



THE McMASTER STUDENTS UNION

STATE

of the

UNION

2012/2013

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23RD

Bylaw 4-Officers

1.4.5.1 The Chief Executive Officer shall deliver a written report outlining Executive and Board decisions and activities including, but not limited to, signed contracts, new employees hired, and negotiations concluded and in progress.

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Dear MSU members,

Thank you for taking the time to read through the 2012/2013 State of the Union, prepared by the MSU Board of Directors with input from numerous volunteers and staff members. The State of the Union is a document that summarizes the year thus far, in order to chart the progress of the organization and ensure that we continue to build upon past work moving forward.

The timing of the State of the Union is of particular importance as the election of the 2012/2013 MSU President is already underway, and the election of the future Vice Presidents is only a few weeks out. It is crucial that students have the necessary information available to them in order to make informed choices.

The State of the Union is divided into three main parts, 'Setting the Context', 'A Year in Review' and 'Next Steps'. This structure was chosen in order to outline what has been accomplished, which priorities have been outlined and the future steps needed to continue to advance the MSU, according to what we perceive as the priorities of students.

Given the transient nature of the organization and the ever-rotating base of our membership, the specific priorities of the McMaster Students Union are bound to change with time. As such, the State of the Union is to serve as a general guideline and to be published annually by the MSU Board of Directors. In addition to serving as a foundation for long-term planning, the State of the Union is an important piece of institutional memory, summarizing the priorities and events of each particular year.

We encourage you to peruse the document thoroughly, as it is a comprehensive look at where the MSU sits as of January 2013, in addition to being an outline of where the organization is heading in future years. Keep in mind that one of the things that makes the MSU such a unique and dynamic organization is that the needs of our membership are constantly evolving, resulting in a perpetual search for feedback and student opinion. We would love to hear your thoughts on the State of the Union to help us in reaching our goal of continuously shaping the MSU to effectively represent the undergraduate students of McMaster University.

Sincerely,

THE 2012/2013 MSU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Siobhan Stewart
President



David Campbell
Vice President
(Administration)



Jeff Wyngaarden
Vice President
(Finance)



Huzaifa Saeed
Vice President
(Education)

MISSION STATEMENT

“The purpose of the MSU is to draw into a true society all students at McMaster University. In pursuit of this, it will foster activities and events, which will enhance the University experience of its members and contribute to the life of the University as a whole. Further, it will seek to facilitate communication between the student body, the University, and other organizations and will organize and regulate student self-government.”

STRATEGIC THEMES

Whereby the MSU is driven to provide a service to the McMaster University undergraduate community, several strategic themes will be applied to ensure a holistic approach is taken in regards to its operations. These core values will be communicated effectively to all services and employees and as such, their mandates will reflect the essence of the McMaster Students Union.

Transparency

MSU operations, finances, milestones and tribulations will be disseminated to the general public without bias or misrepresentation. Any and all decisions which directly impact the mission statement of the MSU will be accessible to all students, unless in violation of legal conduct.

Accountability

MSU stakeholders, directors and any subsidiary members will be held responsible for decisions made, both personally and on one's behalf. As the Board of Directors are the officers of MSU Incorporated, their responsibility is to ensure the functionality and fiscal stability of the MSU as a whole.

Affordability

The MSU, where possible, will investigate the viability of any project or service – both economic and non-economic – to ensure that the benefits outweigh the costs.

Inclusivity

The MSU will place a large emphasis on maintaining neutrality on contentious issues unless undergraduates are greatly disadvantaged by its outcome. The MSU will create a community that is welcoming of all and as such, will not discriminate against any group of students or contribute to any organization in breach of its mandate.

Sustainability

MSU operations can prosper and survive. This will not inhibit innovation, creativity or risk, but proper research and analysis must be conducted to ensure longevity of the organization.

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ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

What is the MSU?

The McMaster Students Union is the largest student organization on campus. All full-time undergraduate students (18 units or more) at McMaster University are members of the MSU.

What does the MSU do for you?

The McMaster Students Union serves students in two main functions: political representation and the enhancement of student life. We provide political representation and advocate for decisions that are in students' best interests at the university, municipal, provincial and federal levels of jurisdiction.

We also offer many of the student services that you will use during your time at McMaster. You might get to know us through Welcome Week and our Campus Events department, visiting the Compass Information Centre, having lunch at TwelveEighty, listening to CFMU 93.3FM, volunteering with more than 20 distinct student services, our funding and assistance of more than 300 clubs on campus, or as a major partner in the McMaster University Student Centre (MUSC). You may even come and work for us. The MSU employs more than 350 students each year to run committees, oversee student services and work at our businesses, such as the Union Market convenience store or Underground Media + Design. We also provide health and dental plan coverage and a universal bus pass with the Hamilton Street Railway (HSR). As a member of the McMaster Students Union, you have a student run, multi-million dollar organization at your disposal to help you through the challenges, provide services and protect your interests within and outside the walls of McMaster.

