

COMMERCE YEAR PLAN

SRA Commerce
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Hello Everyone,

This year is going to be an incredible exciting year within the commerce faculty. We have decided that we are going to focus on the a variety of issues that commerce students struggle with. The issues we have identified are issues that we have all heard time and time again need to be addressed. Issues like career support, extra-curricular hiring practices, first year commerce students events, and increased communication with commerce students. As a caucus we believe that tackling these issues will matter to the average commerce student. It will MATTER to the first year student who is looking to get involved with the DeGroot community, when there is more helpful information regarding extra-curricular position hiring. Improving the food options on campus will MATTER to many students across our faculty and across all of McMaster who struggle in that regard. Increasing communication among commerce students will MATTER to students because it will show them that their SRA is there to fight for them, support them and care for them. We hope that you will read through our plan and hold us accountable to our ideas, as we are excited the see their success this year.

Kind Regards,

The Commerce Caucus

Objective 1	Supporting DeGroot clubs and associations with hiring practices.
Description	Unlike the MSU and their hiring practices, most DeGroot clubs do not have (a) standardize job format, (b) centralized location, or (c) realistic job preview. Which may lead to some commerce students not getting involved in executive roles or getting involved with a club as a member in the first place.
Benefits	Additional support will allow more students to get involved and help sustain the clubs to continue with good quality. This will allow commerce students to better challenge themselves for roles they may never have take on before while simultaneously giving them a realistic expectations for hours, the roles' duties, and if they are actually interested in this field.
Difficulties	Working with all the groups and ensuring all needs are met for each club/association, and ensuring that a centralized location can be done and properly maintained.
Long-term implications	This can set up the framework to ensure that clubs/associations can maintain the same or better quality for the long term future, which may ultimately benefit students when the clubs/associations have better relationships with companies, better events, and allowing personal growth for those who apply for these executive roles.
How?	Creating a template for each club/association to input data into in first semester. Next, discussing with the DeGroot Commerce Society on implementing this through their website, which may be a potential source for a centralized place. Continue, by promoting through social media, reaching out, and word of mouth of the job posting when clubs/association start their respective hiring process. Finally, by reforming any improvements for next year's hiring process and ensuring that each club/association is happy with their executive structure/job posting (if roles evolve into something else).
Partners	DeGroot Commerce Society, DeGroot Clubs (DMA, DAA, DHRA, DFA, AIS, DWIB, DOA, etc.), VP administration (to help review good practices are being followed before implementation).

Objective 2	Improve DeGroote’s co-curricular offerings and career support to students.
Description	There is a significant amount of funding that goes towards programming that supports the job searches done by DeGroote students, but there are key disconnects that happen perennially between DeGroote, the DCS, and DeGroote students in terms of support needed and who is going to take on certain responsibilities.
Benefits	More attuned programming will result in DeGroote students dramatically improving their job readiness through soft skills development, more relevant networking events, and additional support systems. It will also increase the percentage of students that successfully find summer, internship, and post-graduate positions.
Difficulties	DeGroote has established some of their programs in very rigid outlines that students are required to fall into, without flexibility to accommodate based on specific circumstances. Additionally, there exists the aforementioned disconnect in terms of who takes on certain responsibilities and programs between different groups within DeGroote, which is difficult to change based on the current structure and routines in place.
How? First Semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assist in the development of the DeGroote Internship Association if applicable. - Regularly meet with DCS President and VP Academic in order to create a strong set of asks to take to DeGroote administration. - Liaise with the MES to discuss any successes/failures that they have encountered with their career office and internship/co-op program. - Develop DeGroote Experience Survey - Work with CPD, Jennifer McCleary, and Emad Mohammad to review the asks from the DCS in terms of responsibility breakdown and program enhancements. - Implement mutually accepted solutions through the DCS and CPD.
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased student satisfaction - Improve DeGroote external standing in corporate environment - Increase rate of placement for student job searches
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CPD - DCS - Potential DeGroote Internship Association - Jennifer McCleary

Objective 3	Increase and enhance the communication between the Commerce Caucus and the Commerce students
Description	We have been elected as representatives for our constituents, commerce students. Thusly, it is a key responsibility of ours to effectively communicate what is happening within the SRA to these students. Currently, our constituents are not engaged with the goings on of the SRA, and it is our goal during this upcoming academic year, to heavily increase engagement.
Benefits	By engaging more students online, we are able to better represent our constituents and be more transparent with our goings on as a caucus.
Difficulties	Sustaining social media campaigns that meet the needs of students, and effectively engage them can be a long term project that loses momentum.
Long-term implications	Our work will set a foundation that can be utilized by the SRA Commerce Caucus for many years to come. By engaging students this year, there the potential that it will continue over the course of their academic journey. Additionally, we project that this project will dramatically increase our constituents awareness of the SRA. This can definitely lead to a significant peak of involvement during upcoming years.
How?	Social media is the most effective medium through which to engage commerce students. Our plan is to effectively use our social media platforms to promote events, opportunities and discussion topics towards the students of DeGroote. We plan to be flexible with our strategy throughout the year, as the realm of social media is constantly evolving. An example of this will be our use of the newly upgraded Facebook Video feature, which allows extensive reach of videos through auto-play features. Key areas of growth will be through our relationship with the DSC, and collaboration with the DCS Social Media Manager to promote our largest projects.
cia	DeGroote Commerce Society (DCS), VP Marketing, MSU Social Media Manager, The Dean's Bulletin

