

# **YEAR PLAN**

MSU Spark Coordinator

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2017-2018

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## OFFICE OF THE SPARK COORDINATOR INTRODUCTION

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To the members of the Executive Board,

First, I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my passions and ideas as they relate to furthering the success of Spark. Spark has played an integral part in my life, helping not only to transition me throughout my first year at McMaster but also to give me a sense of purpose and strength as I continued through second and third year. I learned that the value of mentorship extends beyond the classroom, and beyond first year - it is all encompassing towards an individual's success, especially mine. It is the core values of this service that have helped shape who I am today, as I have learned many important lessons along the way that uniquely qualify me for this role.

Last year, Spark was operating in only its second year as a ratified service and took on many new avenues that proved to be successful. We established brand new avenues for first-year support with the introduction of Spark formal, used MUSC as a more central area for weekly sessions, and created more of a supported presence for our Team Leaders throughout the year. This year will be an opportunity to amplify what we know works and revise what could be improved. It will also be an opportunity to polish the service by clearly communicating our role on campus to students and our Team Leaders early on in the year. Beyond this, Spark should always strive to innovate and introduce new strategies to engage and support first year students. I hope to engage with other services and campus partners to continue to innovate and collaborate on new initiatives to offer to first-year students.

After meeting with all my executives to include their vision for our service, I'm excited to share with you my year plan in detail. Here you will find my goals for the year, as divided in three main focus categories: engaging first-year students, the Team Leader experience, and the Executive Team. If you have any questions about my year plan, I would love to hear from you.

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# GOALS

## 1) ENGAGING FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

Objective 1	<b>Increase Spark presence during Welcome Week</b>
Description	Welcome Week is a critical time for first year students as they encounter a large amount of transition all at once. The beginning of term 1 is an essential time as students can capitalize on the support and initiatives Spark has to offer. This year, I hope to increase Spark's presence during Welcome Week by working with campus groups, RezLife, and SOCS to reach out to incoming first years. I hope to utilize Team Leaders throughout the week and have a permanent tent set up for Spark for students to hangout/destress when not participating in Welcome Week activities.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Students can learn about the services Spark has to offer and that they have paid to access them</li><li>- Act as a stress-free station where students who are feeling nervous about coming into a new school can de-stress</li><li>- Increase engagement with Team Leaders well before sessions start to clearly communicate a comfortable and welcoming environment</li><li>- Allow Team Leaders to begin student engagement outside of weekly sessions and inform Welcome Week reps about Spark</li></ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Welcome Week is a busy time for everyone on campus, which can make collaborations hard</li><li>- Finding space outside/materials (Such as a stationary tent) to use for the entire week</li><li>- Creating programming that is engaging for Team Leaders all week</li><li>- Many TLs will likely also be reps, and this could result in less help from Spark volunteers</li></ul>

<p>Long-term implications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Building positive working relationships with campus partners that can place a strong importance on first-year transition</li> <li>- Knowledge of Spark’s initiatives early on to clearly communicate our benefits to both reps/students which can help with promotion of our service</li> <li>- Increase further outreach to help engage student registration</li> <li>- Build positive relationships with Team Leaders outside of session to show the benefits of both formal/informal mentorship</li> </ul>
<p>How?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Speak about Spark’s initiatives at Residence and SOCS opening ceremonies, and highlight the registration for the sessions program</li> <li>- Collaborate with Residence Orientation Advisors to facilitate ways to engage with Team Leaders during the week</li> <li>- Participate in large-scale Welcome Week events</li> <li>- Build relationships with residence Community Advisors and ensure that they are aware of the services Spark provides for first-year students</li> <li>- Speak at Welcome Week Training to inform Welcome Week reps on how to engage students about our services</li> <li>- Set up meetings with VP Administration Preethi Anbalagan to discuss setting up a space/tent on BSB field</li> </ul>
<p>Partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VP Admin</li> <li>- ROAs</li> <li>- RezLife</li> <li>- SOCS</li> <li>- Faculty Planners</li> </ul>