For more information, as well as a complete list of our business, services and volunteer opportunities, please visit www.msumcmaster.ca, or contact one of your representatives:

MSU President, Siobhan Stewart president@msu.mcmaster.ca ext. 23885

Vice President (Administration), David Campbell vpadmin@msu.mcmaster.ca ext. 23250

Vice President (Finance), Jeff Wyngaarden vpfinance@msu.mcmaster.ca ext. 24109

Vice President (Education), Huzaifa Saeed vped@msu.mcmaster.ca ext. 24017

How does the MSU represent you?

The Student Representative Assembly (SRA), the governing body of the MSU, is composed of 35 undergraduate students elected by their peers, inside each academic faculty. They work to provide the best possible MSU services and departments, address undergraduate students' concerns and lobby the University to improve McMaster's academic quality. The MSU exists to represent you and to help build a better community for all students.

During the academic year, the SRA meets bi-weekly in Council Chambers, Gilmour Hall 111. SRA meetings are open, public forums, to which anyone can attend without invitation or reservation. General elections for the SRA are held every March. Seats on the SRA are allocated by population; larger academic divisions have more representation. If seats become vacant, by-elections are held during the school year.

If you have any questions or concerns, you are encouraged to contact your SRA faculty reps at the following email addresses:

Arts & Science: sraartsci@msu.mcmaster.ca
Commerce: sracom@msu.mcmaster.ca
Engineering: sraeng@msu.mcmaster.ca
Health Sciences: srahealth@msu.mcmaster.ca
Humanities: srahuman@msu.mcmaster.ca
Kinesiology: srakin@msu.mcmaster.ca
Nursing: sranursing@msu.mcmaster.ca
Science: srasci@msu.mcmaster.ca
Social Sciences: srassci@msu.mcmaster.ca

SETTING THE CONTEXT: McMASTER UNIVERSITY IN 2012/2013

It is impossible to discuss a year in the MSU without referring to the broader context of McMaster. In an effort to keep this section concise yet relevant, only points of major impact will be discussed. Naturally, given the size and complexity of the institution, some details and events will inevitably be left out.

125th Anniversary Celebrations

McMaster celebrated its 125th birthday on Founder's Day – April 23rd, 2012. Year-long anniversary celebrations have highlighted McMaster's rich history, as well as the many contributions of McMaster's students, alumni, faculty and staff to the community. Led by the Alumni Association and with the participation from all corners of campus, some of the events which marked McMaster's 125th anniversary included: Doors Open, Mac In Time, the burying of the Class of 2012 Time Capsule, Open Streets McMaster, dozens of alumni events across the country and the announcement of McMaster's 125 People of Impact.

2nd Annual Women and Leadership Conference

This past year was the second in a row in which the MSU supported - and through its executive, managers and volunteer base - heavily engaged in the annual Leadership Summit for Women. In 2012, the organizing committee decided to further engage with the community and the Summit was held at Hamilton City Hall. The Summit featured the participation of a number of active community leaders. It fostered lively discussions concerning the role(s) women play in various levels of government, our communities, the workplace, as well as how the female experience within these roles can be enhanced.

Ad-Hoc Committee on Democratic Reform

The Student Representative Assembly (SRA) of 2011/2012 struck the Ad-Hoc Committee on Democratic Reform in response to ongoing discussions as to the democratic structure and principles of the organization. Originally scheduled to disband in April 2012, the committee was re-formed for the 2012/2013 year to continue its work. The committee has discussed issues of representation in the MSU, timing and number of elections, the political structure of the organization and more. Recommendations will be coming forward to the SRA before the end of the current term.

McMaster Credit Union Merges with PACE

This year emphasis was placed on continuing our efforts in revising the Clubs' banking system to offer students a lower-cost account that is simpler to set-up, change and monitor through McMaster Credit Union (MCU). Moreover, an MCU ATM was installed inside TwelvEighty that offered the lowest rates to students and the most responsible use of the funds collected. Two other ATMs were installed at locations in the Student Centre that offered the same low rate. Having formed a partnership with the McMaster Credit Union on both of these fronts, MCU demonstrated themselves to be community focused and excited to help support students.

Late in 2012, MCU merged with PACE Credit Union. The MSU has spent several months negotiating with the bank to ensure that we receive the same services that MCU originally offered. We continue to monitor this relationship and to examine further opportunities for cost-saving in the Clubs system.

Ontario Premiere Resigns After Proroguing Queen's Park

In response to growing labour disputes with Ontario doctors and teachers, and amidst funding scandals at the provincial air ambulance service and as a result of the closure of two proposed natural gas electricity generating plants in Liberal-held ridings, Premier Dalton McGuinty announced the prorogation of the provincial legislature in October and immediately resigned. The Liberal party is currently in a leadership race and will decide their next leader (and Premier of Ontario) in late January 2013.

