



# REPORT

*From the office of the...*  
**Vice President Finance & CFO**

---

TO: Student Representative Assembly  
FROM: Ryan MacDonald, VP Finance & CFO  
SUBJECT: VP Finance Report #3.  
DATE: March 7th, 2016

---

## Student Representative Assembly

My second last report for my time in this role - wow. As I start this report I want to be absolutely clear that one of my top priorities for the final part of my term is ensuring that my replacement will be well prepared to take over the role. I am a firm believer that an effective transition is both preparing folks who want to run for this role to understand the scope of responsibilities in addition to after the election getting them prepared to actually do the day to day tasks. Simply put if you want to run for my job, or anyone else's for that matter I'm happy to give you my insight.

I am pretty proud of the work I've done to this point and I can say that many platform points that I wanted to accomplish were completed over my term. I had an ambitious agenda, taking on many more tasks than traditionally is done with this role. Without a doubt this has led me to be successful with many of these projects but it definitely left many to be completed. I am not trying to hide anything in saying that there were projects I didn't complete due to simply a lack of available time in the role - should my successor want I will be happy to work with them to ensure they have all the tools to make them successful.

## PLATFORM

### Business Unit Communications Plan

Wooder has been doing a great job in his new role and I look forward to Budget 2017-2018 where he will be able to take his new role and see it become more effective by having a higher degree of ability to ensure

effective marketing in the organization. Further with the introduction of the full time sales staff - we will be in a position to position the organizations communications much more effectively than we were able to 10 months ago.

### **Digital Media Support**

Major changes in Underground have increased our capacity for digital media in a significant way. Further we have introduced further supports for marketing and communications in Campus Events and a new FT position in the CFMU / Silhouette.

### **Space Audit**

Maccess has a functioning space! Wahoo!

### **Campus Events / AVTEK Rebrand**

This is the project that I'm probably most proud of because it was something that will seem small on paper but will likely have the biggest impact to the average student. Campus Events is in the midst of hiring an additional full time role in an SOP. This role will allow us to take over new aspects of Welcome Week and develop a Campus Events brand that endeavors to planned truly campus wide initiatives. This will be huge.

### **Governance Support Review**

Oh wow! Shaarujaa is doing a Delegation from the Floor today on this exact topic? Awesome!

### **Evaluating Clubs Funding**

Nothing more to report. Clubs seem to be doing a great job and the system for MSU dollars has been significantly more effective than in past years. I'm working with Chukky to discuss how we could implement clubs grants for larger

### **TwelvEighty Business Plan**

This is probably the biggest question mark that remains on my platform. TwelvEighty remains as the MSU's largest financial burden and should no major changes be made, will continue to be so. This is a challenge and while we continue to evaluate our operations, this will not be something I will be able to find the solution to during my term in totality.

### **HSR Negotiation**

While the Negotiation is done, the work continues to have this ready for September 2017. We have bi-weekly meetings scheduled and the team at the University have been great in making this a priority to have implementation. The HSR and Metrolinx continue to drag their feet but I'm confident something will figure itself out.

## **SoBi Negotiation**

The agreement is ready to be talked about again if the referendum is re-introduced.

## **University Budget Submission**

Likely the only other area that I can leave a bit of a question mark as I begin to transition out of this role. With the University budget completed I think the work I've done on identifying gaps in faculty funding and specifically funding for student affairs may be best left to next year's team to use. This project while valuable has always been a project I viewed as less of a priority due to a function of time required. Valuable work that can be built on.

## **Welcome Week Equity & Analytics**

I'm organizing a bulk suit order for WW rep-suits which will see the average cost of a rep suit by about \$40 or 50%. Considering there are about 850 reps per year who purchase new suits this could save students collectively about \$35,000. Further on the changes to WW, Shaarujaa and I have worked with WWAC to secure a new version of the MOU which stipulates stricter financial protocols, efficiency identifications and a new stewardship model for strategic themes funding that see's the MSU take on a greater role.