<p>Objective 2</p>	<p><b>Increase visibility of Spark.</b></p>
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Description	Spark has grown a lot over the last three years. By continuing to use strong and consistent service branding we can reach a larger demographic which will translate into higher student retention.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be able to reach out to a larger demographic of students about our service</li> <li>- Increase our outreach for events, publications, and sessions program</li> <li>- Empower Executive members to think creatively and find unique ways to engage within their own portfolios</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Purchasing visible Spark swag can be expensive</li> <li>- Deciding when to use large promotional materials vs poster size</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spark will be easily recognized as the first year transition service</li> <li>- Increased engagement and retention with our service</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Order t-shirts, lanyards, buttons, visible identifiers</li> <li>- Increase Spark presence at first-year outreach events</li> <li>- Consistent branding -building off last year by incorporating campus photos and TL photos in promotional material to make Spark a comfortable and relatable environment</li> <li>- Collaborate with campus partners/services to build relationships (ex: tv screens in Residences)</li> <li>- Increasing social media presence throughout the year</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Haley Greene (Promotions &amp; Publications Coordinator)</li> <li>- Sarah Conrad (Communications Officer)</li> <li>- Team Leaders</li> </ul>

Objective 3	<b>Enhance the first-year experience in the sessions program.</b>
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Description	Spark initially started out as a sessions program. Since then, we've evolved to offer much more, but our sessions program continues to reach out to a large number of students. As such, I am excited to work to polish the program by ensuring Team Leaders are trained weekly, evaluating the logistics of weekly sessions nights, and to ensure weekly sessions themes are relevant to first year transition.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The sessions program is a pivotal component of our service and supports 200+ students each term</li> <li>- Team Leaders put a lot of energy in training and facilitating sessions - a better and more transparent program will ensure a more positive experience for both TL's and students</li> <li>- Enhanced student retention in the program</li> <li>- More accessible rooms/space in MUSC and maintaining our positive relationship with MUSC management</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conflicting schedules with midterms and other events make attendance variable during the year</li> <li>- Keeping Team Leaders motivated when student retention is low</li> <li>- Collaborations with external partners can be difficult to coordinate and time consuming</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supporting the first-year transition throughout the year</li> <li>- Lots of research/evidence for benefits of mentorship on a successful transition</li> <li>- Building lasting relationships that extend beyond the session room</li> </ul>

How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emphasis on building professional skills and transferable skills in sessions</li> <li>- Expanding the number of students in each group to battle low retention during midterms</li> <li>- Asking students for feedback on sessions to revamp the session topics come second term</li> <li>- Collaborate with MSU services for session activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Highlights other services that students can access</li> <li>o Builds relationships with other groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Focus on collaborative activities and team building initiatives early on in the sessions program to encourage team cohesiveness. This will translate to better turnout at subsequent sessions.</li> <li>- Continue on joint sessions activities to help students within the program find support in their peers</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jane Luft and Giancarlo Da Ré (Sessions Coordinators) have been working hard all summer to prepare</li> <li>- Collaborations with MSU services</li> <li>- Feedback from students/Team Leaders</li> </ul>

Objective 4	<b>Improve student retention in the sessions program</b>
Description	<p>Our student registration for our sessions program always fills up quickly with students registering at the start of each term. This number, varies drastically as school begins to get busy. Often, the number of students attending each sessions drops in the first few weeks of the term, and numbers are especially low during midterms and busy academic weeks. Working to improve retention in the sessions program will not only build positive habits within first-year students (time management, stress management, transferable skills, etc.) but will also improve the sessions experience for all students in a group.</p>

Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Higher retention means that first-year students are taking breaks in their schedule, meeting new people, connecting with their mentors - all of which are important to a smooth transition</li> <li>- TLs continue to put in a lot of energy into their roles. Having a consistent turnout at sessions will allow TLs to stay motivated throughout the term and have a positive experience in their roles and feel engaged in weekly trainings</li> <li>- More positive student engagement with our sessions program will impact turnout/engagement with other Spark initiatives (events, workshops, guidebooks, etc.)</li> <li>- Students will be able to find support in other first year peers in addition to their Team Leaders</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Varying schedules are hard to avoid - conflicts are inevitable</li> <li>- Breaking the first-year mindset that studying should be prioritized over all other positive habits</li> <li>- Maintaining TL energy when turnout is low</li> <li>- Deciding the order of sessions to ensure important topics are receiving high engagement</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive experience and meaningful takeaways in the sessions program</li> <li>- Students are able to gain new skills through sessions</li> <li>- Positive experience for Team Leaders could translate to more applicants in future years for this role</li> <li>- Smoother first year transition for Spark sessions students</li> </ul>