Wentworth House Closing / Wilson Building Coming

The McMaster community has been notified that Wentworth House will be demolished in late spring of 2013. There are a few MSU services as well as some club resources that will be relocated to different parts of campus as a result. The MSU has been working extensively on this issue with Facility Services to ensure that our affected groups are relocated successfully. The decision to demolish Wentworth House is due to its selection as the location for the new Wilson Building for Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences. The MSU is pleased that building plans are moving forward and there has been a great deal of consultation with various stakeholders, the MSU, faculty societies and students on what the new Wilson Building will provide.

Phoenix Moves to the Refectory

After forty-three years in its Wentworth House location, the Phoenix has moved to its new location in the Refectory. The groundwork of this move had been developing for a number of years and construction began in the summer of 2011. After a number of delays, the move from Wentworth House occurred during the summer of 2012.

Quorate General Assembly

In March 2012, the MSU had more than 600 students attend its annual General Assembly, resulting in the first quorate meeting since 1995. At the meeting, students approved the establishment of a new "Orientation Fee". The fee was instituted in response to growing financial concerns with Welcome Week, replacing the former opt-in MacPass fee - which was approaching \$150 - with a less expensive yet mandatory fee charged to all level I students. The \$110 fee is shared between the MSU, the Student Success Center, faculty societies, Residence Life and the Off-Campus Resource Centre. It supports all programming and swag of Welcome Week. The new fee brought with it several new opportunities and challenges, which will be articulated under Goal #1 of this document. Quorum was lost after the approval of this fee, although several other items were also discussed at General Assembly.

Opening of the Lodge (Off-Campus Students' Lounge)

Through cooperation between several University partners including the MSU, McMaster created 'The Lodge', an on-campus lounge for off-campus and commuter students. The Lodge is located in the Wentworth House, in the space formerly occupied by The Phoenix. The Lodge was designed to be an inclusive and welcoming space for all undergraduates, governed by fellow students, and even decorated with commissioned undergraduate art. With the demolition of Wentworth House scheduled for this spring, it remains a priority of the MSU to demonstrate the importance of this space, in order to justify the allocation of other space on campus to the continuation of this project.

Forward with Integrity

Within President Deane's 2011 letter to the McMaster community, a number of issues were discussed, specifically the undergraduate experience and why the University plans to enhance experiential education, self-directed learning and interdisciplinarity. In 2012, several FWI working groups have developed goals to improve McMaster's pedagogy, culture and student experience. To that end, funding was recently awarded to a number of FWI projects. The MSU has been actively participating in responding to the letter through our role(s) in FWI taskforces, hosting open forums and online chats, tabling in MUSC via the Advocacy team, launching a *Forward with Integrity* 101 portal, as well as soliciting survey feedback.

2012/2013: A YEAR IN REVIEW

GOAL 1:

AN ORGANIZATION THAT PRIORITIZES STUDENT-CENTRIC ISSUES

Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) Expanded Service

The McMaster Students Union had been campaigning for expanded service in terms of volume and scheduling for the past few years. Specifically, as per our Transit Policy the MSU supported an increase in bus service during designated off-peak hours, as well as weekend service for Ancaster amongst other things. This summer, after further lobbying efforts, the City of Hamilton announced increases to service via an \$18 million investment in new busses and greater allocations on the routes serving McMaster. For the 5A/5C West Hamilton lines, buses are now departing to and from Ancaster Meadowlands every 30 minutes on weekends from approximately 6am to 12am. This provides additional direct service from the Westdale/University area to the stores, restaurants and services in the Meadowlands.

Your 32 Campaign

The Your 32 Campaign was announced in fall 2012 as an initiative of Civic Action Toronto. The Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance brings together civic leaders from across all sectors to increase the Greater Toronto region's economic prosperity and is composed of a board of influential regional champions. These champions are influential, rising and senior leaders representing a range of sectors, including major corporations, labour organizations, academic institutions, non-profit organizations and more. The McMaster Students Union was invited to be one of the regional champions for this initiative. The Your 32 Campaign aims to create awareness for how specific investments (titled "The Big Move") in our regional public transportation infrastructure could save citizens on average 32 minutes per day. The MSU will be spreading awareness and garnering support for this project via a variety of social media and physical initiatives on campus throughout 2013.

