Vice-President (Administration)

Transition Report 2016-2017

By Shaarujaa Nadarajah

Prepared for:

Preethi Anbalagan

Vice-President (Administration) 2017-2018

Welcome to this new world!

Preethi,

I am very happy you are sitting in that chair upstairs, as there was no one I trust more to replace me than you. This job definitely requires someone with tough skin who won't stand for BS and if there is something I know about you, it is that you will stand up for everything you believe in. That fighting spirit along with your solid values is why I have no doubt you will kick ass in this job. Hopefully this transition reports covers everything you need to know about the job, but as you know, there are so many small details and nuances to being a VP Administration; I probably forgot to include something. I tried my best to archive all the work and documents you need in all those binders, so I hope they do serve as a resource to you throughout the year. If not, everything I worked on this year can be found in the archived folders on the MSU server under my name. Despite everything, you have my digits and probably my social media passwords to everything, so if you need to chat or need guidance, I am always going to be here for you. I think you are as prepared as you can be for this job and the rest is a learning curve. You know that I look upon this role very highly as I think you have real potential to use this role to impact thousands of students.

Although you pushing papers in an office for many people will be viewed as an insignificant task, trust me when I say you have an important role and your work is valued. You probably won't get this much throughout the year, so I will be the first to say thank you for all the long hours you are going to pull and the genuine care you have for students here at McMaster. No one will understand the job more than the rest of the board and past board members, so don't ever hesitate to contact any of us if you just want to chat and decompress. With this job, it becomes very difficult to separate work from your actual life, so my advice is to try to strike a balance even though it will be challenging. GG outlined this in her transition report but this job requires a lot of administration work and a lot of reading (year plans, EB documents, student policies, job descriptions, operating policies). Over time, you will become more efficient at knowing what you can skim versus actually having to read line for line. The more time you spend getting historical context or just general context by reading these documents, the less you will be caught off guard when you have to make decisions about Full-Time Staff, SRA, PTMs, etc.

Furthermore, one of the most challenging parts of the job is the fact that you are the designated HR person on the board. This means that you are constantly dealing with people and their problems, which can get exhausting. I think there is no right way of preparing yourself for these situations, just takes it one day at a time. I will say it's easy to just come up with the quickest solution to get people out of your face, but think critically about every decision you make. Your decisions will be impacting people and therefore, have larger consequences than a board member botching a project. Also, your position is heavily reliant on the core competency of being able to build rapport and relationships with PTMs, so make sure you think things through very carefully. No other board member manages the amount of staff you do, so it will be hard for him or her to see your perspective sometimes because you will always be the person that has the most amount of context. It's important to seek perspective from your fellow board members, but also trust your gut. You were elected into this position to make these tough calls, so trust that the call you are making is the right one and stand by it.

There is nothing you are not capable of handling and I look forward to cheering you on from the sidelines. Good luck and if you ever need a reminder of where you came from, here it is:

P.S As GG mentioned, this transition report would be very similar to past years because as an admin, you deal with a lot of similar stuff. However, I am going to try to be specific some nuanced issues I had to deal with.

Yours truly,

Shaarujaa Nadarajah

Vice-President Administration (2016-2017

The Standard MSU Stuff

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 also known as BOD or Bod. This means you are responsible for all aspects of the McMaster Students Union from day to day operations to overall management of all functions of the organization on a political and management level. You are the chief administrative officer of the organization, which means you will have your own focus for the role, but it is important to have an understanding of what other board members do and how their role fits into the greater picture of what we call the MSU. This is critical as you will be the liaison between SRA and the board in addition to providing support to PTMs. You will also likely engage in certain board projects based on interest or because they require your expertise based on your portfolio (PTM Collaboration, Welcome Week, event planning).

In your role, you will focus on the following things:

1. PTMs- as you know, I have both said this is the most rewarding and challenging part of my job. PTMs will constantly need you and pop their heads in the window and ask you for support for problems ranging from personal issues to logistical support or general inquiries. As mentioned before, you are the designate HR person on the board even though you don't have formal experience with any of the issues that arise at times (i.e. mental health accommodation, accessibility, pay equity), but you will be asked for an opinion. I have a section later in the transition report talking about how you can navigate some of the situations that will arise and how you should navigate it.

2. SRA and the Governance Wing- you are the Deputy Chair of the SRA and EB (you will be the speaker if someone isn't there and the same for if the President isn't there to chair EB). Roberts's rules are used at both EB and SRA but EB is less formal so you should be fine if you had to chair it in Chukky's absence once or twice. You may also work closely with the speaker on training events throughout the year and the relevant Commissioners (B&P, Ops, and Services) on projects. This year, you will also have the unique opportunity to oversee the

AVPs and they will be a great support for you but at the same time, it is more people that you have to oversee so keep that in mind.

3. Welcome Week- you will sit on all levels of the planning committees (WWPIC and WWAC). This means your responsibilities from directly planning the logistics of Welcome Week to establishing the themes and strategic mandate of orientation. As GG mentioned, don't be afraid or hesitate to say no to things as people will throw around wild ideas all the time and you want to make sure student money is being spent appropriately. In addition, these committees are all based on consensus decision making so make sure you are not making too many waves by disagreeing constantly. Strong and effective communication is the key to surviving these committees and as I always say, pick your battles.

4. Random Stuff that Comes Up (Either your personal stuff or supporting the BOD)- There is a plethora of random things that will be tossed your way because it often doesn't fit in anywhere. You will be asked to plan random conferences with the SSC, be a panellist for residence life leadership programming, do some of the paperwork for the larger scale projects, etc. As GG summarized, the VP Admin used to be very hands on with the full time staff before the management shifted more to the VP Finance. Given the number of people you manage, I would not take on additional staff you need to oversee, but based on your interest, you will be vested in FT staff issues and SOP issues. Our board had a very collaborative approach where we would all know about any issues or concerns with FT staff and ensure that any decisions made were discussed as a board first. The SOPs I worked the most with are Union Market and Clubs, as I would work with PTMs or SRA to help get there UM orders for their events. As for Clubs, the VP Administration and President often get emails when people are dissatisfied with the decisions made by the clubs administrator so be aware of that.

   It's important to remember that you are a Vice-President Administration, but you are also a Vice-President and there are many responsibilities you have to do that fall in this portfolio. You will be asked to go to events and sit on many university-hiring boards and just be mindful of all the things you say yes to. I will say that it can get very exhausting when you had a long day and then you have to go to an event for 3 hours in the afternoon. I always liked going to the events because it was an opportunity for our board out hang out as a gang as we often don't get to do that during the day as much. I also never said No to Mary from advancement or Karen from alumni or Sean in student affairs because they are some of our major partners and thus, it's important to help them out because they will return the favour when you are in trouble.

Unique Traditions to the VP Administration

The following are some unique traditions that have happened in the past. I cut many of them because some of them were just a waste of time but some have a lot of merit. Just make your own traditions but keep in mind what the value of each tradition was and make something that is your own.

1. Candy Bowl- Anna and Jacob did this. TBH Jacob probably did this so it's one less thing people can shit on him for. I didn't do this because people are getting very sensitive these days and think me giving candy is bad for their health and instead should focus on fruits and veggies. I would recommend using your expense line and buying some fruit and veggie trays for the odd SRA meeting or PTM Meetings.
2. Toys- you will no longer find a bookshelf of toys, but there used to be one of trinkets. I didn't like clutter and thought the toys were useless, so I got rid of it. I did have odd things to characterize the office as my own like Willow and the targets, but I just didn't want to have toys around and invite more people into my office more than the high volume of people that already stop by.
3. Getting dunked at the MSU Retreat- So, I was told by GG it's a tradition to dunk the admin in the lake or a body of water when we go on to the retreat at the campsite. It hasn't happened for a couple years, so it might not be a thing unless someone wanted to bring it back. I also think you want the MSU retreat to be on campus, so you won't really have a body of water unless members wanted to go wandering into Cootes and go into the water which I won't recommend.
4. MSU Staff Trophy/ SRA Trophy: My year on the SRA, there were SRA medals that were passed around to recognize contributions individual members made and then, they would have to pass the medal to someone new at the next meeting. I thought this was tradition was cool, but just didn't get a chance to start it in my year with all that was tossed on my plate. Also, we have a similar thing for the FT staff, which was not that effective because it seemed almost forced and people were struggling to come up with things to recognize people for. I would recommend you get John to think about staff appreciation more as it's something that falls below his radar other than the organization of staff parties.

Below, I have outlined for you some of the ways that the VP Administration interacts with other members of the Board including during board meetings and general office interaction. I will reiterate this that other board members will have a hard time understanding your job as they just look at things black and white and don't consider people's feelings which is often the case when you are dealing with people. In addition, they are also not the board members delivering the news or facilitating a tough discussion, so you are lone ranger on that one. Fight for what you believe is the right to thing to do and understand that sometimes, people are only saying something because they don't have the full context to something so try to give them context. Keep in mind it's okay to bounce ideas of another board member as they may get you to reconsider your position, but when it comes to your portfolio, believe that the call you are making is right and stand by it.

President

The nature of the relationship between the President and the VP (Administration) has some constant items that are outlined in our Bylaws and in practice, but there are also unique parts of it that changes each year with new leadership. You have a very good understanding of my relationship with Justin this year and I do believe our friendship has been the foundation that has gotten us through some tough times on the job, but it also complicates things at times.

According to our bylaws, the VP Administration is the right hand of the President; they chair meetings when the President is unavailable, they would be the person who would replace the President should they no longer be able to serve in their role, or if the President happens to be out of the office for an extended period of time. I am sure you know the term "acting president" was tossed around a couple times this year and the reality is, you are acting as the president in their absence so it's important to keep their values and decision making process in mind. You may also assist the President in the completion of some of their projects. As Chukky has a very internal focus you may be asked to help him with his Welcome Week and service goals. You also don't want to be doing all the work for the President because you will be the most overworked VP, so taking on additional projects just means you have to lose or give up things.

VP Finance

By the nature of the role, you two are the most often in your office during regular working hours. This means that you will and should lean on them for advice and making decision. Having an open relationship is key to not getting blindsided by SRA, PTM, or full time staff members. Ryan and I talked extensively during transition weekend about the importance of having a good relationship because it's that synergy that made it easier to manage the organization because we were always on the same page and knew about everything going on.

This year, I find that Ryan and I made a good team because we share the same work ethic, values, and have complementary skill sets. Ryan was very good with spreadsheets and had a lot of patience, not as much as me though. We also had the capacity to be bad and good cop interchangeably, so we would take turns playing that role. Ultimately, Ryan was my biggest support system when it came to

PTMs because he was the only other board member that understood the nuances of each situation. When it comes to financials, I would recommend never sign a PO for a PTM unless it's an emergency or Tuba is miles away and won't be returning for days. PTMS will try to take advantage of the fact that you don't know much about financials and try to trick you or in the case of an emergency, want you to sign a PO right away. Always flag the amount they are asking for something and if it's a big amount, wait before signing the PO. You are dealing with student money, so think about everything you sign and how people are spending money. But, the golden rule should be don't sign anything unless you absolutely have to and PTMs should leave at least 2-3 days before requesting something.

You will also interact on a variety of Welcome Week type projects. The VP Finance will tell you what you can spend on Welcome Week stuff. You also sit on Welcome Week Advisory committee (WWAC) with the VP Finance and together, you will tackle some of the large problems (i.e. levy allocation, funding for new projects, convincing other departments to structurally change something about Welcome Week). The VP finance also works closely with faculties as they distribute the levy money and do the checks and balances on the welcome week levy.

I can't stress enough why it's so important you establish this relationship and set expectations with the VP Finance early on. Being on the same page will save you from a lot of tough situations and you will understand once you get on the same lane.

VP Education

The VP Education is out of the office most out of the entire board of directors, so there may not be many instances where you interact on a professional level. However, since we left CASA, and depending on whether the VP education wants to run for OUSA, this relationship and level of interaction might be different. I imagine Ryan having been a past PTM will have things to say about internal matters more than past VP Educations. Past VP education have been notorious for being bad managers, but I don't imagine that will be the case at all this year with Ryan have been two time manager.