How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase transparency of the sessions program themes and its structure. This will help students really understand what the sessions program is all about and what to expect each week. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Weekly themes overview on the website</li> <li>o Gives students a sneak peek / what to look forward to</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Up-to-date communication with students in the Spark Facebook group</li> <li>- Incentives for attending sessions</li> <li>- Booking session rooms that are more central to campus (look at using MUSC, Mills Community Room, etc)</li> </ul>
Partners	Jane Luft and Giancarlo Da Ré (Sessions Coordinators) Sehar Arfeen (Volunteer Coordinator) will play a role in logistics (room bookings)

Objective 5	<b>Engage Spark student involvement through the Spark Ambassadors program</b>
Description	Our Spark Ambassadors program allows many first year students to contribute to Spark beyond attending sessions or events. This year, I hope to continue the Spark Ambassadors program with a large focus on promotions/event planning. Spark students will work closely with the Promotions and Publications Coordinator and the Events Coordinators, to promote and brainstorm events, workshops, and guidebooks.

Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing more opportunities to first year students beyond the mentee role to engage in their own transition</li> <li>- More creative opportunities to work with</li> <li>- Valuable feedback on the program / insight</li> <li>- Increasing students' engagement with Spark, giving first-year students a chance to work with an exec member and learn more about the service</li> <li>- First year students promoting our initiatives will allow us to reach out to even more first year students</li> <li>- Increased outreach and presence of Spark on campus</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordinating schedules</li> <li>- Commitment may be inconsistent and less formal</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive leadership opportunities for first-year students</li> <li>- Potential to revise based on feedback</li> <li>- Taking initiative to engage with Spark in a different way</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote this opportunity during Welcome Week</li> <li>- Include this option in first year registration</li> <li>- Set up weekly meeting times/agendas</li> <li>- Make a Facebook committee group</li> <li>- Feedback meetings/feedback google forms</li> </ul>
Partners	Sehar Arfeen (Volunteer Coordinator), Haley Greene (Promotions and Publications Coordinator), Lisa Tran and Sarah Mo-hiuddin (Events Coordinators)

Objective 6	<b>Continue to the success of a first-year formal that is open to all first year students (residence and off campus)</b>
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Description	<p>In the past, IRC and RezLife host residence-specific formals for students living in residence, in addition to Maroons first year formal. Last year, both RezLife and Maroons did not host the formal which provided Spark the opportunity to plan the first year formal. This was a huge success and provided an inclusive space for all first year students living on/off-campus. This will help bridge the gap between residence and off-campus students, provide opportunities for first years to get involved in the Spark Ambassadors program and clearly communicate one first year formal.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhancing the social transition to first year</li> <li>- Connecting residence/off campus students</li> <li>- Providing first year students to get involved in Spark Ambassadors</li> <li>- Create a space for students to meet other first years both in and out of the sessions program</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Booking an appropriately sized venue</li> <li>- Gauging interest and turn out</li> <li>- Budget could be challenging</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaboration between RezLife, SOCS, and the MSU to make this happen could determine making it bigger each year</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using feedback from last year's Spark Formal</li> <li>- Engage the Events Committee (made up of Team Leaders) in the planning and execution of the event</li> <li>- Collaborate with FYC and apply for a Special Projects Fund</li> <li>- Work with RezLife and SOCS to actively promote this in their space</li> <li>- Work with Community Advisors, Residence Orientation Representatives, SOCS Reps to promote</li> <li>- Promote it amongst students registered in the Spark program</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FYC, RezLife, SOCS, MSU services</li> <li>- Lisa Tran and Sarah Mohiuddin (Events Coordinators) are taking the lead on this</li> </ul>