McMaster Systems Renewal (The MOSAIC Project)

The student records systems (MUGSI and SOLAR) have been a concern for students at McMaster for a number of years. Apart from the expressed discontent by many students during course registration season, McMaster University has ranked very poorly amongst Canadian universities for ease of course registration in consecutive Globe and Mail campus surveys. As a result, in 2010 over \$40 million was dedicated to the acquisition of a new campus wide enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to revitalize student records, research, human resources and financial systems of the University. Since fall 2010, the MSU has had a representative on the steering committee of the project and after years of hiring software consultants, relevant staff and other planning, the project is in its final stages. Once University departments finish defining their requirements and their implementation strategies, the multi-year sequenced implementation of the new software will begin. Students can expect to see a much improved replacement for MUGSI/SOLAR by summer 2014. The MSU is glad that the process of change for the project has utilized student representation and has listened to student concerns.

Wi-Fi

Campus Wi-Fi has been identified as a concern by many students and student representatives, with several spots on campus having either unreliable or non-existent service. The MSU has been working with University Technology Services (UTS) for the last couple of years to prioritize wireless infrastructure investments, while concurrently lobbying provincial MPPs for deferred maintenance funding. In fall 2012, UTS invited the MSU to a Wi-Fi working group upon the receipt of a \$100,000 from the Office of the President to create a pilot project. After consulting the group, the MSU capitalized on this opportunity by running a popular survey and social media campaign to garner student feedback on where the investment should be allocated on campus, as well soliciting concerns and suggestions for Wi-Fi in general. UTS in turn largely utilized the feedback in their allocations with a bulk of upgrades focusing on the Student Centre, BSB and Arts Quad. The MSU will continue collaborating with the Wi-Fi working group in support of the planned proposal to the Board of Governors for a multi-year funding business plan.

Student Discount from Paradise Catering

In the summer of 2012, the MSU worked with Hospitality Services to reduce catering prices for student groups running events on campus. While Hospitality Services helps to subsidize the occupancy costs for both student and University-run operations in MUSC, the MSU drew their attention to the fact that many student groups find Paradise Catering unaffordable. As a result of this effort, individual students, as well as student clubs that are recognized by the MSU now receive a 15% reduction in costs when placing and confirming an order with Paradise Catering. In addition, a special catering menu targeting student groups was prepared, which includes lower-cost items. The MSU will continue its lobbying work to ensure that food costs on campus are reasonable and affordable for students.

Twitter Talks and Online Chat with President Deane

One of the concerns that students often bring forward to the MSU is that they feel there isn't enough opportunities to engage with the University Administration. Furthermore, students often articulate that they wish to have more chances to share their reflections, concerns and/or experiences with the appropriate individuals who have the ability to create change or make decisions on our campus.

The MSU worked on multiple fronts to improve this situation in 2012/2013, by providing students with an opportunity to connect with Dr. Patrick Deane, President and Vice-Chancellor of McMaster University. This was done through two different approaches, including "Twitter Talks" which allowed students the opportunity to meet with Patrick Deane in an open space on campus for dialogue. And most recently, through an online chat session where students could raise their questions, concerns or feelings online in real time with McMaster's President via the MSU website.

Undergraduate Student Initiatives Fund & Student Life Enhancement Fund

A portion of the Student Services fee paid annually by students is allocated towards two funds that help support student life and the enhancement of student services. Formally known as the Student Services Program Support Fund, the newly named Undergraduate Student Initiatives Fund solicits proposals from individual students and MSU-status clubs for seed capital or financial support to help undergraduate students create, foster and grow new ideas and/or events for the benefit of campus life.

The Student Life Enhancement Fund supports projects to enhance student life through the delivery of student services. Project funding has ranged from a few hundred dollars to tens of thousands. The fund is accessible for application by all students, who will be able to submit ideas and pending approval, be able to partner with either an MSU service or a department under the umbrella of the Office of Student Affairs. The promotion of this funding apparatus helps to encourage student ideas and ingenuity and contribute to the betterment of student life.

Thus far in 2012/2013, the Student Life Enhancement Fund has allocated \$392,300 to enhancement projects, while the Undergraduate Student Initiatives Fund has contributed an additional \$21,535 to student efforts. Proposals for 2012/2013 are still being accepted by each fund.

Study Space (Bridges Café / TwelvEighty / Libraries)

Study space is an issue that is consistently raised by students as a challenge on campus. For a number of years, the MSU has been working on this particular issue and to that end, has helped secure more study space in the libraries, as well as extended hours of operation of the libraries during the exam periods. Moreover, the MSU has helped create more space through the opening of TwelvEighty for study during exams. In addition, the MSU in collaboration with Hospitality Services, was able to open Bridges Café for extra study space during the exam period for students to enjoy.

Mental Health Campaign

In what has been an emerging trend in the Canadian post-secondary education sector over the last year, there has been much needed emphasis placed on the prevalence of mental health issues on campus. The MSU took a leadership role in enhancing this movement at McMaster. To be clear, the efforts of the Student Wellness Centre, Student Health Education Centre (SHEC) and other campus groups were already focused on mental health and wellness, however, there was a perceived lack of dialogue amongst student leaders and students on the topic.

