



REPORT

From the office of the...

SRA Engineering Caucus

TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Desmond Flowers & Sarah Kula, Caucus Leaders
SUBJECT: SRA 16L Report
DATE: December 22, 2016

Good afternoon, Student Representative Assembly,

We hope you had an amazing holiday season and we are excited to start a new year with all of you! This report will highlight the work that the SRA Engineering Caucus has been doing since our last report on October 30, 2016. Please let us know if you have any questions.

PROGRESS ON YEAR PLAN

Communication

Social Media

The SRA Engineering Facebook page has promoted many student involvement opportunities. Our outreach has continued to increase and we have reached our goal of getting over 600 likes on our page. We currently sit at 617 likes and aim to be at 650 by next report period. We will be posting more Humans of Mac Eng posts to increase our social media outreach this coming month.

Student Outreach

A google forum titled 'SRA Winter Questionnaire' was released to get student's opinions on how frequently the same referendum questions should be asked as well as opinions on gender-neutral washrooms. The forum had 164 responses from different faculty societies. The majority of students who participated in the survey indicated that there should be a limit of one full academic year before a referendum question is repeated. The majority also indicated that all single-stall washrooms should be gender neutral but not all multi-stalled washrooms.

Engineering Governance Committee

The first meeting of the committee happened on Wednesday, November 30. The meeting was promoted through Sarah Conrad and included free banana bread and coffee for meeting participants. Unfortunately, none of our constituents came to this first meeting, probably because of the date being so close to exams and not enough promotions. Those of our caucus that did attend the meeting took the banana bread and coffee to different students on the second floor of MUSC and chatted about the SRA, the SRA Engineering Caucus and opportunities to get involved for next semester. We will continue hosting meetings next semester and consider new promotional strategies, including promoting the meetings through the MES, and highlighting our discussions during our office hours to build rapport with our constituents about the meetings.

MES Relationship

The SRA-MES connection continues to be strengthened, and MES meetings continue to be attended.

Independent Projects

More Accessible Resources

Engineering Empowerment Conference

We met with our faculty society's VP External in November to discuss our vision to establish an engineering conference for the winter semester. The discussion revealed that a conference has been planned before, and will be planned again for this semester. The current agenda of this year's conference will be similar to what was outlined in our platform; namely an interdisciplinary theme and emphasis on diverse post-grad opportunities for engineering students. We will be continuing to meet in January to discuss how our caucus will be able to continue supporting the conference early this semester.

MSU Governance Standing Committee

The committee was successfully established at our SRA 16J meeting, on November 13th of last semester. The next steps will happen outside of our caucus's direct activities but will continue to be reviewed by the new chair, and committee members in hopes of bettering the current governing structure of our MSU.

Additional Projects

Some of our projects have been more challenging to implement; namely the opt-in/opt-out opportunity for students on co-op and internship experiences, and also for the Coherent Campus Expansion Plan. Conversations have been happening between our caucus and the BoD in hopes that the current platform points may be adapted so that they are more feasible to achieve for this new semester. This includes adapting the opt-in/opt-out opportunity to instead be a promotional tool of opportunities already available for students away on co-op and internship opportunities. This also includes adapting the Coherent Campus Expansion Plan to

instead be an initiative to bring student attention to how the campus is currently expanding, and research on how students can have more of a voice in the expansion process going forward.

More Academic Support

Cookies and Cram

(Formerly referred: Test Review Session)

The Cookies and Cram initiative has been established and continuing to happen every other week with the help of our faculty society. The opportunity has brought our engineering constituents together to receive affordable academic support for major first year engineering classes. The turnout has been good, and will continue to happen this new semester.

Additional Projects

We have had some challenges implementing some of our projects that fall under the academic support section of our Year Plan; namely the elective course and extension of Thode library hours. Past discussions with our faculty society shows that the MES is already identifying that there there can be a smoother transition for first year engineering students to upper year programs. The faculty is currently working on an online tool that can be accessed by first year students to better understand what upper level programs will look like, and how to prepare. More conversations will happen between the caucus and the faculty in the new semester to figure out how we can make this as accessible to students, and as successful to their transition as possible. Extending Thode library hours is a project that has been taken on by many caucuses of our assembly and the SRA Engineering Caucus plans to take on a more active role in this project in the new semester.

Addressing Financial Barriers

Conversations started last semester between our caucus and the BoD concerning more affordable textbooks for McMaster students, and especially students in the faculty of engineering. We have been assured that this conversation will continue to happen through OUSA, and in the meantime we hope to collect more insight on ways this project may be adapted so to benefit students in the near future. This will require conversations with the current BoD, as well as relevant campus stakeholders.

CHALLENGES

The Engineering Caucus has faced challenges implementing our larger projects. Some of these projects are already being taken on by our faculty society, such as the engineering conference, or the faculty such as attention being placed on successful first year transition to upper year programs. It is currently unclear how our caucus can still make a valuable impact in

these areas, although we plan to continue relevant conversations going forward into the new semester.

SUCSESSES

We are very excited at the successes we have had with some of our platform points; including the MSU governance committee, a stronger relationship with our faculty society and initiatives being taken on to better transition engineering students to upper year programs and post-grad careers. We have built a notably strong relationship as a caucus, remain committed to the success of our platform points, and still have a lot of great things planned for this new semester.

We thank you for reading our report!

Best,

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