There will be a few things that come up in the year that is important you address early on:

1. TAC (now Macademics) and Advocacy: These positions used to be co-supervised by both the VP education and the VP Administration. However, this year, you no longer have this problem as Macademics reports directly to you and there is no advocacy coordinator. With this structural change, it should make things easier with respect to the logistical mess the VP education and VP admin often get into when they co-supervise people.
2. General PSE Stuff: I was interested in the education portfolio, so I would always be curious of to the projects Blake was working on and would offer my support for any events she needed me to be at. Blake was also super understanding that the jargon she speaks is not what the rest of us speak, so she would always prepare briefing notes and take time to explain what each of

our roles would be when going into meetings. I didn't have time this year to go to OUSA, but if you get a chance, I would recommend potentially co-authoring a paper. Blake and I also relied on each other a lot as we were the two female board members and often talked after hours about some of the experiences we had in the day we wanted to debrief. To get back to the advocacy stuff, you will be asked by the VP education to attend HPSAG (Hamilton Post Secondary Advisory Group) and other events. If you have time, definitely support your fellow VP and hopefully, you will get to talk about something you care about. Use your experiences and advocate using your portfolio, as it will make it more authentic. i.e. one of the provincial priorities is more upfront funding for essential student services such as mental health, so I talked about our peer support services and how the nature of mental health has changed and that is why this priority is important.

Board Meetings

These are weekly 1.5 hours- 2-hour meetings that you will have with members of the Board (everyone you already spend like gazillion hours with), the General Manager (John McGowan), and the Corporate Secretary (Emma during the year and Victoria Scott during the summer). This means that they will oftentimes be the two- three staffs that go to with confidential issues (outside of the BoD). Aside from the ranting that I used this for, BOD meetings can be an opportunity to stay in the know about your fellow BOD members are up to. This can especially be important for BoD member you don't see everyday like the VP Education. You should encourage each other to share projects ahead of time because it can be extremely frustrating if you find out your fellow BoD members are moving forward with a project that is wider to the organization without consultation from other BoD members.

This year, we chose to meet on Monday afternoons. In the past, they have moved times around depending on the schedule of board members and their alertness levels. For the VP Administration, I would just watch out how much board meetings eat up your time because on Mondays, you have the radio show, board meetings, and then have to plan for the week. I usually brought a scrap paper and some coloured pens to map out my week while people were talking. I was good at multi-tasking and it helped me think while someone was talking. Just be clear about expectations for board meetings at the beginning of the year. We had pretty loose expectations on how board was operated.

I also had a few moments where I debated with myself whether something I was addressing was a "Board Agenda Item". Use your discretion – it can take a while to get in to the groove of whether to get the Board's opinion or whether to just act and inform later on. It depends on the personalities and approaches of the people you are working with. Personally, I am the type of person that likes to get advice and then act. I think people also appreciate when you consult before making a decision because it allows us all to stay in the know, to provide alternative opinions and come to better decisions. ***Note: I copy and pasted this from GG's but I totally agree with it verbatim***

During Board Meetings, the BOD will address a few different types of items. There are some general items that may be similar from year to year and then I added any items that we specifically discussed this year at Board.

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 and dental opt outs. All information about what were past board actions are past board meetings can be found in my folders under Board.
    a. **Opt Outs**: You may have students who do not opt out of Health and Dental on time or are looking for extra coverage/exceptions to the plan (e.g. this year, we had a parent that wrote a personal letter to the board stating how much they needed the money and how they missed the deadline by a couple days). As the BOD, you have the authority to grant these exceptions. Emma/Victoria will bring the necessary documentation to the Board Meeting. It is important you are discussing why you granted the exception so you are aware of any precedents you are setting moving forward. My recommendation would be to make sure all MSU SRA members, PTMs, FT staff, PR Assistants are promoting this to the full extent so people are not confused and don't miss the deadline. In addition, usually Victoria doesn't send any opts outs through unless she feels like there is a reasonable case.
    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. Discussions: Generally, we discussed any items that would be coming to EB/SRA to get feedback from the rest of the board. As the VP Administration, you will bring a lot of service changes forward with respect to job descriptions and items of business on behalf of PTMs, so it's important to discuss it with your board before the appropriate meeting. With our board, we often discussed items as it came up and board meetings were used as update meetings. Rarely is something brought up at a board meeting that we hadn't discussed or aware of prior.
3. HR: Anything related to full-time staff employment, or significant part time staff issues. As well any major complaints from students will also be discussed as a board, we wanted to make sure we agreed with the course of action. For significant full time staff employment issues

that may result in discipline or termination, the board will generally meet privately with John first, but then approve the course of action at the following board meeting.

Year Plans

As per many other members of the organization, you are requested to submit a Year Plan to the SRA. Often times, your board members will forgot so put a reminder in their calendar for them. All Board year plans should come to the June meeting (first SRA Meeting in the summer) and as I mentioned, get your board to start thinking about it early on. I often found I used my year plan as a good way to measure progress for the year which was exciting because the more I got done, the more I got to say complete. I really spent a lot of time on my year plan to make sure I thought about all the stakeholders involved at what the timeline of my platform was going to be. Even still, unexpected things come up and make it difficult especially for the admin to achieve their year plan. I would say take a good look at your platform and think critically about how you are going to get things done. It is okay to modify things with more information that you have. For example, I wanted to hire outside the MSU office but then the SSC converted all the interview rooms in the mental health case management office, so I just hired in the MSU office but afternoons and weekends to ensure the core intention of my platform was achieved. As I mentioned, I used my year plan to mark out my progress for the year, but GG used to put it up on her whiteboard and walk in on it everyday. Reading your platform, I know you went the realistic route as I think you have a really good understanding of the role. As the VP Administration, you have some prescribed tasks that is already required in your role (e.g. revamping the MSU Orientation, making sure people hand in year plans, make sure the day to day operations of the organization is managed) so ensure when you are creating the plan, it has a realistic timeline that keeps into account your day to day life. As for SRA and PTM Year plans, the following descriptions should help set the deadline. You need to send them a template at least a month in advance. You can reuse mine or add some more Preethi flare and get them to do something different.

SRA Year Plans

All SRA year plans will be do for the second meeting for the summer (usually happens in July). You need to set a draft deadline and then give yourself a week to review and then an additional week for them to make corrections. With SRA, just keep the submission deadlines in mind (i.e. documentation is due on Tuesday). Compared to PTMs, SRA year plans are a little more rushed and lack content, so you need to spend more time providing feedback. Caucus leaders are the ones that are responsible for writing these year plans so just make sure they are held accountable as many of them go MIA for the summer.

PTM Year Plans

This will be different this year because all PTMs mostly start in May versus I had summer PTMS then September PTMs. I would suggest setting a draft deadline where you can review the year plan and set the final deadline 2 weeks after. This should give you enough time to read and provide feedback to the PTMs. All PTM year plans need to get approved at Executive Board. Keep in mind that by EB approving the year plans, they are agreeing with the direction the service is taking for the year. This means later on in the road, when they raise concerns about an event or idea, the PTM can claim EB approved the direction. So, it's really important that you encourage EB members to read the year plans and provide feedback accordingly. It's always nice to set a fake deadline that is a couple days prior to when you actually need something because there will be people who need extensions and this will give you the freedom grant those extensions.

Transition Reports and Transition Weekend

It can be difficult to think about who comes next while you are in the role, but it is so important that you document and archive everything. I don't just believe a good transition lies in the final report, but it is something you have to actively think about all the way through the job. GG was better at this, but it's better if you write your transition report as you are in the job versus looking back and thinking about all your challenges. So, my recommendation is to have a running document and encourage the PTMs to do the same, but it's just difficult. In terms of general transition reports, you will probably have better luck getting them from AVPs and PTMs than caucus leaders because they are not compensated to write these reports while the latter is.

Transition Report Guidelines

- Make sure there is clear guidelines on what should be included in the transition report (refer to my criteria that I sent out this year and feel free to add on them)

- Make sure you are sending some sort of template to them, so they know what format to write it in and what the expectation of a gold star report looks like
- Make sure you set a due date that is realistic and think about the fact that many of these people are students and transition reports take time to write. This year, I set the deadline to be after my term completed and after exams to the first week of May that way people can focus more on the report as they are compensated a week's pay to write it.

For transition weekend, the year prior, GG and Ehima worked on it together. This year, we were on a tight deadline as you all had exams and we had to do transition weekend in early April. It would be good in general to reach out to the incoming board and outgoing board to see what topics you want to cover. As a board, we just thought about our transition and added on things we felt were missed but important to talk about during transition weekend. It's good to build 1 v 1 time and 2 v 2 time as well as time for old board and new board to debrief. I did like the fact that we did transition earlier in April this year as opposed to later which is when we got it. For more detailed notes, just refer to my folder with all the documents that has the itinerary. This should be a priority right after the new board is elected as conflicting schedules such as this year may encourage you to change some of your plans with how transition weekend will work.

Expectations of You and Your fellow BOD in the Role

Early on, I would recommend sitting down as a group to discuss expectations of each other. You are representing the MSU and it is important that you are all on the same page for certain issues to avoid misunderstandings. Think of this as your rulebook on how to navigate each other in terms of board dynamic. Things that would be important to discuss are:

- Work Hours
  - Note: As VP Administration, being in the office should be your priority as it's important for people to stop in, you may need to sign documents and also need to be present for FT staff (who work traditional business hours). It doesn't help to build a positive work environment if the board is consistently coming into the office after the FT staff, but also keep in mind that you also work well into the night and FT staff leaves at 5 traditionally. Sometimes, you might sleep through you alarm and that is okay as long as you don't have a early morning meeting with someone. The most important thing is to let people know if you are coming in late, so I would let the board and John know. You know me, so you know I was a morning person, so I very rarely had this problem.

    - It would be beneficial to discuss whether you all want to cut each other some slack post an SRA Meeting or a late event. For example, some events run until 10 pm and then coming to work at 8:30/9 am might not make you the most productive person.
    - One of the things that bothered me is if people were late to where they were supposed to be because I always had a million things on the go, so it would frustrate me if someone though my time was invaluable and I made the effort to show up on time. But, how I handled that is I would just go grab my laptop if someone is coming late and do work or go back to my office and let people to know come find me once everyone has arrived.
    - As GG mentioned, John always good advice which is to not make yourself into a different person. You know me to be an early bird and I found a lot of solitude in being myself at the office for the first hour, but you don't have to be that person. If you are a 9:30 am person aka Ryan M, be that person. Just be mindful of how much you are willing to push that boundary because I would find it disrespectful if the full time staffs are constantly in the office before the Board who are their bosses.
- Conduct and Professionalism
    - This should be something you talk to the board about both during office hours and after. You are now a corporate office of a student union, which means you have to be mindful of how your actions and words can be perceived. You and the role of VP Administration are no longer separate. What you attend or don't attend, what you say or don't say, how you act is no longer reflective of just you.
    - One thing to note is that the walls are very thin, so what you think people might not be hearing can actually be heard and let me tell you, things spread fast in the MSU. So, if you have something confidential to say or something you don't want other people to hear, say it after hours when there is no one in the office or go in the meeting room.
- Lieu Time vs. Vacation Time
    - Lieu time is essentially any hours you worked outside your usual rotation that you can claim as vacation and take off. For example, if I worked 10 hours on the weekend, I can potentially consider it lieu and take a vacation day for that that wouldn't be considered my actually vacation. Usually, most boards work so many hours outside the usual JD that at the end of term, you are entitled to additional pay up to 3 weeks and 10 days max. John will explain this to you closer to the end of your term. Our board didn't really track our lieu thoroughly because we trusted each other, so at the end of the term we didn't have any disagreements when people claimed there hours and vacation. But, John will say that some years this is a point of contention, so maybe it's better you clear that up before you all start your term.
- Email Response Time

- This is an expectation you should set up with all your staff on what your email response time is going to be and with your fellow BOD members. It can be frustrating if people or you send an email and don't get a response, but also understand how people operate. Sometimes, it is better to call someone or for you fellow board members, walk into their office and ask the question. My turnaround for emails was always quick because it used to bother me if I had things in my inbox.
- I tried to balance the Facebook messaging and the emails, so I told PTMS to send me an email if they needed me to do something, but if they had a question, I would ask them to just message me on Facebook. Many times, people would message me on Facebook and we would have a conversation, then I would say hey could you send me an email to remind me. I used my email as my to do list, so if I clear it, most of the time I am on track for what I am supposed to be doing.
- Just understand what people's personalities are and how they communicate best. The art in getting things done and effective communication lies in how you can adapt to different people's working styles. This is a theme that will be reoccurring and come up a lot as this applies to SRA members, PTMs, and FT Staff.