It was identified that Welcome Week reps serve as an integral part of the transition process for incoming first years, which is - according to research - a critically vulnerable time for many students. The MSU worked with the Student Wellness Centre to design a comprehensive and accessible training module for Welcome Week reps, which was coupled with a wildly popular “Elephant in the Room” marketing plan, including promotional clothing and an awareness web portal. The branding maintained a prominent spot during Welcome Week proceedings and feedback suggested it was well received by many students and receiving strong media coverage.

Peer Support Line

In her election campaign, MSU President Siobhan Stewart promised to establish a peer support line at McMaster. The Peer Support Line is now underway. As it stands, the plan is to run a pilot project in second semester and evaluate how the pilot is received. Approximately 20 peer listeners have been selected for the pilot project and have participated in two different weekend training sessions. The launch of the pilot project will take place at the end of January/early February. The MSU would especially like to acknowledge the efforts made by staff of the Student Wellness Centre in seeing this project come to fruition. Special acknowledgements also need to be given to McMaster Security Services, Facility Services and McMaster University's Vice President (Administration) Roger Couldrey for their efforts in moving this project forward.

Green Space Initiative

The Green Space Initiative involves turning the balcony area on the third floor of the Student Centre (beside CIBC Hall) into a green space that students and the campus community can enjoy. The MSU has gathered feedback from the student body on what the space should like and has also consulted with a number of key stakeholders including OPIRG, the Office of Sustainability and McMaster University Student Centre Administration, to gain their insights into this project. A design firm has been selected through tender and is now in the process of developing schematic drawings that the student body will be asked to evaluate prior to construction.

Welcome Week Fee Change and Revamp

In Welcome Week 2012, the MSU continued its prominent role of providing events for incoming students. The MSU facilitated Mac Connector, ClubsFest, the Shinerama Charity Casino, as well as two concerts, including DJ Steve Angelo which was attended by more than 5000 students. The MSU's Shinerama Campaign had yet another record-setting year, raising over \$117,000 for Cystic Fibrosis Canada. The Maroons Welcome Week Reps continued to grow their presence, with a smaller team and a renewed vision of support and representation for the MSU.

With the new Orientation Fee, the MSU and the University have found financial stability, but also have accepted a host of new responsibilities. These include wider participation in events, more diverse programming and a better experience overall for students. This year, the Welcome Week planning committee worked diligently towards these goals, focusing primarily on building capacity at events and the engagement of off-campus students. The MSU also expanded its involvement in faculty society programming through support from the MSU Campus Events department. Having seen significant gains in these areas, next year's committee will begin to address other goals discussed in the "Next Steps" portion of this document, including a more inclusive Welcome Week and building a better transition for first-year students.

'Make a Break' Survey

The MSU has engaged with students on the subject of a fall break. The MSU gathered student input through the "Make a Break" survey which asked students if they would like a fall break. The nearly 3000 respondents overwhelmingly favoured the creation of some kind of fall break. Discussions on this topic are currently being held at the administrative bodies of the University, namely the Undergraduate Council and Senate.

GOAL 2:

AN ORGANIZATION THAT STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PROMOTES LOCAL INDUSTRIES

Hamilton Youth Retention Strategies

In 1997, the McMaster alumni population was 90,000 with 70% of active alumni residing in the Golden Horseshoe. In 2011, the alumni population is 152,218 with 47% of active alumni residing in the Golden Horseshoe. Several organizations and local leaders have identified that youth retention should be a key priority for the progress of the city of Hamilton. However, the 2011 “Your City Survey” conducted by the MSU, highlighted that a large portion of students are dissatisfied with (their perceptions of) Hamilton and up to 78% of respondents did not consider Hamilton to be their first choice for either work or residence after graduation. The MSU has consequently engaged with the Hamilton Training Advisory Board (HTAB), Economic Development, Workforce Planning, Tourism and Culture and various other departments to discuss partnerships to increase the exposure of McMaster students to the city of Hamilton. As well, the MSU is working with McMaster’s Student Success Centre to see if there is potential for further partnerships in community engagement projects. The ultimate aim of these discussions is to increase retention through improved employment opportunities, public transit and cultural exposure to Hamilton.

3rd Annual MSU Community Clean-Up

This past September, the MSU ran its third annual Community Clean-Up & BBQ at the end of Welcome Week. The event attracted close to 200 students who spent an afternoon ameliorating the Ainslie Wood-Westdale area, followed by a BBQ at TwelvEighty. As this is the third year that the MSU has coordinated the Community Clean-up, our commitment to community relations has been further strengthened with the Ainslie Wood-Westdale Community Association (AWWCA) praising the efforts of students. The MSU name and the profile of students gained a tremendous amount of goodwill within the local area as a result. Prizes were awarded to the team from residence that collected the most garbage, as well as those that presented the most creative pieces of garbage to the judging panel.