Objective 7	<b>Engage the larger first-year community through monthly workshops</b>
Description	Monthly workshops will engage the larger first year community as they do not require a weekly commitment as does the sessions program. Strong promotion and attendance of these workshops in first term will also help spear head student registration for the sessions program in second term.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engage students who can't commit to the weekly program</li> <li>- Provides an avenue for collaborating with other campus partners</li> <li>- Engage in transitional topics not necessarily captured in a session theme or to enhance one of the weekly sessions (Ex: off-campus housing)</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Booking space</li> <li>- Variable attendance/turnout at events</li> <li>- Collaborations can be time consuming</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Valuable connections between campus partners</li> <li>- Better awareness of campus transition and support resources amongst students</li> <li>- Better predict which events are in specific months during the transitional year and make this a reoccurring theme</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identifying important key themes that would benefit students in a workshop</li> <li>- Using feedback collected from workshops last year and from Spark Ambassadors</li> <li>- Choosing workshop themes that complement but do not entirely overlap session themes</li> <li>- Promotions through RezLife and SOCS</li> </ul>

Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student Success Centre, other MSU services, RezLife</li> <li>- Lisa Tran and Sarah Mohiuddin (Events Coordinators)</li> <li>- Spark Ambassadors</li> </ul>
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Objective 8	<b>Introduce first-year social events</b>
Description	The transition to first year include social, academic, and personal aspects. Ideally, Spark will try to host informal social events outside of monthly workshops that is open to all first-year students.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A more connected first-year class</li> <li>- Greater sense of community</li> <li>- Opportunity to explore Hamilton</li> <li>- Opportunity for meeting and connecting with others</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Additional costs</li> <li>- Collaborations can be time consuming</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More cohesive campus - less of a division between off campus and residence students</li> <li>- More engagement with the Hamilton community</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborate with first-year groups to host social events throughout the year</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FYC, RezLife, SOCS, Maroons</li> <li>- Lisa Tran and Sarah Mohiuddin (Events Coordinators)</li> </ul>

Objective 9	<b>Continue the publications of guidebook content.</b>
Description	Spark introduced online resources and first-year transition tips through guidebooks. This continues to be a positive and easily accessible resource for students. We are excited to continue to collaborate with campus groups and services in the creation of the guidebooks and to build off the themes from last year's books.

Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Online resource guidebooks include tips and tricks for university success</li> <li>- Collaborations ensure that we are accurately reflecting different services and student groups on campus</li> <li>- Create content that better reflects opportunities and information in and about Hamilton</li> <li>- Building relationships with campus groups increases the credibility of our service and encourages others to promote our service</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relying on external partners can be stressful and time consuming</li> <li>- Finding new tips that haven't already been suggested</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better visibility and outreach of Spark's initiatives</li> <li>- Increased credibility of our program and the creation of a larger content library for future students</li> <li>- Building positive relationships with services and campus groups</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborate with MSU services to highlight their resources to students</li> <li>- Collaborate with the Silhouette for promotion of our material online</li> <li>- Collaborate with the City of Hamilton</li> <li>- Collaborate with Incite magazine to publish Spark content</li> </ul>
Partners	Haley Greene (Promotions and Publications Coordinator) is doing a great job on this and will be taking the lead

## 2) TEAM LEADERS

Objective 10	<b>Adopt a collaborative training model for September Team Leader training.</b>
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Description	Collaborating with different campus partners only makes more a more engaging and extensive training. This year, I'm excited to work with Merima (the Training and Resource Research Assistant) and Lucia Lee (Peer Support Line Coordinator) to plan a resources training for our Team Leaders. Additionally, I'm excited to work with Lillian Obeng (Diversity Services Director) to plan the Anti-Oppression Practices training for our team.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resources training will better prepare TL's for their roles and for supporting students</li> <li>- AOP training will help TL's feel more comfortable in their roles and approaching new situations</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordinating different schedules</li> <li>- Time constraints at training - we have a lot to cover in one weekend</li> <li>- Making training extensive and relevant to spark experiences</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase TL knowledge of services and resources</li> <li>- TLs become a better resource for students and can provide guidance</li> <li>- Increased collaborations between services</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plan for a more structured resources training</li> <li>- Work with Lillian on AOP training for Spark</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lucia (PSL Coordinator)</li> <li>- Lillian (Diversity Director)</li> <li>- Merima (TRRA)</li> </ul>

Objective 11	<b>Create clear expectations of the Team Leader role.</b>
Description	Being a Team Leader takes an immense amount of energy and commitment from our volunteers all year. I hope to better define the expectations of Team Leaders during hiring in order to effectively select the team.

Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clearer expectations of the role will lead to more commitment from TLs</li> <li>- More buy-in and commitment from TLs will improve the TL experience and the first year students' experience</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Being a TL is a hard job, and TLs will get tired</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear expectations will improve performance and enhance the TL experience</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Revamp the TL hiring process to evaluate skills that are required for success in the role</li> <li>- Regularly ask the team for feedback and implement this feedback where appropriate</li> <li>- Regularly check-in with TL's to prevent burn out</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The executive team</li> <li>- Operations Coordinator</li> <li>- Sehar Arfeen (Volunteer Coordinator) and I will facilitate regular check ins with Team Leaders</li> </ul>

Objective 12	<b>Regularly check-in co-team dynamics and TL experience.</b>
Description	Being a Team Leader can sometimes be a challenging role and TL's may require support in handling difficult situations. Because of the nature of its long commitment, it's important to monitor co-team relationships during the year and provide support where needed.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better co-team relationships translate to better sessions and relationships with students</li> <li>- Better co-team relationships enhance the TL experience</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scheduling and finding time to meet with all 20 pairs during the busy term</li> <li>- Knowing how much a TL would like to be supported and how they like to receive that support</li> <li>- Encouraging TLs to approach exec/myself if issues arise - not everyone will be comfortable to do this and therefore a proactive approach will work best</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhanced first-year experience with the service</li> <li>- Sessions will be more strongly facilitated</li> <li>- Better communication will translate to a more positive TL experience</li> <li>- Adopt better training practices</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement a mid-term co-TL evaluation and a self-eval</li> <li>- Check in with TL's twice each term (1 mid-term, 1 end of term)</li> <li>- Provide TL's with time to plan the upcoming week with their co during training</li> <li>- Regularly collect feedback from TL's on their experience with the service with in person meetings and google forms</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Team Leaders</li> <li>- Sehar Arfeen (Volunteer Coordinator) has some great ideas and will take the lead here</li> </ul>

Objective 13	<b>Collect TL feedback on sessions</b>
Description	20 TL pairs and over 500 students participate in our sessions. It only makes sense to incorporate as much feedback and input from the team as possible in order to make these sessions exciting for a diverse group of people. Introducing a sessions review day to allow TLs to provide input on the sessions that have been created will improve their structure.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More engaging sessions that are inclusive and appealing for a diverse group of students</li> <li>- Engaging TLs in the sessions creation process</li> <li>- Lighten the pressure off the Sessions Coordinators</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implementing feedback regularly as sessions program is underway</li> <li>- Scheduling meeting time</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stronger and more inclusive sessions</li> <li>- Engaged TLs</li> <li>- Better trained TLs on sessions activities</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gather feedback on sessions twice each term: first half in September, second half of sessions in October</li> <li>- Use both in person training for face-to-face feedback, and anonymous google forms,</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jane Luft and Giancarlo Da Ré (Sessions Coordinators) Sehar Arfeen (Volunteer Coordinator)</li> </ul>

Objective 14	<b>Empower Team Leaders to contribute to event planning through an events committee.</b>
Description	Events are a big part of our service - both the workshops and social events. This year, we hope to continue an internal TL events committee to encourage TL's to contribute to the event planning process.

Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empower TLs to take on a large role within the service</li> <li>- Provide TLs with opportunities to contribute to event planning</li> <li>- Expose TLs to Events Coordinators role and Spark Ambassadors</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Busy schedules might make scheduling meetings a challenge</li> <li>- Continued engagement from students during busy periods</li> <li>- Balancing being a TL and committee member</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More engaged TLs will be more excited to promote events</li> <li>- Stronger student turnout at events</li> <li>- Stronger facilitation of events</li> <li>- Sharper event logistics and planning</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Events committee sign ups in late August</li> <li>- Meetings as needed close to event dates</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lisa Tran and Sarah Mohiuddin (Events Coordinators) will lead this</li> </ul>

Objective 15	<b>Empower Team Leaders to contribute to Publications through a Publications committee.</b>
Description	Last year, the Publications Committee was introduced and was a huge success. I hope to formalize and sharpen the expectations of this commitment early on this year, and continue to engage TLs in creating and promoting publications. The Promotions and Publications Coordinator will oversee this committee.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engage TLs in exec portfolios and other aspects of our service</li> <li>- Encourage TL collaboration</li> <li>- Provide the Promotions &amp; Publications Coordinator an opportunity to gather feedback</li> </ul>

Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scheduling</li> <li>- Commitment of TLs during busy periods of the term</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stronger publications as a result of feedback and diverse input</li> <li>- Stronger promotion of publications</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordinate publications committee in late August</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Haley Greene (Promotions &amp; Publications Coordinator) and Sehar Arfeen (Volunteer Coordinator)</li> </ul>

Objective 16	<b>Improve weekly Team Leader sessions training.</b>
Description	Spark sessions run every week during both terms. Vital to the success of the sessions program is the facilitation of these sessions. Weekly sessions training is important to help prepare TLs for the upcoming sessions and ensure that they are ready to facilitate the session with their co. This year, we hope to improve on the structure of our weekly training to make it more engaging and interactive for the team.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A more interactive training will encourage stronger retention</li> <li>- Better scheduling will promote higher attendance</li> <li>- TLs will be more prepared to lead their sessions</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scheduling training for 40 TL's every week is HARD</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stronger sessions, better student retention in the sessions program, higher attendance and student engagement</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue two weekly training sessions and coordinate TLs into training times</li> <li>- Interactive and engaging delivery of training</li> <li>- Continue to incorporate feedback into training</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jane Luft and Giancarlo Da Ré (Sessions Coordinators) continue to work on their ideas</li> </ul>

Objective 17	<b>Build team cohesiveness through better TL socials.</b>
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Description	Being a TL is an exciting role, and being part of a large team means that we have lots to learn from one another. I hope to improve on the socials from last year to encourage TL attendance. Additionally, the TL Meet and Greet will be a cool opportunity to bond with the team, get to know one another, and announce co-teams to set positive relationships for the year.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More unity within the team will promote stronger engagement</li> <li>- TL's will be more excited to represent and promote the service</li> <li>- Fostering positive relationships within the team will trickle down and impact the first-year student experience with the service</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scheduling conflicts for a team of 40</li> <li>- The year gets busy and school/life gets in the way</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Less hierarchy within the service</li> <li>- Connect exec with TLs and connect the team</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inclusive TL socials with incentives to attend (ex. Food, announcing co's)</li> <li>- Meet and Greet in September to get to know the team</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sehar Arfeen (Volunteer Coordinator) has put forward some great ideas</li> </ul>

### **FOCUS 3: THE EXECUTIVE TEAM**

Objective 19	<b>Support the Executive team through regular check-in meetings.</b>
Description	Executive roles can be overwhelming, especially balancing being an exec and a Team Leader. I hope to continue Wid's awesome work in checking in with my team and offering support where needed.

Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear understanding of expectations of the role</li> <li>- Offer support to relieve stress and lighten the load on the team</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scheduling</li> <li>- Determining how each executive likes to be supported</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consistent performance from the Spark team as a whole</li> <li>- Better cohesion of the team</li> <li>- Aligning vision for the service</li> <li>- Better transition as a result of stronger communication</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Biweekly meetings with each executive role</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The executive team</li> </ul>

## Long-term planning

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Overarching Vision	<b>Spark as the MSU's First Year Success Service</b>
Description	Spark fills a very important niche on campus for first-year transition. Spark's mandate is to support the first-year transition to McMaster. This can be achieved through many avenues – workshops, social events, mentorship program, on-line resources.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A central resource for first year students</li> <li>• Spark as a service will have better credibility for incoming students</li> </ul>

Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review feedback from first three years of service operations</li> <li>• Polish service logistics and structure</li> <li>• Enhance student turnout at Spark programs (mentorship program, events, Formal, workshops)</li> <li>• Collaborate with campus groups/services to increase cohesion amongst different transition programs</li> <li>• Increase Spark presence during Welcome Week and promote service as a first year success service</li> <li>• Build consistent Spark brand (order Spark identifying swag)</li> </ul>
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the team to offer more resources to students</li> <li>• Strengthen collaborations between SOCS and RezLife</li> <li>• Revise budget as necessary</li> </ul>
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to innovate and implement feedback</li> <li>• Maintain Spark as a first year success service</li> </ul>
Partners	<p>Preethi (VP Admin)  Tuba (VP Finance)  Michael Wooder (Student Life Development Coordinator)  Sarah Conrad (Communication Officer)  RezLife, SOCS</p>

## **GOALS to strive for**

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### **List 5 things that you would like to have prepared for the beginning of September**

1. Hire Team Leaders and plan September training
2. Release first guidebook
3. Finalize all sessions for the mentorship program
4. Enhance Spark presence during Welcome Week

5. Launch registration for the mentorship program and promo!

**List 5 things you would like to have completed during the fall term (1<sup>st</sup>)**

1. Team Leader training and support and 3 team socials
2. Gather feedback from Team Leaders, executives, and students in the mentorship program / at events
3. Establish TL committees and Spark student promotions committee
4. Release more guidebooks
5. Workshop #1, monthly student socials, Spark Formal

**List 5 things you would like to have completed during the winter term (2<sup>nd</sup>)**

1. Team Leader winter re-training and support
2. Winter sessions program promotion & launch registration
3. Release 2 more guidebooks
4. Workshops #2 and #3
5. Transition incoming Coordinator

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**Master Summary**  
**(calendar and checklist)**

<u>May</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Have a super cool team hired!</li> <li>● Complete an Exec Retreat by end of April and have portfolio's rolling in May</li> <li>● Transition Meeting with Residence Life</li> <li>● Transition Meeting with Wooder and Sarah Mae Conrad</li> </ul>
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<u>June</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Book Session Rooms with Sehar</li> <li>● Meet with Taha/Preethi about Welcome Week - where does Spark fit in?</li> <li>● Complete Year plan for Preethi/EB by June 26th</li> <li>● Have TL applications questions finalized by last meeting in June and go over marking expectations</li> <li>● Have TL app promo finished</li> </ul>
<u>July</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● WOW TL apps go live!!!</li> <li>● Have new banner ready for Horizons Success Fest</li> <li>● Promo TL apps</li> <li>● Marking TL Apps - done by first week of august</li> </ul>
<u>August</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TL interviews finalized and handed out</li> <li>● TL interview weekend</li> <li>● Send out offers WOW we have a team</li> <li>● Welcome Week - Spark presence in Res/SOCS/ Events</li> </ul>
<u>September</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Welcome Week Activities</li> <li>● Staff Bonding Event</li> <li>● TL Training Weekend</li> <li>● Sessions start!</li> <li>● Guidebook release</li> </ul>
<u>October</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Spark Ambassador Meetings start</li> <li>● Second Guidebook Release</li> <li>● First Spark Event</li> </ul>
<u>November</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Release another guidebook</li> <li>● TL Check-ins with Sehar</li> <li>● Spark formal!!!!!!</li> <li>● Session feedback T1</li> </ul>
<u>December</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Term 1 closing ceremonies</li> <li>● Staff Appreciation Social</li> <li>● Second Term student registration</li> </ul>
<u>January</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Term 2 registration closes</li> <li>● Winter retraining</li> <li>● Promo Take it from me</li> <li>● Life after first year workshop start working on</li> </ul>
<u>February</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Applicants workshop</li> <li>● New PTM hired</li> <li>● Start talking about transitioning end of month</li> </ul>
<u>March</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Second Term large scale event</li> <li>● Term 2 closing ceremonies</li> </ul>

April

- Transition Reports due
- Cry because it's over
- Love everyone and hug 5ever