## **Transition Program Policy**

Blake did most of this. I think this is a great paper that the organization will benefit from.

## **Sustainability Advocacy**

Nothing new to report. In a recent meeting with the Deputy Premier and Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development, she noted that there might be some significant movement on Open Textbooks in Ontario which would be both a key move with respect to sustainability and affordability of education.

## **Career Support**

After many discussions with Gina Robinson, the MSU has been involved in further developing the future of what Career support at the SSC looks like with changes being brought to Student Services Committee. While confidential at this point, students will see changes starting May 1.

## **PTM Financial Training Support**

Our PTMs have been awesome this year when it comes to tracking their budget and I couldn't be more pleased. I will be compiling the document with respect to this year's budget to be stored for next year's team - I think this will be an incredibly useful transition tool.

### **Event Planning Packages**

I still frequently use this as a tool for event planning and something the MSU can probably use for a while.

### **Part Time Wage Review**

The most time consuming project we've taken on this year and a total beast of a process but all-in-all one of our most important. I think this system will be a staple for the MSU for many, many years to come.

### **Marmor**

Well the fee doesn't exist anymore. We're budgeting for about 100K deficit in this fund next year for the yearbook to continue.

### **CFMU Review**

I recommend a review of the CFMU fee be considered in 6-8 months with the new changes coming for the department. This is still something I believe is important but completely infeasible with the time remaining in my role.

### **Student Services Fee**

SLEF voting is happening soon! Take a look out for that if it's not out already we had 9 great ideas eligible for voting. The CAF agreement, the largest development with respect to this project will be presented to the SRA this Sunday.

### **Athletic Costs**

Well in about 2 weeks we might have a completely different landscape to discuss with respect to this item.

### **Strategic Consultation Campaign**

Should a referenda be successful, a major student space consultation campaign will be initiated and budgeted for in next year's budget. We absolutely need to know what students want to see in this space and falls in line nicely with Chukky's plans for the role.

### **Homecoming**

Plans for next year are getting going and community members have indicated that the biggest area of concern may in fact be the Saturday evening. We will address this as a committee soon. From a student safety perspective, continuing with some programming for the morning and doing a Saturday night concert may be better to keep students safe.

### **Special Projects Funding**

Still funding projects. There is still significant funds available here so I expect to budget less for this next year. Despite this I think that this project funding is a good idea and should continue.

### **Health & Dental Plan Review**

We're figuring out what exactly the plan will look like for next year but I can guarantee it will be cheaper (based on what was sent to you) and have more benefits which is a win-win for students.

### **MSU Network Development**

We have a new email system and tons of new productivity tools for our staff team to take advantage of. I'm really excited about seeing this network changes come to fruition and attempting to further ensure that spending on maintaining our network is a priority.

### **Online Ticket Infrastructure**

I think this is a really cool project that I'm excited to see happen. Our website developer is working to create custom software to meet the needs of our Campus Events Department, Compass and our many clubs and services. The goal is to have an online ticketing system that can be integrated for scanning at events that could further be rented out to clubs and student groups.

### **Discount Card**

Yelena and Finance Committee are about to start work on contacting the list they've developed of vendors. Matt, our sales assistant, worked with the team to ensure that the program is taking advertising into consideration and I think this could be a good program for the new year. I expect this to be a program that will be implemented for September 2016. As a note, many of the ECC vendors are not happy with the current level of service and are not honouring the discounts currently, this could be both a challenge and an opportunity for the service we try to create.

Every day in this role I feel lucky to be able to serve students and make McMaster, a place I hold near and dear to my heart a better place (hopefully). I'm proud of the work we've accomplished this year, but with two months left we have a lot to still cross off the list. I'm excited to finish this role as excited as I was going into it.

Yours in relentless enthusiasm,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ryan MacDonald', written over a faint, dotted rectangular border.

**Ryan MacDonald**  
Vice President (Finance) & CFO  
McMaster Students Union