McMaster Teaching and Community Garden

Through a partnership between the MSU, the Office of Sustainability, Facility Services and the staff and students of the Integrated Science (iSci) program, a community garden has been created on campus called the McMaster Teaching and Community Garden (MTCG). While not directly contributing dollars to the project, the MSU has agreed utilize the funding provided by iSci to hire and supervise a student manager, who will help determine scheduling and the logistics of garden operations. As well as offering educational opportunities, a portion of the produce grown in the MTCG will be available through the Mac Farmstand and Mac Bread Bin.

Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) Discussion Paper and Strategic Mandate Agreements

In summer 2012, Glen Murray, then Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities released a discussion paper on the future of the Ontario post-secondary education sector. Specifically, he wrote on the topics of innovation and productivity, as well as teaching quality, experiential education, online learning, credit transfers and various different degree structures. There were consultations held with student organizations and administrators across the province. The MSU had the privilege of attending several of these consultations. As part of the process, each university was required to submit a Strategic Mandate Agreement

(SMA). These SMAs were brief proposals outlining specific projects and priorities to which institutions wish to secure funding. McMaster's letter was largely based off the discussion arising from the *Forward with Integrity* project and prioritized the establishment of an Experiential Education Centre. The MSU was happy to contribute its input into this process.

The 16th Annual McMasters: MSU Charity Golf Classic

For the past 16 years, the MSU has run a charity golf tournament with proceeds benefiting the MSU Child Care Centre. Since 2011, the MSU's Shinerama campaign has also benefited from the charitable efforts of the MSU. In 2012, The McMasters boasted its largest sponsorship total yet and raised more than \$8000 thanks to increased donor participation. The support from both campus and community partners continues to be impressive and the MSU is grateful for the tremendous support we receive for this special event.

Digitization of the Silhouette Archives

The 125th anniversary of McMaster University presented us with a perfect opportunity to further develop the MSU's fledgling digital archives to include past volumes of The Silhouette. The Silhouette captures a year in time within the MSU and McMaster and a digital archive could be far more accessible to all members of the McMaster community.

The Silhouette was first produced in 1930, the year McMaster University moved to Hamilton. One of the biggest challenges of this project was to source missing original paper copies of the newspaper. The MSU maintains original copies for approximately half of the 82 years in which the paper was produced. The remaining copies were loaned to us by Mills Library and by former Board Members of the McMaster Students Union. These paper volumes are quickly deteriorating. With generous support from the Student Life Enhancement Fund, the MSU was able to hire student summer staff, rent specialized scanning equipment, as well as purchase software and server storage space to create and house the large digital files created for each page of each edition of The Sil.

We are continuing to work on finalizing this project and correcting any errors we come across to ensure that the end product contains the best quality and most comprehensive archive of The Silhouette possible. While there are issues relating to copyright that still need to be resolved, our hope is that eventually a complete, searchable, digital archive of all volumes of The Silhouette will be made available online and through the library, to all McMaster students, staff and alumni.

Open Streets McMaster

This year marked the first time that the University hosted Open Streets: McMaster Edition. The event brought together a mix of community partners, University partners, MSU groups, staff and students in an event that directly connected McMaster to the Hamilton community. The MSU supported this event through a variety of different ways and was happy to collaborate with the Office of the President to see this initiative through.

GOAL 3:

AN ORGANIZATION THAT ENHANCES THE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE FOR ALL UNDERGRADUATES, REGARDLESS OF ORIENTATION, ETHNICITY, GENDER, CULTURE OR SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

MSU Health and Dental Insurance Plans (Executive Board Taskforce)

Exciting changes to the MSU health plan have resulted in increased benefits and less monetary risk for the MSU. Financial risk for the health plan has been taken on by our underwriter, so we are able to move forward with our plan with greater confidence in its sustainability. In addition, the MSU has been able to negotiate an increase in maximum drug coverage, as well as more robust accidental death and dismemberment benefits. The insurance plans of the MSU both saw a fee increase in the last fiscal year; the prices are now \$56.71 for the health plan and \$113.41 for the dental plan. The fees were raised simply to cover the current costs of the plans and are budgeted to break even or make a small surplus, which can be used in future years to offset increases to coverage or reduce the price of the plan. However, it is important to note that this fee is not mandatory. If a student so chooses (and can demonstrate proof of comparable coverage), a student may opt-out of either plan before September 30th of each year and receive a full refund. Currently, the MSU is examining the possibility of extending coverage to include eye care, oral contraceptives and some physiotherapy.

Online Voting

Two years ago, the MSU began utilizing online voting during the Presidential election. The voter participation in the election rose from 20% to 25% from 2010 to 2011. In the 2012, Presidential election voter turnout increased to 33%. The ease of voting that online elections provides allows students to vote at home and encourages greater participation in decision-making. As online promotions and campaigns become more and more important, the MSU is dedicated to allowing students to access information and to vote as easily as possible.