- Dress Code
  - Generally, business casual is the norm with more casual Fridays, but it's up to everyone's personal discretion. Just don't dress like a slob and make sure you use your discretion when you are meeting with university administration. Don't be afraid to add you own flare and style as I would roll in with zippies and blundstones and people accepted me. But, I would also dress it up some days because I wanted to look nice.
- Office Procedures
  - You have access to the office 24/7. What you use your office for is up to your discretion, but keep in mind conduct and professionalism. Also, keep in mind who you give access with respect to your office as everyone often doesn't lock their offices and may leave their files around, so you don't want people knowing information they shouldn't. In addition, anything with respect to hiring, I usually put it away from plain sight so try to do that especially if you are leaving you office during regular hours.
- Cell Phone/Electronics
  - Technically, you need to be on call 24/7 especially the VP Administration. Just be mindful whom you give your number and what they might contact you for. I have gotten messages ranging from SOS, I need an extension cord to SOS, someone is hurt and I need help navigating this (Clay). It's also hard to maintain a life and separate work when people can text and message you all the time. I was very liberal and always wanted to be available, but you can use your discretion.

- Also, as GG mentioned, be mindful of how you are checking your phone and electronics during meetings. It is incredibly rude when someone is speaking and you are opening using the phone in front of them. I would suggest bring a laptop and check emails and messages on that instead.
- You do get up to 80$ a month for your cellphone which is a cheque you get every 3-4 months because they expect you to have a good plan and be always available as a corporate officer of the organization.

- Social Media
    - We covered this on how you want to navigate the constant Facebook messages you get. Golden rule, if you are having a conversation on Facebook, just ask them to send an email if they need you to do something,
    - I always had Facebook open and would take periodic breaks from work by checking the timeline. It can be exhausting to constantly do administration work with no break, so use it as a break but don't get sucked in. I imagine you won't because before you do, someone will sweep in and interrupt you, so you don't have a lot of time by yourself.

It is important to set these expectations early on, but it's also important to make sure you are holding each other accountable to these expectations. Just call things out respectful when it happens, so people are not developing a habit. You may choose to also be looser with your expectations as the year goes by, so it really depends on what gets under your skin and what doesn't.

MSU Strategic Vision and Brand

As a member of the BOD, you will set out the vision each year. It has been tossed around quite a couple times about setting a long-term strategic vision for the MSU. Jacob in his term strived to work toward it and Pauline really likes the idea of coming up with a strategic mandate, so each year people don't come and change the direction rapidly. I see it as one of two perspectives:

1. You develop a strategic document similar to the Western USC route and you spend thousands of dollars on consultation and you have this vague document that sets the vision for the organization for the next 3 years. It will consist of guiding principles and strategic themes similar to the Welcome Week Document. The con in doing this is the money you will spend and there is no rule that incoming board members have to follow it, also it binds board members from being innovative with their projects.

2. You don’t develop the document but have to keep in mind when you are developing your vision that there were projects that came before you and themes past board members worked on, so you have to figure out how to integrate you vision with the direction the organization is going in. For example, thousands of students voted for Justin on the theme of sustainability, so is that something your board wants to focus on or is that something your board is going to cut altogether.

At the beginning of your term, the corporate secretary and John sit down and talk about hammering out timelines and the goals each of you have. To see a sample of what the document looks like, check under my board folder and it should be there. I didn’t really look back at the document much during the year, but Jess was always good at reminding of things

during in the timeline that was set.

Other branding things you need to know is that we have a visual identity guide that we sue for all promotional items that are created through the Student Union. These are colours and logos and fonts that all service PTMs and execs need to follow. I have a copy of the visual identity guide in my archives, but Sarah and Wooder also have copies and run the training and check regularly on the website for people who cheat the system. Sometimes, your job is to flag something you see and bring it to their attention, so be familiar with the content. Wooder takes this visual identity very seriously and he worked really hard to establish it with the MSU Underground, so respect the work they put into this and make sure PTMs are following the rules.

State of the Union

State of the Union is a way our organization keeps historical record for the organization as well as outline and document of our goals. We have come along way since the first State of the Union. As you probably are familiar with, we have a huge stage and do our big presentation in the atrium. Wooder will be on top of this very early to make sure you are creating this document. Last year, we had some obstacles as the board took multiple LOAs, which made it difficult to do the State of the Union the way we intended it to be. We piloted the use of a video to summarize our state of the union and we did recap videos throughout the year and I really liked that because I think we built a lot of engagement online. When you critically think about, the State of the Union usually happens during Presidentials and as Wooder would say, often times the SoTU is used to debunk stupid presidential platform points. So, if you want to be innovative and try something different for this, don't be afraid to bring it up to Wooder. When it comes to the document, it was the vain of my existence as the admin; you have to report on all the services and everything else that is general. I would say the VP Education writes the most for the State of the Union, followed by the Finance and Admin, then the President. I have a document from last year under the state of the union folder, but Wooder can also give you the document. To make your life easier, email PTMs the blurb from last year and ask them to write you one in a similar fashion and that will reduce the amount you have to write by a lot. I was very busy in term one and I didn't give this document the attention it needed, but I would start early and just update as you go. As GG mentioned, have you part for the State of the Union done before you leave for the break because you will be busy in January with hiring. Be respectful of the deadlines and set yourself a fake deadline if need be to make sure you get this document done on time.

Confidentiality and Your Role

As GG mentioned, you have three locked cabinets in your office that you can use to lock up any belongings you need. I started by locking my office everyday and closer to the end, I also locked up and during hiring at times. You can choose to do whatever you are comfortable with, but just keep in mind that there is a hole in your window and these offices are accessible and as I mentioned earlier, you just don't want people borrowing things or taking a peak at hiring documents when you are not there. PTMs and staff were very respectful when I closed the door, which indicated they shouldn't be entering my office while I am gone. But, as a safety measure, I used to always hide documents if I knew I was not going to be around in the office.

If you ever need to dispose confidential information, there is a shredder by your office. It is better to shred more things than it is to shred too little. This is a service that we subscribe to and the company will pick up things once a month to destroy everything. If you ever drop anything accidently in there, contact Victoria and she will give you the key to retrieve it. In terms of archiving, you can do what I did or just save everything to the desktop then upload it to the drive. Just be mindful of when you are uploading things to the server, what is private and what is public. You wouldn't want to upload a private document into the public server with no restrictions placed on it.

Whenever I had any HR issue or challenges with my employees, I would often go to Jess and the board to get more perspective. Depending on the nature of the situation, I would also go to Wooder and John for their expertise. It is important to remember that they have been around here longer than you have and some problems are routine things that happen year after year. Don't feel like you have to solve all these problems yourself because you certainly don't have to and trust the people around you to give you more perspective and provide you with expertise you don't have. With Jess gone, I would say rely on the perspectives of John, Wooder, and Victoria as they have interacted with many FT staff and services in their tenure in the MSU. Regardless of where you go, hope you can trust them with confidential information.

MSU HR

The MSU underwent a FT staff review in 2012-2013 and there is documentation available for you to read about the process and the outcome. If not, John is always a great resource to ask on what happened with the review and what changes were made to the organization. In terms of the proposed changes from last year, there was a strong desire from students and staff on a part-time level to see us have more resources invested into HR for the organization. There were claims such as us underpaying our staff and breaking labour code. So, in Teddy's year, they took a look at FT staff in order to reassign some roles. For example, Wooder used to play a heavy role in clubs and that year, he took on more of a role that focused on the communications of the organization through his director of marketing and communications role. Clubs went to Jess and she was know the operations coordinator as opposed to an administrative assistant. Her responsibilities were to oversee the organizational wide policies and take an active role in clubs where she would be directly supervising the clubs administrator. Victoria was known referred to as the administrative services coordinator and the intention was for her to play a more active role in service conversations and support the VP Administration more. In our year, the change that was made was the wage review system that both Ryan and I overhauled along with Jess to provide our part time staff with more equitable wages. Jess is a great resource to utilize in terms of seeking another perspective as she does have her HR designation, so she can give you more legal context or support you as you have to navigate some HR situations. In her absence, I would advise you to seek guidance from Wooder and John and Victoria as they have been here for multiple years and can provide you with context on how situations were handled in the past.

Full Time Hiring

This year, we restructured the MSU Underground and other departments such as campus events where we had to hire 8-10 full time staff. It is rare that you have such a turnover for FT staff that you need to do that amount of hiring. Ryan and John did most of the FT hiring, but I did on some hiring boards such as the hiring of the administrative assistant (Emma) and SOP (Clubs administrator). The VP Administration is often exempt from hiring on the FT staff because you do some much part time staff hiring, so do more hiring should be taken on at your own discretion. All the questions and any FT hiring I did can be found in the archived folders. In terms of support for hiring, you are often not the one coordinating it- it would be John or whoever is getting hired for Jess' position. I am going to copy David Campbell's notes for FT hiring and make some amendments based on my experience in case you are going to take an active role this year which is unlikely.

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.

The additional notes I would make are that it is important to see how this person would integrate themselves into the organization. The Student Union is unlike any place and you want to find a person that respects students and is comfortable and adaptable to change because things change every single year. Also, be careful if the person getting replaced is sitting on the hiring board because they might be biased to find someone like themselves and what we are trying to do is look for someone who can fulfill the role and bring their own role (i.e. campus events hiring, we are not looking for another Al, we were looking for a Campus Events Director).

Discipline and Evaluation

If anything ever comes up with a full-time staff member, bring it to John's attention immediately. Because of the yearly turnover, issues with behaviour and job completion can often get lost. Remember that we hold our PTM's and each other to account, and we should be doing the same thing with FT staff. It can be a little awkward at first to think about disciplining someone who is about 20 years older than you, but keep in mind that you are their bosses. It's important to understand different perspectives and respect that FT staff have been here a lot longer than you have, but it's also important to not get taken advantage of because of you lack of context and age.

When disciplining a staff member, John should always be involved. Focus on how this is meant to help them improve rather than preparing them to be fired. There are sample letters during David Campbell's year and there may be some sample letters in my email. Make sure when you are disciplining or preparing to terminate an employee, you document everything so you have evidence to point to while you are discussing disciplinary matters. If you are planning to discipline someone, John will prepare all the documentation but make sure if you think it's serious enough, you give him or her a written warning. My recommendation is that anytime there is a staff issue during the year, document it in a word document that way you can pass it onto the next board, so they have context of what they are walking into.

My last tip is when you are looking at FT behaviour, treat every employee the same. You might have more affinity towards certain staff members based on proximity of working relationship or your personal opinion of them, but it doesn't change the fact that you should treat them the same when looking at staff issues. It's all about perspective and try to look at things through all angles before making any decision and this applies to more than dealing with FT issues.

Please refer to FT Manual I sent to you for more information.

PART-TIME STAFF

Part-Time Managers

A recommendation Anna made to Jacob was to create a document outlining when PTM roles begin and end. As mentioned, some jobs are hired outside of the normal cycle (i.e. Clay is hired in October), others ends outside of a normal cycle (i.e. Shinerama, Farmstand, Horizons). Especially with the wage review, a lot of PTM start dates were changed. I think the August start ones will surprise you and to make sure you are prepared, just make sure you know when they all start and end. You will be responsible for training them and making sure they get started with all the resources and when they end, make sure they cleaned up their cabinets, organized their email, and are completing their transition reports.

For more information about Part Time Managers, refer to my service manual I left for you.

