

YEAR PLAN
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OFFICE OF THE COMMERCE CAUCUS INTRODUCTION

Dear Members of the Assembly, and fellow Commerce Students

The 2017-2018 Commerce Caucus is excited to present our plan for the upcoming school year. We feel that our goals will improve the lives of students at McMaster and will result in a more engaged and well-rounded community. Our caucus brings a wealth of experience, new ideas and diverse schools of thought. We are excited to build on what previous Commerce Caucuses have been working on, as well as implement our own unique ideas.

We have structured our goals into three broad categories, which we hope will keep us on track and focusing on what really matters. The three sections are: Communication, Events and Academics. We will be working on projects in these three areas, as well as advocating for pro-student policy that works towards them. We believe Communication is very important. Commerce students are not as engaged in the MSU or DCS as they could be. Which means they are missing out on a wealth of experiences and learning opportunities. We want to bring the MSU and DCS to the forefront of Commerce Student's thoughts, empowering them to get more involved than ever. We think that events are an excellent way to get students involved. Not only do the events themselves have great utility, by teaching students new skills or helping them deepen their connection to the community. Events are also a great way of introducing students to the ecosystem of student-run organizations, inspiring them to get more involved in the school community at large. Finally, we believe focusing on academics is essential. After all, that is why we are all here at one of Canada's foremost learning institutions.

This document is not the final, set in stone plan of the Commerce Caucus. We will be participating in committees, reaching out to our constituents, and always striving to improve the lives of the students who call McMaster home. If in the pursuit of serving our constituents new objectives become clear, old objectives become irrelevant or changes to our proposed objectives become necessary we will not hesitate to change and adapt. We will always put the needs of the McMaster Community first, and our actions will only serve to reinforce that idea. We are very excited to make this year another successful chapter in the storied career of the Commerce Caucus.

Sincerely,

Your 2017-2018 Commerce Caucus.

GOALS

Goals can be broadly defined into three different categories: *Communication*, *Events*, and *Academics*. By structuring our objectives around three themes we can ensure that our efforts are focused and synergize well.

Communication

Communication is something we have identified as a major priority. DCS-SRA relations have not always been a priority for the SRA, something we intend to change. As advocates for the MSU it is our job to reach out and actively engage with our constituents. The following goals reflect that responsibility. This is especially important for Commerce students, the SRA is very unknown to Commerce students. We intend to change that.

Objective 1	Strengthen Relationship with the DCS.
Description	The DCS and the SRA have not always had the strongest interorganizational communication. After talking to the previous Commerce SRA caucus and the incoming DCS executive team improving this was identified as a priority. Our proposed solution is to make sure at least one SRA member is attending each DCS executive meeting.
Benefits	By attending DCS executive meetings we can make sure communication between our two organizations is comprehensive and timely. This will ensure we are able to work together well, and neither organization will be left in the dark.
Difficulties	Attending and being prepared for another set of meetings each week is a time commitment. By working together and sharing the workload/attendance we do not foresee this being a serious issue.
Long-term implications	Having improved communication between the DCS and SRA will increase the effectiveness of both organizations. Strong communication will allow us to share resources and work together to further both independent and collaborative organizational goals.
How?	We have already reached out to the DCS, and they will be sending us a schedule of their executive meetings. We will ensure a SRA member is always in attendance.
Partners	The DeGroot Commerce Society.

Objective 2	Maintain an active Facebook presence with the “SRA Commerce” Facebook page.
Description	One of the biggest challenges the Commerce Caucus faces is the fact that many Commerce Students are not aware of its existence. We will

	use the “SRA Commerce” Facebook page to promote student engagement with the MSU and the DCS. By posting updates on SRA meetings, DCS meetings, DCS events, and other things Commerce Students might be interested in we can make the SRA Commerce page a hub of student information.
Benefits	Increasing student involvement in the SRA and DCS will allow the SRA/DCS to be more effective at serving their constituents. It will also enrich and improve the school experience of Commerce students and the rest of the MSU community.
Difficulties	Students are very unengaged right now, a cultural shift is necessary to increase engagement. Facebook has a very high noise to signal ratio, we will need strong content to promote our online presence.
Long-term implications	Better student engagement will improve both the operation of the SRA and DCS as well as improve the lives of MSU and DCS members.
How?	Posting updates on SRA meetings, DCS meetings, DCS events, and other things Commerce Students might be interested in. Making a video series to communicate weekly or biweekly summaries.
Partners	The DeGroote Commerce Society.