McMaster University Student Centre

The loan that the students of McMaster were paying back to the University for their share of the costs in the McMaster University Student Centre (MUSC) has been retired. The contribution of over \$25 million has culminated in the building that you see today. It has become the hub of all student activity on campus. Through various businesses, services and offices, the MUSC has everything for students to enhance their university experience. However, the fixtures currently in the building are over ten years old and are due for replacement or repair. There is a capital improvement plan being put in place for 2013 and the MSU will make sure students have a say in what is improved and/or fixed in the MUSC.

Furthermore, the cost of the fee associated with the MUSC was decreased from \$3.00 per unit (to a maximum of 30 units) to \$0.60 per unit (to a maximum of 30 units). This fee provides for free access to most student-used space, including space where the MSU's services are located.

In conjunction with the retirement of the MUSC loan came the realization that there was a \$1.1 million surplus in the coffers. Since this money was collected for the capital loan on the building, it was decided that it can only be used for capital improvements in the MUSC that have a noticeable and tangible benefit to students. The MSU is examining different options for spending these funds and has already committed to upgrading the wireless network in the Student Centre. Plans are being put in place to allocate and expend this money before the end of the 2012-13 academic year.

Women and Trans Centre Committee*

For the past several years, there has been an extensive debate on campus over the potential creation of some form of women's centre at McMaster. This year, the SRA decided to channel that debate by creating an Ad-Hoc Women and Trans* Centre Committee. The committee was tasked to research and ultimately propose an operating structure for a women and trans* centre on campus, to then be debated at the SRA. The committee's work is ongoing, as it attempts to assess the need, uses, operations and feasibility of a centre on campus.

SACHA Project

This year, Hamilton's YWCA and Sexual Assault Centre Hamilton Area (SACHA) were awarded a federal grant to initiate a project on the McMaster campus, tentatively called Engaging Youth on Violence Against Women on Post-Secondary Campuses. The project is directed by an advisory group which involves several MSU representatives, including the VP (Administration) and representatives from the Queer Students Community Centre (QSCC), Diversity Services and MSU clubs. The initial phases of the project launched in January and will continue through the 2013/2014 academic year.

Prayer Space

One problem that has been identified this year is that there is a lack of an adequate multi-faith prayer space on campus. Multi-purpose space at McMaster is an incredibly rare commodity and the MSU is dedicated to a reasonable approach that adequately meets the needs of groups that have indicated a need for this kind of space. Thanks largely to a proposal developed by a student last year and the cooperation and support of Athletics and Recreation, a multi-use "mindfulness" centre is being developed in the Ivor Wynne Centre. The MSU is part of the process as this space becomes a reality and we continue to lobby to ensure that emphasis is placed on room availability for groups requiring prayer space.

MSU Services

ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT

It has been a busy time for the Accounting Department. The launch of the digital purchase order system and upgrades to debit/credit lines across the MSU have made for a busy transitional year. We expect that future upgrades to our accounting software and more work on the e-commerce module of the MSU website will mean further training in coming years.

AVTEK

AVTEK continues to work towards solidifying business here on campus, as well as in the surrounding area. AVTEK has been working steadily with the Ron Joyce Centre providing support for their events. The department is also preparing for a new direction in office procedures, as well as the control software that enables smooth operation of staff. AVTEK is pursuing improved front office space as part of the MSU's space audit.

CAMPUS EVENTS

This has been another extremely successful year for Campus Events, obtaining increased sponsorship for the MSU's Annual Charity Golf Tournament, high attendance at all Welcome Week events with the introduction of the universal Welcome Week fee, and continued partnerships with groups across campus to run concerts and other events. Campus Events continues to provide diverse entertainment for students with sold out events at TwelvEighty, including the Dinner and a Show series and helping bring the TD Pump It Up concert to McMaster students.

MSU CHILD CARE CENTRE

The MSU Child Care Centre continues to see full enrollment, as well as a large wait list. They have maintained their "Raising the Bar" Program Gold rating for commitment to high quality early education and are fortunate to contract with the McMaster Work Study program to hire McMaster students for Teacher's Assistant

positions. The Centre has seen a small decrease in pre-school enrollment upon the institution of all-day kindergarten. With a shifting focus to toddler care, the Centre is working towards adapting the classrooms to accommodate the smaller ratio of Early Childhood Educators to toddlers.

CFMU 93.3FM

CFMU was awarded Hamilton's Radio Station of the Year for the third year in a row and received a number of other awards for its programming. Their disc compilation of Hamilton music was again in the top fifty and they reached out into the community to help organize the highly successful Supercrawl festival in September. CFMU is currently working towards the possibility of broadcasting in residence buildings and is making plans to extend programming and fully enter the digital age.

