be responsible for promoting spirit and McMaster pride during Welcome Week and assisting with Welcome Week events;
  - 3.6.2 Be responsible for promoting campus spirit and McMaster pride amongst undergraduate students throughout the academic year in ways including but not limited to:
    - 3.6.2.1 Involvement in Maroons events through Athletics, Social and Promotions Committees.

3.6.2.2 Involvement and promotions of MSU events and campaigns

3.5.1

~~3.5.2~~3.6.3 Perform duties outlined in the Maroons ~~Welcome Week~~  
Representatives job description;

~~3.5.3~~3.6.4 Be selected by the Maroons ~~Coordinator~~Spirit Leader and Maroons  
~~Executive Team~~Coordinators within four weeks of the hiring of the Maroons ~~Spirit~~  
~~Leader~~ through an application and interview process.