Objective 3	Create a series of short videos to communicate important information with constituents.
Description	In accordance with our objective above we want to make a series of short videos on a regular, repeating basis. These videos will be short summaries of what the SRA and DCS are working on, as well as any other interesting or pertinent information for students.
Benefits	Videos are a very effective way of communicating information in the information age. Students do not like reading long, boring blocks of text and Facebook analytics show that videos have a very high engagement rate. Producing short videos is a powerful way of communicating our message and encouraging engagement.
Difficulties	Making videos is a lot of work, and it is very important to be consistent. We will have to schedule time to make these videos and not fall behind on their creation.
Long-term implications	Better student engagement will improve both the operation of the SRA and DCS as well as improve the lives of MSU and DCS members.
How?	By making short videos every week or two weeks with the help of the Mac Tonight media team. SRA Commerce members, and DCS execs would provide short videos to communicate useful information to Commerce Students.
Partners	The DeGroote Commerce Society. The Mac Tonight Media Team.

Objective 4	Class talks.
Description	A great way of reaching out to Commerce Students are class talks. At the start of each semester classes are very full, and as such provide a great way to communicate directly to large amounts of students. We would use these talks to communicate important information about the SRA, and also to inform Commerce Students about our existence.
Benefits	Increasing student involvement in the SRA will allow us to be more effective at serving our constituents. It will also enrich and improve the school experience of Commerce students.
Difficulties	Preparing class talks takes time. But overall this is a very easy goal.
Long-term implications	Better student engagement will improve the operation of the SRA caucus as well as improve the student experience of MSU members.
How?	Reach out to Commerce teachers at the start of the year to set up class talks. Identify important subjects and create short speeches to present the subjects.
Partners	Commerce teachers.

Objective 5	Application Calendar.
Description	September is an action-packed month, and it is easy to miss things. Many students miss the wave of club applications that go out in september, and have to wait for January, or even worse, the next school year to get involved. An applications calendar for the DCS and other Commerce faculty societies will help alleviate this problem. This calendar could then be expanded to MSU clubs as a whole.
Benefits	This will help students get more involved in extracurriculars, enriching their student experience. This will also provide student and school organizations with more student involvement, so they can accomplish even more.
Difficulties	This is a large task, and will require lots of cooperation between many different student organizations.
Long-term implications	Better student engagement will improve the operations of the many Commerce Student organizations as well as improve the student experience of Commerce students.
How?	Reach out to Commerce organizations and get lists of their deadlines. Assemble these deadlines into a single calendar source, for a comprehensive list.
Partners	The DeGroote Commerce Society and sub-organizations (DHRA, DMA, DFA, DAA, DOA). SRA. Potentially other MSU clubs.

Objective 6	DCS fee breakdown.
Description	Fees transparency, specially commerce fees that are paid. Working with DCS to have a link on the website, or hold an event to show students where those fees are going to.
Benefits	By showing the what the DCS fee Commerce students pay goes towards we hope to foster better community engagement. People appreciate seeing where their money goes and this may inspire them to get more involved.
Difficulties	This will take some work, but ultimately is not that monumental of a task.
Long-term implications	Hopefully this will foster a positive attitude towards the DCS and encourage student engagement with the organization.
How?	Work with the DCS to either make a short presentation or a video that breaks down where the DCS fee goes.
Partners	The DeGroot Commerce Society.

Objective 7	Paradise Catering Nutritional Information.
Description	The nutritional information for McMaster's food is hard to find, and in some cases downright inaccurate. We think this information should be easily accessible to students (and accurate!) so students can make healthy and informed decisions about the food they eat. We would like calorie and nutrition information to be posted in easily accessible places for students, instead of locked away deep in their website.
Benefits	The benefits of being able to make informed decisions about the food one eats are too long to go here. Students who eat better perform better in school, are less stressed out and are healthier, to name a few benefits.
Difficulties	Paradise Catering is very uncooperative. Caucus members have already tried reaching out and have been ignored. Adding this information to menus will cost money.
Long-term implications	Something every student at McMaster agrees on is that the food is subpar at best. Hopefully by educating students about what they are being fed pressure on the McMaster Administration to change the awful service will increase.
How?	By advocating to Paradise Catering and the McMaster administration. As well as spreading awareness to students. By doing this we can convince Paradise Catering to put nutritional information in accessible places for students.
Partners	Paradise Catering. McMaster Administration. MSU.

Events

We would like to advocate for and help organize events that we think will better the academic experiences of our constituents.

Objective 1	Networking Night with Professors and Students.
Description	Provide a networking event for students to meet their professors and each other in September. This will be similar to events other faculties hold for the same purpose.
Benefits	Having students meet each other and their professors is a great way to foster a strong community of Commerce students and Faculty. A strong community will enrich the scholastic experiences of our constituents.
Difficulties	Planning an event like this is a lot of work. There are many different moving parts and people to get on board. Thankfully we can look at the best practices of what other faculties do, allowing us to learn from their experience.
Long-term implications	Fostering a strong Commerce community will enrich the networking and support groups available to Commerce students. It will also develop stronger relations between the students and their faculty. This will improve scholastic performance and drive the business program to new heights.
How?	By liaising with the DeGroot Commerce society, teachers and sponsors a September event can be put together.
Partners	The DeGroot Commerce Society. Mill Street Brewery potentially as a sponsor.

