



# REPORT

*From the office of the...*

## SHEC Coordinator

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TO: Members of the Executive Board  
FROM: Sutina Chou  
SUBJECT: Proposed Service Restructuring  
DATE: February 28, 2017

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Dear Executive Board,

I am writing to propose a service restructuring of SHEC to be implemented for the 2017-2018 year. As the returning SHEC Coordinator, I have been fortunate enough to watch the operation of this service for a whole year and strongly believe that a restructuring will enable our volunteers and executives to better serve the needs of MSU members. The current service structure consists of a nine-person executive team, including myself – four pillar chairs, two promotions committee chairs, one internal programming chair, and one promotions executive. Executives with committees directly manage volunteers who are also peer support volunteers (i.e. all peer support volunteers also contribute to a committee).



The restructuring that I am proposing shrinks the number of executives to five, with one Promotions Executive, one Volunteer Coordinator (formerly Internal Programming Chair), one Events and Programming Committee Chair, and one Research and Outreach Committee Chair.



The Events and Programming Committee Chair will be responsible for working with their committee to create events and programming that relate to the strategic priorities of SHEC (what were previously the Sexual Health, Mental Health, Addictions Awareness, and Nutrition and Active Living pillars) – things that we have previously done that would fall under their jurisdiction would include the Sex 101 series in residence, or the New Year’s Resolution Fair.

The Research and Outreach Committee Chair will be responsible for working with their committee to design and collect health resources that can be used by the service (whether in the space or on our website) and create and run educational campaigns, much in the style of our consent or addictions awareness posters that we have done in the past. The functioning of this executive and their committee will be similar to the way the Social and Political Advocacy committee operates on Diversity Services, with a stronger focus on research and education rather than in-person engagement.

Committee chairs will directly supervise a team of students drawn from the peer support volunteer pool (i.e. some peer support volunteers are on a committee, but not all) that indicate interest and sign onto the committee at the beginning of the year.

Restructuring a service is not a task that should be trifled with; however, I sincerely believe that this move will bring major benefits in several areas, which I have outlined below:

### 1) Streamlined executive and clearer chain of command

As is clearly seen in the diagrams, the proposed structure is much smaller and streamlined, which presents numerous advantages. Firstly, it allows for better communication between the core executive team, as it is easier to coordinate and facilitate meetings (not to mention make decisions) with a smaller team. Furthermore, individual executives will be better able to stay up to date about the operations of other committees and components of the service. Second, it allows the coordinator to have a clearer idea of service operations, as it is much more straightforward to keep up with two committees instead of six (and four executives instead of eight). Third, the condensed executive structure has much clearer focus in each of the roles, instead of being arbitrarily based around subject matter.

## **2) Improved programming**

A challenge that we encountered this year as a service was low attendance at programming that we did not have an existing audience for (i.e. MacTalks vs. Sex 101 series) – we tend to do very well at events where we go to students, as opposed to ones where students need to come out to us. What I believe to be a key contributor to this problem is the oversaturation of SHEC programming due to all four pillar committees are working independently to produce content. Under the current structure, committees were running at least one event a month, but with low turnout. By reformatting the pillars into strategic priorities, and separating in-person programming from educational campaigns, two committees can produce content less frequently, but with higher impact and quality because our presence is not diluted, and because committees have better access to resources that are spread less thinly. As well, using strategic priorities means that there is no obligation to produce pillar-based content if there isn't an anticipated need or interest for it, meaning that subject matter being tackled from year to year can be much more flexible and responsive to the issues that students care about, making it more likely that they will come out to events or engage with campaigns.

## **3) More consistent and impactful promotions**

Because each committee feels the need to put out consistent programming under the current structure, there is often overlap and our promotions resources are spread thinly in terms of both Underground design money and diluted social media presence. It is also logistically challenging for the promotions executive to coordinate promotions plans for multiple events from multiple committees at any given time. Condensing service output into two committees that produce less programming gives the promotions executive the opportunity to better stay in touch with the content being produced. As well, this also gives us the chance to adequately and effectively promote events and campaigns to ensure maximum engagement.

## **4) Re-imagined media committees**

We currently have two committees dedicated to producing content for cfmu and the Silhouette respectively. The Silhouette committee has been able to produce an exceptional quantity of content that has ended up in the print edition of the newspaper this year, despite the fact that they have cut the SHEC-specific column that we have traditionally gotten. However, the success of the committee varies greatly year to year depending on the interest of the volunteers and the relationship with the Sil team. The radio committee does consistently put out content, but to variable quality within and between years and with low outreach. In the new structure, I believe that using cfmu and the Silhouette as outreach tools at the discretion of the committee chairs will be a better use of volunteer time and energy.

## **5) Improved volunteer retention and engagement**

Another problem that we've seen this year is volunteers low engagement going into second semester, with volunteers being unable to commit to being both on a committee and in the space as peer support volunteers. Under the new structure, volunteers can opt into being on a committee in addition to doing peer support in the service space, which will hopefully allow for them to match their commitment to the time they have available.

Ultimately, I believe that a restructuring is sorely needed for the above reasons – approval from the Board and proceeding with this process will align SHEC with the style of management currently being used to great success on other services within the MSU.

Should there be any questions or concerns at all, please let me know and I would be happy to address them.

Sincerely yours,

Sutina Chou  
SHEC Coordinator