Hiring

The number of times you have to do this depends on the odd starts and how you want to structure hiring. So, in previous years, hiring was done twice, once in the fall period and once in the January of the winter period. In fall, you would hire Clay during the month of October and Horizons during the month of November. In my platform, I addressed I wanted to provide more job opportunities for students and make them more accessible, so I wanted to spread it out. I also was on Executive Board the year prior and I knew how much hiring the VP Administration needed to hire in January. The way I broke it down was I hired Horizons, Clay, Shinerama, Mac Farmstand, and MACycle during the fall term and the rest I put it up for winter. In terms of the schedule, you can follow mine or create your own. I would say do about 2-3 PTMs every week depending on how much you can handle and the availability of SRA members on Executive Board. All my hiring documents can be found in the desktop files including questions used and competencies for each position.

Now, you know how hectic my life was in second term. Hiring has the potential to consume your ENTIRE January/February. Most of your day is spent coordinating the hiring committees, reading applications, interviewing and then sending out acceptance or rejection emails. However, if you are organized and prepared, you can have a generally smooth process. Jess would have helped you through this process as she does most of the Job Postings. I don't anticipate you will run into any trouble as long as you plan ahead and prepare for the constant flux of hiring. Talk to the PTMs and ask who needs priority in terms of hiring. I put Spark, Maroons, CRO Diversity, EFRT, and PSL as a priority because some needed to hire rep teams an some need longer transition. For positions with assistant directors or assistant positions (i.e. diversity/PSL), you need to hire the directors first so keep that on your radar and bump them first.

As we talked about, I really think hiring on the weekend alleviated some of the pressure of the admin having to hire during the week and being unavailable from the hours of 9-5 pm. I did a lot of afternoon and weekend hiring because it was part of my platform in order to make candidates feel comfortable and to alleviate the office hours spent on hiring. The qualitative feedback I got from applicants was that they appreciated the afternoon and weekend times because of not having school or the fact that they didn't have to see staff. Every year, we have a master schedule we create on a Google document on PTM availability and my availability and then availability of EB members. Because you do hiring during Presidentials watch out for EB members or PTMs that are involved in hiring and also participating in election season. We always try to do this ahead of time in December, but people need constant reminding to fill out the availability.

Once you have confirmed the schedule, then take it to EB to strike the hiring committees (Victoria has a copy of the motions from last year that indicates who is on which hiring board). If a PTM is reapplying, you would put 2 EB members instead of the one that typically sits on the hiring board. The regular structure for standard hiring boards is the VP Administration, the EB member, and the PTM. You can look into piloting the AVP services position this year to see if they would like to take some of the pressure off hiring. I would recommend sending EB the schedule and asking them to think about what positions they want to hire for or are available for. That way, at the EB meeting, they aren't checking schedules but instead picking positions and getting the times they would conduct interviews.

This year, we changed the EB bylaw to make sure people know that they have to sit on at least 3 hiring boards per term. The reason we made this change was because GG and I sat on like 15 hiring boards during our terms and we thought it was ridiculous. Hold people accountable and make them sit on the minimum number of hiring boards to ensure fairness for other members.

Set a goal for posting all PTM jobs. This year, I wanted them all up by mid December, closing early January because of my leave. We found that closing them early caused a reduced number of applicants applying because of the break. So, maybe make your first close one-week after the break to allow students to be aware and apply for these positions. You will also find that some positions have a reduced number of applicants that apply due the nature of the role such as the CRO, Diversity Director, EFRT, etc.

The other thing to consider before posting jobs is the Job Description. It would probably be useful to get the PTMs to take a look at their JD in the fall to bring any changes to EB before putting them up. Be mindful on what changes you actually bring to EB as some changes are reflective of a particular person and not the job.

Before the interview, you may also want to change or update the interview questions. As you know, the priority for GG was hiring and myself, so between the two of us, we have left you with a great foundation of questions and competencies. PTMs like to be involved in the development of the questions, I find it's easier to just create the questions and ask them for their feedback. What I did this year is ask the PTM to provide me with a real life situational that happened to them and tried to incorporate those in the creation of the questions. Your new operations coordinator should print all the resumes, interview questions, and help you with scheduling interviews.

We normally interview 2-4 candidates. You can interview more or less depending on how you want conduct hiring but make sure you are consistent in your decisions. For example, if you chose to interview someone based on their relevant experience and not their cover letter, make sure you are sifting through the rest of the applicants and not just picking this person because their name is familiar. Some services, I interviewed 5 people and for others, I interviewed 2. So, there really is flexibility in how many people you want to interview.

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. It is a nice touch to do it over the phone (but not necessary). Then, once they have accepted let all the non-successful candidates know the outcome of the interview. They may want feedback and I often gave it via email. One way to expedite this process is at the end of interviews, I always like to ask people for 1/2 reason as to why someone could improve. Conversely, as I was writing down what the candidates were saying, I would often put missing things as notes to myself. For example "Ok, but how were you responsible for the fundraising?" "What about follow-up?". Makes it a lot easier, especially when you have interviewed a million people. Again, if you and your fellow hiring committee members take good interview notes, providing this feedback isn't that challenging.

Structure of Feedback Sample
The applicant had strong communication skills and did a great job in showcasing how their relevant skills could be applicable to the job. An area of improvement would be to thin critically about the nuances presented in a situational question in the greater context of the job. I.E. if a volunteer doesn't show up for a peer support shift, what are the implications to the service.
(Try to pair something they did good with an area of improvement and keep it to 4-5 sentences that is meaningful feedback. I used to pull up an example of something they said and how they can phrase it better).

A few final tips:

- Make sure you draw on the supports of the Administrative Assistants, especially replacement Jess. As I mentioned to you already, that person will be responsible for all the job postings, downloading of resumes, printing of resumes, etc.
- Event if there is only one applicant, do the interview and don't tell them because you want to make sure they take this process seriously. Also, do not be afraid to hire them if they aren't suited for the job. You can re-open as many times as you feel comfortable until you make a good hire.

- Knowing Operating Policy 2- Employment as it will dictate some practices and procedures for this process. Also, review the service operating policies, as they will dictate who should sit on these hiring boards. Some of these positions require external people (SWC, people from security), which you also need to coordinate.
- Do not hesitate to reopen a position should you feel that it is necessary. If you are going to do so, inform the candidate that you are reopening the position early on so that they aren't left hanging. And, do your best to reopen, close and then interview the next batch of candidates. If the process is too drawn out, the original candidate may not feel comfortable. You can either re-open because you are uncertain, or because you know that you won't hire people. Overall, be VERY clear with timelines and communication. I got a bit of flack this year for not being clear enough when I re-opened a job.
- 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.
- Make a concerted effort to promote the availability for the jobs. Use the PR department, the SRA, current PTMs and other means you can think of to spread the word about the jobs available to students.
- You will probably coordinate the hiring for the positions supervised by the VP Ed. I personally had to help Blake a couple times in making the interview questions and competencies. Just make sure to liaise with Ryan well ahead of time so that it's all sorted.
- Once a job is hired, give the student's information to Jess. As the Corporate Secretary, she will draft up all of the forms and then help get them out to the incoming PTMs. This includes the preparation of their letter of employment, tax forms, etc.
- This is an excerpt from Anna *"There may be a delicate balance that you must find when hiring regarding who you chose to hire. A PTM and the members of EB may disagree about who to choose. This happened this year to me and it was hard (I essentially became the tie breaking vote between an EB member and the PTM on who to pick). My suggestion is go with your gut. You are building a team and trying to set up your successor with good employees. If you feel like a person isn't going to be successful (and you will have your reasons), trust them."* **You know this all too well. I trust your judgement.**
- Board members have access to who applies to every position in the organization and remind them to keep this confidential information confidential. My board knew I would ream them out if they spoke a word to anyone about any of the information I shared with them; so keep an eye out for this. If someone feels our process is tainted, they might never want to get involved again so make sure being vigilant protects this. This also spans to members of the hiring board.

Discipline

I think every VP Administration struggles with this process because it's hard to sit down someone who is your peer and let them know that they have done something wrong and need to correct their behaviour. One way to avoid this to meet with PTMs ahead of time or in a PTM meeting, outline your expectations for the role and let them know what the disciplinary process as outlined by the OP.

In general, a good rule of thumb is to document every conversation as best as you can. As much as people thought I was very strict, I was very lenient in the sense I understood this was many people's first manager job and there is meant to be a learning curve. Many of these people have never managed a team or know the basics of budgeting. I am open to teachable moments, however there are some things that may cross the threshold of learning curve.

I have examples in my files of discipline letters I had to give out this year. You can use them as a template. Before, you would need to have someone come in and sign that they received a letter of verbal warning. Try to have someone in the room whenever you have to discipline a staff member as to avoid misconceptions from arising. Also, be clear about why they are getting disciplined but also open yourself to be a resource to help them improve unless you are terminating them.

Technically, EB is privy to everything PTM related but oftentimes it can difficult to disclose information to them regarding discipline. Generally, before or immediately after delivering some form of discipline I would inform EB. I don't go into detail unless I was probed and many of the times, EB is an update and not a board that decides whether you should discipline an individual or not. You as a supervisor make a decision and update EB as the board that manages PTMs. However, any PTM has the write to an appeal process with EB if they wish. Let the PTM that this is an option and inform EB should this ever come up. However, normally that is not the case.

I set the tone pretty early for Executive Board meetings and this helped me maintain order during the year when we had some tough conversations.

Year Plans

These are really important for PTM to do and you should encourage PTM to spend ample time on them. The format is pretty straightforward and easy for them to understand. There are several templates spanning multiple years you can send out to PTMs as a guide to follow. I spoke about how you should structure this earlier in the transition report, but here are some quick notes for review:

- PTMs are sent their year plan template and you set a date for a draft to be emailed in
- PTMs send in their draft and you take a week to review and provide feedback

- PTMs send you a final copy of their year plan
- You submit year plans to get approved at Executive Board

Personally, I set the deadlines based on the start time of the PTM and when their service was becoming operational. For summer PTMs, I made the final copy due within the first month of them starting work on their service. For September start PTMs, I made them submit their year plans for August. You can change the timelines based on the new start dates for the PTMs.

What I didn't do a good job was to go back and refer to the year plan when I had one on one with PTMs. I asked them to review their progress halfway through the year and mark down how many points they achieved in their year plan but it's gets busy and PTMs are not interested in doing extra work unless it's directly related to their service. You know I used my year plan to mark my progress, but that might not be the case for PTMs. So, encourage PTMs to use this document as a foundation for their goal setting and it will help them keep on track and measure their success as they go through the year.

Reporting

It is your responsibility to create the reporting schedule for EB. Victoria will remind you that you have to do this ad will send reminders to PTM's each week about when they have to report. I personally used last year's schedule as a draft to create this years. Something I kept in mind was that there are certain events that come up during service operations that may be beneficial for a service to submit their year plan at a particular date. For example, it makes no sense to put Elections reporting in the middle of Presidentials or the middle of SRA Generals. So, I tried to schedule them after their election and a similar practice can be employed for all the other services to make sure you are not overloading administrative responsibility on a PTM during a peak time.

EB does have some follow up required and this year, I made Victoria put it in as action items and have follow up at the next meeting, so I wouldn't forgot. It is hard to keep up with all the discussions and action items, so just make sure you are on top of it. I used to have a do list from EB and flag it as something I need to follow up on that week before EB the next week.

Evaluation

Something that wasn't really made clear to me was the more formal evaluation process that Anna started. It is essentially a mid year evaluation that is carried out. All of the templates from Anna, GG, Jacob, and my year should be in the folders. I found it helpful to receive feedback and see areas in which I can improve and it's good to get executives to fill out evaluation forms for PTMs as well.

There are a couple forms that can get filled out:

1. PTM's that will evaluate you

2. Exec/volunteers that will evaluate PTM's
3. Assistant Directors that evaluate Directors

I gave executives an option of sending this form to me via email, but as GG said, I would encourage you to make it into a Google form maybe to help you get more responses. I essentially got all the feedback and then I made a final evaluation summary that I sent to PTMs. I know this is not something we do, but it might be good to do this with FT staff as well to get their feedback. This would fall under John's responsibility and with the many things he has on the go, it might be hard for him to make time for this. But, if you want to make this a priority, he will make it his priority and make time.