Objective 4	Supporting students with more accessible food options
Description	Food prices for meals on campus have steadily increased over the past few years and transparency for prices on food items not being clearly displayed is simply bad practice. The increase in food prices has already indiscriminately affected students with financial difficulties which puts a strain on students' health and academic performance. We need to allocate more funding towards a student assistance meal program that will enhance food accessibility on campus. The MSU needs to reach out to Hospitality Services and possibly with local vendors and commit to a more feasible meal plan that offers greater choice and flexibility.
Benefits	By lowering food costs for students with financial difficulties, students are able to purchase foods at a more accessible rate and offering informative food labels on all items helps students make informative choices on the food they purchase (I understand there is a PDF on the Hospitality Services page, but creating a more identifiable label on certain food items can help inform students on different choices). Understanding daily intake requirements allows students to remain healthy and lowers risk of developing diseases. (One of the few reason why the ECC even came to existence is because there is an enormous outcry from students who want lower prices for food on and off campus. The portions of meals being served are furtively reduced while the cost of food items are irreparably increasing.)
Difficulties	The actual cooperation by Hospitality Services and local vendors and who will fund the cost of such a program. There must be an agreement that the MSU will not put food operators at any serious financial constraints (by reviewing financial statements, inflation rate if possible), but at the same time the MSU must bargain lower food prices for students with financial difficulties.
Long-term implications	Working closely with our internal and external partners to offer students more accessible healthy food options will change university policy and will offset the growing number of students who experience food insecurity. By partnering with MSU food clubs to advocate or create new food programs

	<p>that targets at-risk students of food insecurity will directly increase food accessibility for the long-term.</p> <p>Having lower prices and meal programs for students with financial difficulties will increase awareness of the SRA’s action towards food insecurity will contribute significant involvement from students themselves to address these problems. A creation of the McMaster Food Program is a strong initiative to provide students with the financial support to access food on campus.</p>
How?	<p>As the MSU is incorporated as a non-profit organization under the Ontario Corporations Act, the student government can expand food programs or increase funding to Mac Bread Bin through ancillary fees that would cover more of the basic needs of students who have proven to show that they require assistance for the food program. These requirements can be determined through the Office of Student Financial Aid & Scholarships based on family income, student’s personal income, or financial situation. Additionally students may also apply for the McMaster Student Union Emergency Bursary Fund to cover additional food costs.</p> <p>Another way is to create a meal program by Mac Bread Bin or TwelvEighty Bar & Grill to offer further discounted meals to at-risk students every week. As a non-profit organization the MSU can offer more affordable tax-exempt meal programs that can other universities across Canada use as “premium meal programs” which are overly expensive.</p> <p>Implementation of the program can either be putting students on a meal card that will discount 10% - 20%, which is similar to the Freedom Plan Hospitality Services offers where money can be transferred over to the next academic year and at any time students may refund their card without the pressures that students need to binge their meal card near the end of the semester. Negotiations and bargaining for students’ basic fundamental rights to not go hungry must be adhered to.</p>
Partners	<p>McMaster Hospitality Services, Mac Bread Bin, TwelvEighty Bar & Grill, (student initiative) Nolunchmoney, Mac Soup Kitchen, (and possibly some local vendors e.g. Shoppers with their new addition of fresh produce year-round)</p>

Objective 5	Increase the amount of events for specifically for first year commerce students while increasing student involvement in all commerce events.
Description	A lot of commerce students have complained about the lack of events being targeted towards the commerce faculty specifically. These events would be targeted towards leadership and networking. Specifically, there should be a yearly event for first year commerce students to get to know each other.
Benefits	If we accomplish our objective, the benefits will be substantial. Doing more events will strengthen the commerce community. These events will also help build better and stronger friendships between commerce students. More events also act as a stress reducer that students desperately need. If the event is a networking event, students will get the chance to increase their connections within the business community and will greatly benefit from it.
Difficulties	The main difficulties with the platform point will be to work cohesively with the DCS and other external partners to see it's success. Monetary funding could be a barrier, as well as overall interest in attendance of the event from all years in our faculty.
Long-term implications	In addition to developing a connection with other commerce students, people attending the events can build relationships with each other and strengthen the community. There's power in attending an event and seeing other people who support the same cause and are in the same program. Meeting like-minded individuals in person will also encourage more active engagement online!
How?	By partnering with the DCS and the First Year Orientation committee, we can create an idea and theme for an event that focuses on first years in the commerce program. Planning for this event will begin in december and should culminate in the execution of the event in early february.
Partners	DeGroote Commerce Society (DCS), DeGroote First Year Orientation Program, First Year Council (FYC), DeGroote Clubs (DMA, DAA, DHRA, DFA, AIS, DWIB, DOA, etc.)

GOALS to strive for

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

1. Map out any event partnerships with DCS for the upcoming term, specifically add support for the DCS Cookout.
2. Creating a mutually beneficial relationship with members of the DeGroot Commerce Society, to work together during the year.
3. A comprehensive social media plan to engage students.

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

1. Support and connect certain clubs/associations that did not get ratified with the MSU clubs and being a contact between the two.
2. We would like to see our online post reach increase by 30% before the end of the fall term.
3. The groundwork for a larger and more effective faculty frost night.
4. For the DCS online jobs portal to have a link to the MSU jobs portal, increasing the accessibility of these positions for commerce students.
5. Agree on a tentative date for the first-year commerce night and handle logistics

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

1. Work with the outgoing and incoming VP HR of the DCS to improve the hiring practices
2. An increase in the amount of required commerce courses that are podcasted via Avenue2Learn.
3. Reduce food insecurity on campus by creating assistance food programs that helps students with financial difficulties.
4. Improve DeGroot Internship hiring procedures and communication with students.
5. Plan and execute an event focused towards first year commerce students.