Objective 2	Guest Speakers Events.
Description	Have guest speakers come in from different areas of the business world to talk to Commerce students and share their industry knowledge.
Benefits	This will help give students new and unique knowledge, specifically knowledge that is incredibly relevant to the business world. Instead of learning things in a purely sterile classroom environment by interacting with industry professionals students will learn cutting edge and relevant information in a hands-on way.
Difficulties	Making these events is a lot of work. There are many possible difficulties from scheduling speakers, booking rooms, getting speakers students are interested in, and most importantly marketing the event.
Long-term implications	Having these talks and new learning opportunities can only lead to more enriched, well rounded students. This is great both for the students, but also the McMaster community at large.

How?	By liasoning with speakers and the DCS these events can be put into motion. The SRA will act as an advocate and a planner to ensure these events are brought to life.
Partners	The DeGrootte Commerce Society. CIBC. The Faculty of Commerce. DeGrootte Entrepreneur Club. FYO Club. Randall Vickerson.

Objective 3	Help Commerce Students Connect with The Forge.
Description	Help The Forge reach out to Commerce students so they can get involved with its many programs and opportunities.
Benefits	The Forge provides valuable skill workshops that Commerce students would benefit from taking. They also provide an excellent suite of resources for students looking to begin startups.
Difficulties	Commerce students have not been attending programs provided by The Forge. Is this from a lack of interest or a lack of awareness?
Long-term implications	Getting Commerce students more involved in their school community will result not only in better experiences for the students, but a community which gains more active and contributing members.
How?	Work with The Forge and the DCS to promote their events.
Partners	The Forge @ Mac. The DeGrootte Commerce Society.

Academics

Ultimately, school is why we are all here. We plan to advocate for things that will improve the academic performance of Commerce students, to ensure they get the most out of their degrees.

Objective 1	Advocate for Podcasted Courses.
Description	Podcasted courses are a slam dunk idea for improving the lives of our constituents. They give students access to an incredible tool that will help them achieve new heights in their academic career.
Benefits	Better availability of podcasts will allow students to do better in school, by having even more resources at their fingertips. Podcasts are also very important because they improve accessibility for students.
Difficulties	Podcasting equipment and technology is available already at McMaster. This means the resistance to podcasting is not a lack of ability, but a lack of will. We will have to lobby teachers to add podcasting to their lesson plans.
Long-term implications	An uptick in student performance due to having increased pedagogical tools. Perhaps lower class attendance.
How?	Work with the professors who have yet to implement podcasting. Connect these professors with the appropriate technical resources, and

	other professors who do implement podcasting. By meeting other professors who podcast their courses the ones who resist can learn about why podcasting is great for students from their peers.
Partners	SRA Science. SRA Social Science. Maccess. Faculty of Commerce.

Objective 2	Advocate for Exam review sessions.
Description	Exam review sessions would be a great help for struggling students. There are some Commerce courses that typically prove to be a large challenge for Commerce students every year (Finance, Accounting). Having study sessions for these classes would do a lot for students. We can look at well attended study sessions like those for Bio 1M03 to attain some best practices for these events.
Benefits	Students who study together succeed together! In an increasingly fast paced and turbulent society it is more important than ever to be able to work together. Providing exam review sessions will not only increase Commerce student's scholastic performance It will help them build community bonds and work together, creating an even stronger Commerce community.
Difficulties	Just because these sessions work for Bio 1M03 does not mean they will work for us. We will have to work with the DCS to curate an event that meets the unique needs of Commerce students.
Long-term implications	Run correctly, these events will improve student performance and foster a stronger Commerce community.
How?	Work with the DCS and Faculty of Commerce to create and run exam review sessions for the Commerce classes that students typically struggle with.
Partners	The DeGroot Commerce Society. The Faculty of Commerce

GOALS to strive for

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

1. Work with DCS to make Student/Professor night a reality.
2. Schedule of DCS executive meetings so we can ensure SRA attendance.
3. Facebook page media plan to ensure consistent posting throughout the year.
4. Video production plan to ensure consistent video creation throughout the year.
5. Class talk ideas and schedule, so we are prepared to deliver class talks in the opening weeks of the school year.

List 5 things you would like to have completed during the fall term (1st)

1. Lay groundwork for the exam review sessions by talking to DCS and other societies who run successful programs.
2. An application calendar for business students.
3. A method of communicating the DCS fee breakdown, by presentation or video.
4. Work with the DCS to have at least one guest speaker event.

List 5 things you would like to have completed during the winter term (2nd)

1. Have readily available nutrition information on Paradise Catering Menus.
2. Extending the application calendar to MSU clubs at large.
3. A series of informational videos created throughout the year to keep Commerce students informed.
4. Have The Forge hold an event that is well attended by Commerce Students.
5. Help Commerce professors who are not yet podcasting setup podcasting for their classes.