PTM Meetings

These are traditionally scheduled for once a month on Sundays. I have outlines for what we talked about at meetings in the folders, but I found that attendance was an issue in my year. I would make these meetings mandatory and if you can come up with a schedule in the summer, then you can let PTMs know ahead of a time and that should allow them the time to get their affairs in order. I would suggest having an attendance policy enforced i.e. you can miss one a term. I had a hard time figuring out what exactly to talk about at these meetings as the first meeting, we tried freestyle tell me about areas you need support and it ended up people talking about how stressed they were and went over the time allotted. So, I would suggest picking themes for each meeting and having a year end dinner for each term. Ryan and I took the staff out to Boston Pizza because 1280 and Phoenix were booked, but I would try to keep it on campus so the most amount of people can come. I would consider asking Kristina to help you with these meetings, so she can be more integrated with the PTM world and provide you with additional support.

As a tip, it does become difficult to schedule these meetings for second term because of hiring so be prepared in advance. I remember I had a weekend interview and I was behind by like a hour, so I had to get Ryan to do my PTM meeting because it was in between hiring and SRA Meeting. Also, if you choose to keep it a Sunday, you might have a date that conflicts with SRA which means you will be working all day which can be mentally exhausting.

The Committee Room

This space is the bane of my existence and I used to dread walking into this room. You had stuff in your platform by restructuring this room, so good luck with that. My personal opinion is that no matter how you restructure it, you have a basic problem, which is too many people use the room, and there is not enough space.

As you and I have already started to discuss, there are a few issues with the space. First, it is never kept clean. Unfortunately, the VP (Admin) and the custodians/office clerks are often the ones left cleaning the space. Second, people will oftentimes leave personal items in there or use the room inappropriately for their own personal uses. If a person chooses to use the room to study, that is okay. If the person uses the room as a coat check, that is more problematic. Set this expectation early on and enforce the rules. Third, ensure people are logging out of computers when they aren't there. If they don't, this essentially leaves our server open for anyone in the room to access it. This is very bad. Also, people monopolizing workstations for an entire day sucks. Try to tell people that they can't do this.

Essentially, who should get access to the space is outlined in an Operating Policy. In the past, Traditionally, the BoD, the CRO/DRO and the Speaker are given the punch code for the door between the Committee Room and the Office. Victoria has gotten very protective of it, and I had to fight her to get it. I think it's important for the BoD to get the code. I wouldn't give it out beyond that, because they more people who know the code, the more likely it is to get out.

If at any point you suspect the room is used improperly or something is stolen, ask Victoria to print out the access card record and she can see who entered when. You can also get her to change the punch code. Honestly, I might recommend doing this once a semester just for the sake of making sure people aren't abusing it. If steps need to be taken whereby a person needs to lose their key, inform Victoria immediately. Also, don't be afraid to give PTM's warnings if you find out they've been handing their keys out to people. The keys are for them, not for their friends.

Good luck with this one, as I am sure you have been the recipient of my many passive aggressive emails trying to correct the mess. I just got frustrated cleaning after people to the point where I told PTMs if I found things outside their lockers, it will be in the trash if they didn't remove it by a certain date.

Courtesy Card

For some reason, the Courtesy Card was a big deal for people. What used to be a perk and a reward for the tireless hours people put into the MSU on a volunteer level has now become an expectation.

There has been a lot of conversation around re-purposing the courtesy card to actually help us generate revenue. This year, Ryan and I experimented with a bunch of options for 1280 and thought critically about who should get the card. I would even open up the conversation about removing the card altogether and encouraging people to use more of their volunteer appreciation budget line.

Touch base with Dave over the redesign of the card. He is pretty quick and usually he just changes the colour so you can distinguish between the summer cards and the fall cards. Sometimes, you will miss people or people will lose it so ask for some blank cards that I used to just fill in for people. I had a one time you loose it, you get a replacement. Second time you lose it, you don't get another one.

The feedback I got from this year was that the FT staff doesn't really use it and some services use it more than hours. Most people just use the Union Market free coffee and 1280 discount. Also, it's up to you to decide who gets a card. I would use Mr. David Campbell's wise words when looking at who you are gong to give the card to:

The courtesy cards are given in recognition for those who we know full well work far more than the hours for which they are recognized (either paid or unpaid). Therefore an executive with SHEC got one, but a CSR in Union Market did not.

So, Office Clerks, Accounting Clerks, CSRs won't get the card though you may be asked by their direct supervisor. Once you decide who doesn't get the card, stick with the decision.

On a priority list, people always used to nag me about these cards and I put them on low priority. I had other things to do before this, but I would give people a heads up of when you plan on administering and giving it out.

Special Note: Clay and Horizons and Farmstand are summer services so typically, their card gets cut for the year. But, I gave them a card for the year as well because it's not fair that they just get a card for 3 months when they put a lot of hours into their service. In addition, watch out for people involved in a trillion services and only give one card instead of multiple.

Phone and Email

You will be reimbursed for your phone usage. The reasoning behind this is that as a member of the BoD, you are required to be available 24/7. You will get $80/month and the cheque will come to you every 4 months.

Early on, add your email to your phone. You should be checking it quite frequently. At the same time though, you want to be able to have work-life balance. As I mentioned earlier in the transition report, just be clear with people on your policy for email correspondence. I would always answer emails after work hours, but GG did not. I also told people to fb message me if it was an emergency and many of the times, people would but not with emergencies.

I would also recommend that you minimize checking your phone for emails and texts during meetings. I tried to do this during meetings but sometimes they can drag on and it can be hard to focus. The only reason I would recommend taking up this advice is that the perception you give off when you are on your phone during a meeting isn't a good one. Usually, you may have something to contribute so listen in and participate and then spend time after hours or during breaks in meetings to check emails. Particularly, if you're more engaged in the WW ones you can often make the conversation move forward more quickly. I already gave you tips for this: just bring your laptop and do work if you feel that the meetings are dragging on and you want to feel productive during a meeting. Also, if you plan to check you phone, do it under the table and not in front of university staff members.

Money/Budgeting

As the Vice-President Administration, you are a corporate officer of the organization, which means you have the ability expend funds on behalf of the organization. The budget lines I primarily dealt with are “EXEC” and “ADMIN’. I had some basic budgeting knowledge from sitting on SRA and I like numbers, so most of the time, I figured out POs on my own or asked Ryan if I ever had a question. If you are ever unsure about anything, ask the accounting department, as they are amazing and so helpful. Kevin and Sean will always answer your questions like you are asking them for the first time even though you probably asked the same question like 6 times.

I also kept a copy of all my PO’s in a folder in the bookshelf in addition GG had her PO’s archived from her year in a black binder on the bookshelf.

Budget

This will hopefully give you a good estimate of where money should be expended. Like I said, just get familiar with the budget lines you will primarily be using. This year, I always strived to find a cheaper deal than the year before for retreats and food. I kept that as a goal going in and strived to see if I could meet it. A special note is that anything you do with an executive budget ends with 0305. Just make sure you are tracking how much you are spending even though Maggie sends you monthly statements all the time to give you updates.

Exec 6147-0305: Volunteer Recognition: could pay for Student Recognition Night (confirm this with the Operations Coordinator) and any expenses that Campus Events can’t pay for from their budget lines for Eggnog or Sangria. I also used this as the line where all the sweater revenue would go to for PTM's (they paid for them of course!) This year, we paid for their sweaters, so the cost for the sweaters could have come from this line or board executive special projects.

Exec 6303-0305 – SRA Special Projects: 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. You already know all about this line from your time on the SRA. Regardless, communicate early that the same rules apply for spending from this line as with any other line (e.g. seeking approval BEFORE spending). Make sure you set up some stern criteria and that SRA members are not just spending this on random cookies and coffee events with no attendance. We didn't have a huge issue with this as many of the times it was used by SRA Health Sciences, SRA Science, and SRA Engineering for their outreach events.

Exec 6402-0305 – Awards & Meetings: Last year was the first time that we collapsed this line and the SRA summer meetings into one link. Use this for all of your training purposed. I personally used it to pay for: June SRA training, MSU Retreat in July, PTM August Training, any food for PTM meetings, etc. Also, if you decide to ever buy SRA pizza or something it should probably come from here. There are PO's in my folder letting you know how much I spent for each training weekend in addition to electronic copies of all the invoices under training in my VP Admin transition folder.

Exec 6405-0305 – Exec Meetings: apparently this pays for Executive Board (EB) transition meetings. I didn't really deal with this as it falls under the portfolio of the President and the Administrative Assistant.

Exec 6802-0305 – Transition Training - This is used for paying for BOD transition. Try not to go overboard. Always remember that you should feel confident in defending your choices to a student if they were to ever ask. I would say as a board we have always been frugal in our spending and I hope your board thinks similarly.

Exec 6410-0305 – PT Merit: I personally didn't use this, so just double check if it still exists. In the past it was used to give the PTM's a final dinner, print certificates, etc.

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. LINK funding comes out of this budget and any other random expenses that may crop up. In addition, I believe Ryan M increased the allocation for this budget line because he wanted the board to have more flexibility in the projects they took on and how they expensed them.

Exec 6615-0305 – VP Admin Expense Account: your personal expense account. Use it to pay for conference/event fees you may attend, buying gift certificates as prizes for survey responses, etc. I may have used this budget line to buy the end of year dinner for the PTM staff.

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) or if you choose to go to a conference.

Random Comment Somewhat Related to Your Role on the Budget: I would touch base with Tuba to make sure that all PTM's have a volunteer recognition line. Also, make sure that all services have budget lines that make sense to them. Some have super vague blanket budget lines that don't really make sense (I Think SCSN is one of them). It really confuses PTM's. You may also want to check in with MACycle because they are always a problem when it comes to budgets. The services you need to watch out for in terms of providing support are services that generate revenue and expend money (i.e. Horizons, Clay, EFRT, Farmstand, MACycle). It can get confusing for the PTM who is dealing with both revenues and trying to track how much money they are spending.

As I mentioned, I had a pretty good hold of how to handle money, but if you don't, ask for help earlier in the job. PTMs will come to both Tuba and you to get support with POs and how to budget, so you need to have a baseline understanding. I would say you need to know the following things in the role as VP Administration:

- Know how to walk someone through the completion of an internal PO
- Have a basic understanding of how to read a budget should a PTM ask which budget line the would have to use (basic understanding means you can still use Tuba but this is for when he is not there)
- Guide PTMs on the process for how to get access to the debit and credit card
- Get an understanding of what budget line you should use for your own spending (Retreats and PTM volunteer appreciation)
- Answer basic inquiries about budgeting (what is the pink form, white form, and yellow for used for)
- Know what a standing order is and how to place one with the business units (i.e. MSU Underground)

Signing Cheques/ Standing Orders/ POs

I covered most of the knowledge you would need to know in the above section, so I am just going to copy some of GG's perspective as I think nothing has changed much from this and it's still good advice to follow.

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, Sean, 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 .

Keep this rule even with PTM's, otherwise sometimes they will try and pull a fast one on you, like if Ryan already said no but they come to you.

This also ensures that Ryan will have a good idea of what is going on financially with all of the services and business units and they follow the procedures that he has laid out for FT Staff and PT Staff (such as filling out POs well in advance).

Special Note: Kevin handles DEBITS and CREDITS now and it used to be Sean.

Keys/Office

You will have received 4 keys and one swipe card, which gives you access to all swipe card areas (i.e. Office Main Door, Committee Room Door). The four keys are: the key for the locked filing cabinets and above desk cabinet (small key); your cubicle door key (looks like a regular key); and two Medeco keys that is MSU Master keys (aka they open all MSU doors). The FNK key is for external doors and the FMK is for all internal doors. You should have received a pin from CFMU to access the studio (all information about codes was given to you in a document so refer to that).

Over the past few years, the level of security has increased when it comes to the office. There is a lot of information and assets that is stored in our office and we need to ensure it is secured, for everyone's benefit. Now, anyone who is staying after hours in the Office should either be a staff member who is in that office, or a student/student group who is supervised by a FT staff member or BoD (e.g. TAC meetings, Charity Ball meetings). Clarify these rules with folks early so that the expectation is clear. **I know that you want to be vigilant with this, and please do, and DO IT EARLY**

Some situations you need to watch out for:

- MSU Elections inviting their friends to run study sessions in the boardroom
- PTMs booking the meeting room and wanting to say after hours (can only happen with your approval)
- Board members not being vigilant of who is accessing the office with them and letting people wander
- Board members giving their card to someone and said person misusing the access they have been given (master keys and cards should not be given out unless you absolutely believe it's a necessity and trust the person even then, if you can, get them an additional card for the space they need with reduced hours) i.e. Welcome Week – get the Shinerama and Maroons Coordinator a card with limited access rights to the office

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 have the catalogue – just return it when you borrow it. Should you want to place an order, just give the exact number of the item to the office clerks and they will order it for you. They place the orders on Friday's and generally the stuff will be here by Monday or Tuesday. The other option is just going to The Campus Store if it is urgent and then reimbursing yourself after the fact.

Network

All of my files are pretty logically sorted for you and archived in the bookshelf. You also have access to files from previous VP Administrations. As the VP Administration, you are able to periodically check in on the files of AVPs and PTMs. It is important you are reminding people to save things on the server and not doing things last minute where things can get lost. I wasn't strict on it unless I noticed that a PTM was not keeping record of things in which case I mandated it on them. It's important for you to follow the same rule where periodically, you spend some time archiving and saving things on the server. It's hard to think about the person coming after you while you are in the job but it's important you are setting them up for success. If you care about the organization, you can recognize that transition is a key factor in ensuring that boards are successful and have all the tools and resources to succeed right from the beginning rather than spending half their term learning.

AODA/Risk Management

As the VP Administration, you will be the main point person on the board to address these matters. This past year, with the new AODA requirements handed to us by the province, Jess spent a lot of her time chasing volunteers and staff for their AODA completion. All modules are now online and it states in people's employment contract that they have to complete it within 7 days in the job, so follow up for PTMs and ensure it's being completed. PTMs have to do all 5 modules like you did for SRA, but all volunteers of the organization need to have AODA complete. To make it easy, instruct John and Tuba to follow up with FT staff and business units and you can handle services. If you want to pass that opportunity to the operations coordinator or Victoria, you can do that as well. It is very important that we are complying with provincial guidelines, so this should be a priority for the organization. My recommendation is ask people to do within the first week of the job or they have to be reprimanded such as leave from the job or can't volunteer until it's complete. Adding consequences gives people incentives to take this training seriously.

Risk Management

Starting in 2013, the MSU took over its own risk management process. The forms required by EOHSS inspired these documents. In 2015, they went online and now, there is discussion on restructuring risk management and event management. Right before I left, I believe student affairs passed a student policy, which will impact risk management moving forward. Ultimately, the only part that really concerns your portfolio is the approval of risk management for services.

During training, please talk about risk management and what PTMs need to do get approval. As you know risk management is important because you always want to be in the position to stand up and say you did everything possible to mitigate risk. I walked through the risk management portal through you during our transition but here is a quick refresher.

- Go to the student events portal and sign in with your login and password
- Go on the menu and set it for all awaiting approval
- Click on the form and read through it carefully (watch out for events with food where people don't talk about labelling or gloves in terms of food handling, having one sentence descriptions for high risk events like conferences, any events with alcohol)
- Essentially, use your judgment when you are approving/ getting people to do corrections
- I was never afraid to send it back for someone to correct with suggestions if I felt the PTM was sloppy and didn't put effort into the form and didn't think about all the risk
- If they are taking transportation, make sure waivers are being signed
- Risk management is a responsibility you can delegate to your AVP as long as you are still going through the portal once a week to overview events
- PTMs should not be promoting events on fb without risk management approval (I usually gave them a warning the first time and the second time, I would say that they would have to cancel the event)
- PTMs need EOHSS forms approved for some room bookings so often times, they would forgot and message you on fb to expedite the approval
- I would tell PTMs they need to leave at least 2 weeks since the date of promotion to submit risk management forms (a good practice is to submit forms for term 1 and term 2 all at once so you are thinking ahead)

Kristina is very familiar with risk management procedures as she is going to be a ROA twice, so I am sure you won't run into any trouble. You also have to do risk management for your events, which I forgot to do for the off campus retreat. I made everyone sign waivers though, but it's important that you are also filling out the EOHSS forms and it's very easy to forgot because usually, you are not asked for EOHSS forms for room bookings because you are the VP Administration.

Services

In GG's report, she had an extensive breakdown of services you need to watch out for. I just created an additional services manual you can refer to outside of this transition report. My email is organized in a way that if you ever need to look back at communication pertinent to a particular service, I sorted it in the folders under PTMs that list all the services.

Just some general notes, you already know that you are responsible for overseeing the services. I think the PTM's were truly the best part of my job because to see services expand and help people grow as leaders is truly rewarding, but it can also be exhausting. The number of services a VP Admin manages has grown a tonne since my time in the MSU and comparably, to a decade ago. Every year, people may come to you and say they want to create a new service- just think about whether ideas are unique and if the "new service" doesn't exist in some shape or form through other services.

May Training (PTM)

Last year, GG and Wooder piloted the first ever May training for summer start PTMs. The reasoning behind developing the training was to allow the new VP Admin to practice facilitate a training with Wooder and to have a focus on the summer start PTMs. The training was effective except it was very overwhelming to do right when I started the job in addition there were some people who had to take time off work. I imagine it would be a little different this year because most PTMs start in May and will be getting paid in the summer, so there is an expectation that they show up to training. All my training materials and any feedback received from the training is on the server and in the binders. Overall, the content can be dry and it's hard to make it engaging, but the training is important because you want to be in the position to say you gave x person training when they say I never got taught how to do this. So, my tip is to always be as thorough as possible and include all training materials in an online format. In addition, think about the differences between each service when you are training PTMs and how useful different sessions would be for different people (i.e. budgeting is something EFRT to pay attention to a lot because they deal with a lot of revenues and expenses at one time). One of the feedback pieces PTMs gave across the board is they would like additional information on how to hire and support for hiring, so maybe get Kristina to create some resources for them.

June Training- SRA Orientation

The training was held on campus and all members slept over in Hedden Hall. I am not going to go into too much detail about this training because you were at it and I know you know how to plan this training. All the information you need for the training again is archived in the folder. The changes I made for my year is reduce the number of days for the retreat from 3 days to 2, so SRA members only stayed overnight for one night. The reason for this change is because there was not enough content to cover an entire 3 days in addition a lot of members had to take time off work on Friday to come to the retreat, so it was to make the training time more accessible. I know you want to move this retreat off campus, so you probably will not be using housing and conference services, but the PO is there should you need to.

July Training- MSU Orientation

This is the off campus retreat we plan that invites all SRA, PTM, and SOPs. I followed GG's recommendation and had the retreat at YMCA Cedar Glen for the following reasons: the shortest distance camp wise from campus (not a lot of travel time), cost (was a priority for many students), on site spaces (entertainment room, pool, mess hall, outdoor space), great support staff, accessibility (the space is pretty accessible for a camp), etc. I know you want to keep this retreat on campus this year and you already started planning for it. Just ensure the price you are getting from housing is fair and I would not recommend providing overnight stay option to everyone you are inviting to this retreat (i.e. clubs people, athletes). Everything in terms of content and costing for this training is on the server if you need to access it. The one thing to think about at this training is you have a room full of PTMs, SRA, and SOP- how can you use their collective thinking to solve or find solutions to some of our complex student problems. Ryan utilized some time at this retreat to get feedback for space, which he used when negotiating with the university on what the basic requirements of space should be for the design of the new building. Use this weekend as an opportunity to get feedback on any upcoming projects or current projects you are working on.

Peer Support Training

This year, thanks to my girl GG, we had a TRRA work all summer at 30 hours a week developing training materials and supporting the peer support PTMs. This year, I was very hands off with respect to the development of this training compared to VP Administrations in the past because I had Shruti. As GG summarised in her report, there are 6 peer support services and prior to the creation of PSL, only SHEC was offering peer support. Now, we have evolved to the point where every peer support offers some form of support and will needing training. This year, it was a little difficult to navigate the relationship between the TRRA and the VP Administration because it was fairly new and neither of us had a handbook on how to best utilize the role. We had meetings twice a month to come up with timelines, projects, and goals and then the following meeting would be updates. I got Shruti to do a year plan so she would stay on track and then we would provide monthly updates to EB on what she has been working on. The updates to EB were mostly because the position was a pilot and had to be reviewed at the end of the year. My recommendation is to stay hands off this training because you are not an expert on peer support my any means, so trust the staff you hired to develop the training under the guidelines you provide. The few times I intervened last year was due to some disagreements that happened between university administrators from the SWC and the peer support PTMs because they had a different perspective on how to approach suicide prevention training. One of the delicate balances you have to navigate is peer support PTMs thinking their training supersedes any training that the university experts can provide and while there is merit to their thinking on many levels, we also have to be careful on going on the dangerous slope of thinking peer support is better than professional support and we should learn to handle all student issues in isolation within our services. I always believed in the joint collaboration approach as I believe the university and peer support services should work together and that is how we can best respond to student needs. So, with respect to the training itself, get the transition drive from Shruti and all the information should be there. What I mostly supported Shruti with was logistics and paying for things as the TRRA should not have access to the debit card or expend funds, however the AVP can.

SRA Professional Development Day

GG had a SRA Professional Development Day where she invited guest speaker Matt Green and we brushed up on our training. I enjoyed it and attended the session, but many SRA members thought it wasn't mandatory and did not. We didn't do an event like this in second term because of all our busy schedules due to the referendum and Presidentials, but I do think it's a good idea and something you can continue in your term. I am sure your board can think of different ways to engage SRA members with respect to having a professional development day.

On-Boarding Package

GG created an on boarding package for PTMs and I created an on boarding package for EB members. Collectively, the resources that are found in this document are extremely helpful with respect to supporting incoming PTMs or EB members on how to navigate the MSU and their roles. As you know, before I left, I recommended starting a Google drive for PTMs and putting resources there, so people can always access it. I put the on boarding package there and you can continue to update the drive with any resources you think they may need. The intention behind creating these packages is to provide incoming people with as much information as possible in the most accessible format. So, you can continue the tradition of updating the on boarding package and passing it along or you can develop your own way of doing things (i.e. Google drive, more Facebook updates, Infographics in front of the office, etc.). The world is your oyster!

Event Planning (aka the part of the job you don't realize takes so much of your time)

Welcome Week

This really does have the potential to be the best and worst part of your job in many ways. You sit on all levels of the planning process, which I always appreciated because it gives you the bigger picture of how things are done and where you need to go to change things. A scientist at heart, I always like figuring out how things work, so this was a very cool part of my job even though the meetings can sometimes be long.

Committees you sit on.

WWAC

WWAC or also called Welcome Week Advisory Committee. You will be the co-chair for this committee with Jeremy Sandor from the SSC. Other members of the committee include: the VP Finance, Jenn from the OCRC, Simon Wilmot from Residence Life, Michele from the SSC, and the campus events director. Essentially, the role of the committee is to be the "oversight" of all things Welcome Week. They set direction for the strategic priorities and they also decide how many days Welcome Week is. Some of the greater themes we discussed on the committee this year are : Welcome Week suit bursaries, mandatory meal plan, strategic theme responsibilities, changes to strategic priorities and themes, etc. You will find that on this committee, you may be taking about things for multiple meetings before strides are made. For example, we talked about the MSU handling strategic themes for half a year before the needle was moved and we got the money and consensus to be able to move forward. You have been with me to a couple of these meetings, so you know how the dynamic works. Everything we do, we do as a consensus so sometimes, and decisions take longer than just voting on something. While I appreciate hearing people's perspectives and getting everything on the same page, when you are only here for one year, it can get frustrating when certain members are blocking great ideas due to office politics. So, my recommendation is to set your priorities with your board on some changes you want to fight for or move towards making and then work on getting the committee on board during the summer and fall term for Welcome Week 2018. Jeremy will be super helpful in helping you navigate some of the WW politics and he used to be someone I just openly had conversation with and he appreciates the honesty.

Things you should put attention to:

Strategic Themes Working Groups: This year, as you know the MSU is taking control of the strategic theme programming and coordinating the working groups to talk about campaign design and content. This is our one chance at doing something big with these themes and showing the Welcome Week committee the potential we have with the X amount of dollars and making this engaging for students. Don't screw it up ☺ We had a rough sketch on who should be on these working groups, but you need to do a lot of the work in coordinating them and setting vision. Maybe you can delegate this responsibility to Kristina and be there for support, but it's important that you have at least one meeting with all the groups in May. The goal of the MSU taking over is to ensure student consultation is being had also, you get to be apart of having a large say in how they will be implemented (i.e. have a big event called one McMaster and display content in an engaging way). One McMaster was an event we tried to have last Welcome Week that was supposed to mimic Western's One Love Campaign they run for Welcome Week. Look up the campaign and see where the inspiration was coming from and maybe it will spark some interest for you board on how to run this event. The recommendation from Ryan and I is to have one McMaster earlier in the week and to have it on the stage outside instead of Sports Hall.

Welcome Week Budgets: This year, every department has to submit a budget to WWAC and the committee will discuss efficiencies and moving some of the money coming out of those efficiencies into a common pot of money that can be used for new iniatives. For example, let's say you spent 5000 dollars on t-shirts in 2016, but only need 3000 dollars for t-shirts this year; the extra 2000 dollars should be spent in a meaningful way on students. So, the early reporting is just for departments to be aware of these efficiencies and ensure the committee is discussing how to spend the extra money.

WWPIC

WWPIC also known as Welcome Week Planning and Implementation Committee. This committee is chaired by Michele and has the following people: Jenn from OCRC, Sean Baudette from Residence Life, Rachel from the SSC, campus events director now maybe the programming coordinator Marco, the faculty societies coordinator (Marina), and a note taker from the SSC. This committee as you know oversees the day to day nitty gritty details about welcome week such as the meal implementation, the schedule, the room bookings for different student groups, etc. You will find that you talk about almost the same thing on this committee week after week i.e. should faculty fusion be on Wednesday or Thursday. The entire past meeting documents and minutes are on my server, but my recommendation is to just bring a laptop to these meetings and do work while you go through some of the routine stuff. These meetings can last up to 3 hours and you never want to feel like you could have used this time to be more productive. I will say there are a couple things you want to fight for at these meetings for example scheduling of MSU events, so you need to be engaged in the conversation to do so. I personally really like Welcome Week and enjoyed the planning elements that went behind the scenes, so although I would be on my laptop, I would still contribute to almost every conversation whether it pertained to the MSU or not. You can choose to use your seat and your voice in whatever manner you think will help achieve your goals and what you want to do as VP Administration on this committee. Something to keep in mind is that as a VP, you also represent all students, so if another department is doing something that is not benefiting all students, you need to speak up and raise your concerns even though it doesn't directly pertain to the MSU.

Things you are responsible for during Welcome Week:

Swag and Equipment

We give out a swag bag each year (about 6000) of them to be exact. Wooder will order the bags for you quite early to get a good deal. Last year, we changed the material the bags were to save money to buy water bottles. You can look at the budget you have and choose to do the same and spend it on water bottles or do something completely different. We wanted to focus on sustainability and a lot of students get dehydrated during Welcome Week. GG's year there was a free campus survival pack from intercept added with all the free lube. This year, they didn't' want to participate but told me to contact them for next year. We are going to have a new commercial campus partnerships individual working on ad sales for the underground; you should use this person to help you with Welcome Week swag stuff. Companies pay you to basically put stuff in this bag for free promotion, so take advantage of that. Last year, I made 7k of this winners flyer which was worth 5 cents. We also include the almanac, library maps, any pamphlets from PTMs, and a Sil issue if they have summer issues, the MSU guidebook. Speak to Wooder and he will help you get your swag in order.

In terms of packing swag, the maroons are your unsung heroes. Coordinate with the coordinator on what days you want to pack the swag. In my time as a maroon, all the packing usually happens in the first two days of Welcome Week and I didn't like that. I always wanted the maroons to go interact with students not be stuck in the student centre packing swag bags. So, this year, I asked Megan to arrange a team of people to come in shifts helping back the bags the week before, so it was all ready to go for Welcome Week. You might have seen pictures of Swag Mountain in my instagram. My goal was to get rid of all the bags by the first two days and by Monday morning; they were gone thanks to the football game. I would get creative on the strategies you want to employ for swag distribution. Our good man Ryan Rogers just called the entire rep squad to help move around swag and it was very helpful. I would try to get a collaborative effort going because the bags really obstruct pathways and make the office less organized and cluttered for staff members. The board should be packing bags as well to level out with the team. It is hard to be stuck inside, but what we did to be fair was we assigned shifts for board members to be in the office supervising on rotation. That doesn't mean you sit in your office while the maroons do work.. it means you pack bags alongside them because if they have to do it, so should you.

For equipment, the campus events director orders the golf carts and walkie-talkies. We primarily used the golf carts to help people as we didn't really believe in the idea of joy rides. If we had access to this equipment and others didn't we wanted to make sure it was being used for the best purpose which was to transport things for rep groups and help other departments. Considering Chukky won't be able to drive it, it will be left for the rest of you to use, so use it with care and keep in mind why we have them. Walkie Talkies- we used it occasionally to communicate with other board members when we were going across campus to pick up people or transport things. We sometimes let other planners use it for additional support or Shinerama and the Maroons. Walkie are not that expensive, so order more if you have to and that way you will be covered for the Maroons, Shinerama, and yourself. I think it would be a nice gesture to provide a couple walkie to the maroons as they are often split up and rely solely on their phone.

Shinerama/ Money Counting

I didn't change a whole lot from GG's transition as I think a lot of this is relevant and still applicable.

Two things to really think of ahead of time
1) Bussing: Honestly, there is no easy way to make this work well. BUT one thing to stress is PLEASE set yourself some calendar appointments to check in with the Shinerama co-ordinators to make sure buses aren't left to the last minute. For two years in a row the Shinerama Coordinator has dropped the ball and left bus bookings until the last minute. DON'T LET IT HAPPEN! We didn't have a huge issue this year because Sam decided to make all residences have walk able or HSR based locations. So, first years didn't have to wait around for buses. There was a recommendation coming from the services committee to encourage first years to go with faculties instead to locations and cut down the number of faculty reps at each location.. Something to think about.

2) Dietary Restriction meals: We did not have a lot of problems this year as every first year was still on the meal plan as Shinerama was moved to Friday. We told everyone else to bring money to buy food. The best course of action is to tell people to bring money to buy food because if you say you are providing food and then don't or don't have enough, it looks bad. The alternative is so much better where you say eat and come or bring money for lunch.

Shinerama brings in a lot of money and it ends up being stored in the MSU Office. There are a few standards we should maintain. This year the BOD played a large role in actually helping count. Just like with the SWAG bags, this task has the potential to make the night extremely lengthy, especially because the Maroons start counting post concert. As a board, we began counting while the Maroons still had duties at the concert and it really helped expedite the process. There should always be either a BoD or the Shinerama Coordinator in the office when the Maroons are counting. Preferably, a BoD should be there at all times. They are the only one who will have access to the Accounting Office and can get in to and out of the main office if needed. Sam did small counts throughout the week with her team and then the big final count on Friday night. Talk to the Shinerama coordinator to come up with the best course of action in conjunction with Sean to make sure that his job is easier on Monday post the weekend. You are dealing with large amounts of money and it's important to make sure we are being careful, but I know you have a background with Shinerama and counting so you should be okay.

Other things that may come up with Shinerama are people are dissatisfied with the way Shinerama is going and often you are the intermediate person in this conflict. It's natural in a high stress week for tensions to flare surrounding Shinerama just make sure you are hearing everyone's perspectives and are trying to be fair to everyone when speaking. You have an ultimate responsibility to defend your staff but if they did something wrong or mistreated a rep, planner, or student, it is your responsibility to apologize on behalf of the MSU and take corrective measures. It's hard to explain how to handle these situations, as it would be case by case. One example I can think of the top of my head was a planner was dissatisfied with the way Sam encouraged her team to raise money and claimed that she was taking personal shots at her character. So, I met with the planner separately and apologized on behalf of Sam stating I am sure it was not her intention to attack her character or maybe there was a misunderstanding. You are very familiar with the tensions that are high during Welcome Week and when someone is dissatisfied with something, they often will come complain to you, so be ready for that.

Faculty and Residence Cup

Again, there were not a lot of things that changed hugely from the past years. I will post GG's transition stuff and then add commentary.

This is one of your main responsibilities this year. Two bylaws govern these cups. Refer to them often. First and foremost, I would start this process (calling the committee and reviewing the rules/scoring) early on. The nice thing is that quorum is only 50% and can be met with yourself, Maroons, Shinerama, or Campus Events present which was awesome. I would suggest that you make sure to add the WWFC to the operating policy, as they were super helpful for drafting and shaping the rules for the faculty cup . Spend some time this summer to get the cups back from the two winners –Edwards and Social Science – so that you know they are in your safekeeping (and also because you need them to film the promo video!).

Calculating the points is super cumbersome and time consuming. You can use my sheet if you want. In terms of the campus presence stuff for Faculty's, I highly recommend you simplify it. So. MANY. CALCULATIONS. Anyways, all my calculations are on the excel sheets which are saved on the server. Make sure to chat with the communications officer ahead of time to give them a heads-up in terms of designing materials to update the cup scores. In terms of planners, you have team "anti-cup" and team "For the cup", you can't please them all, so just do what makes your comfortable. I chose to release top 3 finishers for residence and all standings for faculty. You will likely get faculties questioning your judging. Keep good track of things. Most times if you just explain the areas where they were not as strong, they will lay off.

One final thing about the points system. Try to talk to the Shinerama Coordinator earlier about the points, their calculation, and their worth. This year due to time constraints we went for a very simple $/reps. you can get a final list of reps from Michele/SSC and then just divide totals. It will save you a lot of headaches instead of using the very complicated formula.

Okay here is where things changed a bit. Faculty and Residence cups were the bane of my existence because you have so many scores to keep up with in addition to all the other responsibilities you have. Everything should be on the server with all the documents I used. I spent probably a solid 1.5 hours counting scores and averaging every night which is why I didn't opt to display scores on the website everyday instead only updates once in the middle of the week. I would encourage you to do the same… the cups can be found in the residence life office and ask the nursing planner to have it back. Do it early as I almost couldn't find the residence cup, which was scary for 2 hours, and we debated going out to buy a new one. Every year, the criteria and scoring system changes so honestly, do what you think will be best and the most fair. There is no right way of doing it, just try to be fair to all faculties and residences when coming up with criteria and penalties.

Tips for making it through Welcome Week

You will have a less regimented schedule, but will probably be more exhausted as a VP during Welcome Week. The VP Administration takes on most of the pressure but this year I imagine it will be a little different with all of you having been involved in Welcome Week to some extent. I had a board where two of them have never been reps, so I relied more on Ryan to help support me during the week and having similar backgrounds, he understood my pressure points and was very helpful. Here are some things to help keep you sane:

- Feel okay to not go to some night events i.e. the concert. I went because as a maroon previously, it felt weird to not help the coordinator in terms of support for the concert. I went to support my staff and the other people on the maroons I once worked alongside.
- Try to meal prep or at least have snacks in the office because you will get hungry often and won't want to wait in lines
- Have a schedule of where you have to be when so you are never late or forget something and also put it in the VP Calendars as well
- Get sleep as there is no reason you have to stay until 3 am everyday.. anytime I stayed late, I did it because I felt bad leaving when my staff were here working . GG and I had different philosophies as I had been a maroon and I know the coordinator needed extra support so I stayed late and debriefed with them and had chats about their day.
- Be prepared for people to ask you to save the day because someone on the Welcome Week Committee screwed up (i.e. SSC, Faculty planners, campus events).

Other Event Planning Things

LINK CONFERENCE

This project is relatively new and hasn't had a permanent home in anyone's portfolio. Teddy started it in response to the redsuit songbook scandal and report. The aim of the conference is to ensure that faculty society executives are adequately trained in their roles. The first year that it ran, it was hosted in the early winter months. Students identified that it would be more helpful towards the start of their term. In response, we hosted this year's LINK conference at the end of September. Again, students said they wished that the conference was hosted earlier into their terms. There is currently conversation to host this in late March/early April/early summer.

Your role in this may grow depending on your passion for this project. I found that I was overwhelmed with the myriad of other training weekends that I was responsible for planning throughout the summer, that I took more of a backseat roll. That being said, we planned this year's conference in a flurry (under 3 weeks) and I would not recommend doing that again. This was due to severe understaffing in the SSC office and other factors (like $$). There is significant potential to develop more robust workshops, case studies, etc. if there is a will from yourself and others. Chances are that you will be working closely with Anushay on this project from the SSC ay and she is incredibly easy and fun to work with!

In terms of money, I was very firm in stating that the MSU would not take on the burden of paying for the conference. We were given $5000 from the SSC as a budget for this conference. The SSC covered the cost of breakfast, AVTEK, and speaker gifts. We covered the cost of the padfolios that were given to students, printing nametags, and the lunch at 1280. All documents that relate to LINK can be found on the server or within email communication in the LINK folder of my inbox.

So, this year, we didn't start planning for the Link Conference until mid summer because it wasn't a huge priority of mine. I do think it has immense value, but I don't know if it is the MSU's responsibility to run it. If it does fall under the MSU, I think it should not be run by the VP Administration as there are way too many things you are responsible for doing and we can't account for this to unless it's delegated to the AVP. Might I suggest using MSU Orientation as a way to include faculties and call it a day or the commentary that is often given is that we don't do the training early enough when faculties start which is April. This is just an unreasonable ask as you don't even get elected at this point.

McMaster Student Leadership Conference

This conference has gone under a number of changes over the last couple of years. Again, due to understaffing in SSC, we planned this whirlwind in a very short time frame. You will sit on a board with stakeholders from res, A&R, and SSC. They will have a bigger stake in this as they make it mandatory for their staff members. We usually help out with either running a session or two, and *then paying for our members to go. We offer SRA and PTM's the option to go and we will cover the cost. I would recommend you do this as well. I'm fairly certain that Anna made it mandatory for PTM's, but I didn't want to do that as I didn't necessarily see it as a useful training component for ALL PTM's, but rather a useful tool for some of the less experienced PTM's.*

This year, Anushay took the lead and really tried to diversify some of the topics for the conference. Again, I didn't make it mandatory as GG suggested because I really don't think it's a useful tool in training PTMs especially when they have a million things to do to run their services. Your opinion may be different. This conference planning is something I would delegate to the AVP as it's tops like 4 meetings and I think Kristina can handle it and it will free up your time for hiring in the fall and winter.

EGGNOG/SANGRIA

These are the annual volunteer appreciation events that we run. The campus events director will do most of the heavy lifting on this. This year, Al and Marco made the "decorating committee" and they just made sure that 1280 was decked out for Eggnog. It will also be your responsibility to send out the invitation to all of the MSU peeps. Just send an email to "All MSU Users" with the jpg of the invite embedded in the email. Or, alternatively, I just send it to PTMs and ask for an estimated number check. This year, I ordered more food and told Al to take money off the free sangria/egg nog tickets because I felt more people were not drinking and coming for the food. You can play around with it as you like. There is usually a tradition for Egg Nog that the MSU President dresses up like Santa and gives out tickets and since Chukky already dressed up as that, I think he will be comfortable engaging with this. Just make sure you send out the invites early enough that people know the date so they can plan ahead. Usually, it is hard to avoid the fact that sangria usually falls on the day before VP Elections.. Tough luck for some.

SRN

Jess is the ultimate hero on this. She will do all of the heavy lifting RE: coordinating the invite list, sending invites, booking the venue, and writing the minute to minute. etc. . You will only have a few responsibilities and Jess will remind you of them:

1) Going over the invite list to make sure we have everyone

2) Contacting president's office and Alumni for donations (the template letters will be in my inbox or in my folder)

3) Reaching out to the MC (MSU President from 10 years ago)

You will run the J. Lynn Watson Award and MSU Spirit Award selection committees. There are documents in my files of the agendas but this year, the Speaker did a lot of the work promoting the award. Just check in with Helen late Term 1/early Term 2 to ensure she has a plan on how to promote these awards. Organize a meeting with all of the committee members for about 1-2 hours. Once you have decided a winner, let the Operations Coordinator know so that she can order the awards and let the nominee know.

Note: With Jess gone, I imagine this responsibility will be delegated to the new operations coordinator or Emma. I would suggest Emma as she has been to many rec events as an office clerk and then staff and she is pretty good at event planning. I took a back seat role in this planning, but I imagine you will take on a more hands on role because of Jess being gone. Just use your resources aka your AVP.

Committees

University Committees

There are a whole slew of university committees that various members of the BoD will individually sit on. Early on, decide who will sit on what. Regardless who does get assigned to these committees, **GO TO THEM**. We are one of the few students groups to get access to so many of these committees. If we don't show up, that just looks bad on us and we may lose these seats. At a Board meeting, Jess brought the master list of committees and we went around the room and strategically chose who would sit on what (e.g. Justin sat on all of the PAC Committees, which are President's Advisory Committees, given the nature of his role. This can change each year though). IF not already done, add it to an upcoming Board meeting.

AdminCon

"The Student-Administration Consultation Committee", colloquially 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 a the IRC. You've already been to one of these so you know the gist.

In advance of this meeting, you should meet as a BoD to discuss what you are going to bring up. Be strategic – you want to bring up timely topics that these folks may not be aware of. You also don't want to embarrass them by blindsiding them with issues or leading questions. You can really use this as a time to advance things that are important to students. At these meetings, I always talked about Welcome Week, Peer Support, Sexual Violence, and helped other board members with their topics. This is a meeting that is hard for the vp admin to share much, so I picked topics that were relatable to all. For the last admin con meeting, I brought stats from PSL to highlight the mental health perspective from the student service usage side.

Student Services Committee (SSC)

The voting members of this committee are the four BoD and four University Administrators (Gina, Sean, Arshad, Karen). Currently, John attends as well and Eva (who takes minutes). This committee oversees the CAF Agreement (changes should be brought forward during the year), the SLEF Fund and the USIF Fund as well as oversees the MOU that governs Welcome Week. There are also a bunch of subcommittees (e.g. WWAC) that various members of the Board will sit on.

This committee spent a ton of time this year on CAF stuff and the athletic and recreation stuff. I imagine as per the MOA created that this committee will continue to discuss the athletic and recreation stuff well into the year.

One thing that I think we were also really good about was ensuring that SLEF funds are actually going to students' ideas. When you go through old documents from the SSC, it seems that these funds just go to supplement university departments though it is meant to fund "student ideas". This year, we allocated funds to MUSC Renovations and Maccess library and composting.

This committee has the student affairs department, so you can bring up things like the community kitchen and more of things in your domain. People on this committee have a better understanding of what you do therefore, will understand the types of problems you have versus admin con participants.

As I mentioned before, Student Services Committee oversees WWAC, so if you ever have trouble here, you can escalate to SSC. But, before you bring things to SSC, it's important to talk to Sean and John so they have a heads up before you bring anything to the table. You do this out of courtesy as at any time, you can bring things up to SSC.

Student Relations Committee

This is a committee run by Alumni Association (AA). Essentially, it is a committee that is led by Scott Mallon from AA that had representation from the MSU (Clubs, Campus Events, Maroons), A&R, the SSC and Res Life. The main thing we did was planning Student Leaders Dinners. The committee didn't meet that often, so just look out in your email for it, but it's not a huge time commitment on your end. I would send your AVP anytime you are called for these meetings, as it's not worth your time as much. This year, we talked about FROST Week, a student leaders dinner, and then Ryan and Justin took lead on LUTN.

HAMILTON COMMUNITY

In general, you may not ever interact with the larger Hamilton community unless you take on projects that lead to these relationships developing or if there is an area of overlap with your PTMs. For example, if you end up taking ownership of the Leadership Summit for Women you will make connections the YWCA and other community members. At other times, a PTM may come to you with an idea in the city that you will need to explore and help them develop.

Something that may also be of interest to you and Blake is the Young Women's Advisory Councils. It's for women up to ~25 in the city. They meet monthly at the YWCA. I only connected with the Hamilton Community when I went to events with Mary Williams and she introduced us to people and we connected.

University People

I am not going to do an extensive section on this because as much as the MSU changes year after year, the university staffing structure doesn't change so much haha. Just refer to GG's transition report for a breakdown of the people you will work with and how they can help you. I will like to highlight two people who have been extremely helpful during my tenure.

Sean- Associate Dean of Students

From space issues to Welcome Week, Sean is the man. Literally the god amongst men because he will save the day almost 99% of the time. He is very level headed and will always listen because he truly cares about students. The tough part of his job is that there is like 10 fires and he always has to prioritize and allocate resources accordingly. But, I will say he is always fair and hear different perspectives and try his best to support you in anyway he can. So, I would use him as a resource if you ever run into any trouble especially with departments he oversees: residence life, athletics, SSC, Case Management Office, Indigenous Office, OMBUDS.

Allison Drew Hassling- Office of Student Case Management

As you know, part of my presidential platform was to run on finding a solution to the fact that the VP Administration is simply not trained to deal with complex mental health and HR issues. Allison has been a great resource in debriefing with some staff members and she has a very good understanding of the balance between peer support and university institutional support. There have been multiple cases with PSL this year where Zeinab has gone to her to help her navigate some complex student mental health issues on the line. I would connect Allison with all peer support PTMs early on especially PSL.

Support

My favourite word in the dictionary during my tenure. I will say this early on because you will feel bad about this constantly, you are doing the best you can and your best is good enough. It always will be good enough, but it's important to also keep an open mind and know that different people have different ways they need to be supported. You have something I wish I did which is an AVP and I think it will alleviate the pressure off you so much. In addition, I think the creation of a Campus Events programming coordinator will help you with the Welcome Week Planning because this person has more hours to focus on programming. Below, I am going to leave you with suggestions on what I think the AVP can be doing and use this as a guideline for tasks you want to assign them.

AVP Guidelines

When we created the AVP roles, we created with every intention of providing additional support to the VPs especially the VP Administration. The baseline minimum Kristina should be doing is conducting 3 service reviews a year alongside her committee. The services that need reviewing: MACycle, SCSN, Macademics, Maccess, and all the ones Kevan didn't do. I don't expect her committee to do all these reviews, but it's something to keep in mind.

Summer Term

- Support you in hiring because you lost people to Medical School
- Help support the TRRA with peer support training
- Help support the VP Administration with all training weekends
- Set up committee to do service reviews in the fall
- Help with some Welcome Week duties (she is a ROA, so won't be around too much for WW)

Fall Term

- Conduct Service reviews
- Work on any action items coming out of EB (she should attend EB)
- Support you in fall hiring
- Do check in with PTMs (you should do them, but she can do casual check ins)
- Any odd planning committees you have to be on (student leadership conference and frost week)
- Help with student recognition night planning
- Risk management portals for PTMS

Winter Term

- Support you in hiring during this term
- Run PTM meetings for you while you do hiring
- Support with the student leadership conference
- Check in with PTMs as you will be focused on hiring
- Any Special Projects
- Risk Management portals for PTMs

This is only a guideline, but I am sure you will be able to think about more things for her to do. Just talk to her and see what she is interested in and it will help you figure out what she would enjoy doing. You have all these resources around you so use it wisely and don't ever let the SRA revert it back to being elected because this just makes more sense and we get better applicants.

Final Thoughts

There is no one happier than I am that you have this role because I know how much you are going to cherish it and I know you know the importance of it. It's always a weird feeling to walk away from something you care about deeply, but knowing you will be here in that chair gives me so much joy. I have an immeasurable amount of faith and trust in your ability to do this job and know you will be kick ass at it. Ever since we met and you shared that story from Grade 9 civics and careers, I knew we were going to be friends for a long time even though I thought you were kind of odd at the time. From Farmstand to SRA to VP, I am so proud of everything you have accomplished so far and look forward to seeing all that you accomplish this year. The job can be stressful and the only people who really understand are the people who have experienced it. So, whenever you need me, I will always have your back ☺

Good luck!