CLUBS

The Clubs department continues to support student initiatives and endeavours to facilitate clubs that benefit the McMaster community. With over 300 clubs on campus, MSU Clubs continue to grow in number and in their influence on the student life experience.

COMPASS INFORMATION CENTRE

This year COMPASS has focused on promoting and advertising events to the student body, with specific focus on ticket sales, services and community involvement. COMPASS faces the ongoing challenges posed by the transition to PRESTO passes, but is working diligently to remain competitive in a rapidly changing market.

CREATING LEADERSHIP AMONGST YOUTH (CLAY)

In 2011, CLAY successfully transitioned from a 4-day to a 3-day event, which will be continued in 2013. With a noticeable decline in attendance last year, CLAY will strive this year to become more Hamilton-community focused and draw attendants from the Golden Horseshoe, while working towards securing more external sponsorship for the conference.

DIVERSITY SERVICES

Diversity Services continues to maintain a strong campus presence and is working under a new management structure to ensure completion of its mandate under reduced hours. Diversity Services continued to build on last year's new event, the MSU Night Market and maintains strong connections with many campus groups.

EMERGENCY FIRST RESPONSE TEAM (EFRT)

With an average response time under three minutes, the Emergency First Response Team continues to set a standard for excellence. EFRT celebrated its 30th anniversary with help from alumni, many of whom attended to celebrate the success of one of the MSU's oldest student-run services. EFRT continues to deal with the changeover at McMaster University Medical Centre (MUMC) to pediatric care only, as well as the removal of the residence phone system.

ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT

The Elections department is working towards extending online voting to enhance student elections at McMaster. Last year, the Presidential election was completed using online voting through a third party electronic voting service. With the success of that process, the Elections department began work on assisting faculty societies and other campus groups with their own elections.

FIRST YEAR COUNCIL (FYC)

First Year Council has been highly engaged, interacting with the Inter-Residence Council to collaborate on a number of events. FYC looks forward to continued success with social programming and is looking into advocacy opportunities.

HORIZONS

The Horizons team ran a highly successful conference geared towards welcoming incoming first year students to McMaster. With a strong emphasis on external sponsorships this year, Horizons was able to maintain the quality of its conference while reducing costs. Horizons has the added benefit of providing opportunities for leadership and self-growth for leaders, volunteers and attendees.

MAC BREAD BIN

The summer of 2012 was MAC Bread Bin's first time being fully operational outside the academic calendar year. Operating from May through August yielded increased valuable service to students and Bread Bin has seen steady and consistent usage of its services.

MAC FARMSTAND

This year marked Mac Farmstand's third full year of operation as an MSU service, in partnership with the Office of Sustainability and Hospitality Services. Continuing to provide fresh, local produce on campus, Mac Farmstand expanded its initiatives by including events at the stand and built on a partnership with the McMaster Teaching and Community Garden to provide fresh produce.

MACGREEN

MACgreen continues to create awareness of environmental issues at McMaster through a variety of channels including campaigns, interactive speakers, movie screenings and volunteer-run programs. MACgreen is also expanding its dish lending program and is looking to purchase new electronics recycling bins.

MACYCLE

MACycle's role in the greater Hamilton community is becoming more prominent. With the closing of Wentworth House, MACycle looks forward to moving to a new location and hopes to continue service with as little interruption as possible during the relocation.

MARMOR (YEARBOOK)

Over the past year, Marmor staff worked diligently to rectify some issues with distribution of the 2005 and 2006 editions of the book, while also creating the publications for 2010 and 2011. The Marmor was recently put in the portfolio of Underground Media + Design and a new full-time designer has been hired to handle the Marmor among other duties.

MAROONS

This year the Maroons have continued to provide leadership and spirit in the McMaster community. New initiatives have been implemented to foster relationships with other campus bodies including the Student Success Centre and an intensified emphasis has been put on collaborative events with other MSU services.

OMBUDS

The OMBUDS office welcomed Kileen Dagg Centurione, who replaced Shelley Lancaster after her retirement. The terms of reference for the office and annual reports, which includes the Ombuds findings and recommendations for systematic change, may be found at www.mcmaster.ca/ombuds.

PROMOTIONS & ADVERTISING COMMITTEE (PAC)

PAC has done well this year in re-establishing the service as a reliable outlet for the posting of advertising material around campus. PAC is working to enhance its promotional services and volunteer opportunities for students.

QUEER STUDENTS COMMUNITY CENTRE (QSCC)

The QSCC has undertaken extensive collaborations with other services and facets of the MSU. QSCC also saw another record-breaking turnout at the annual Mac Pride Parade and Drag Show in November.

SHINERAMA CAMPAIGN

McMaster students continue to be huge supporters of the Shinerama campaign. In 2012, the MSU-led Shinerama Campaign was extremely successful, exceeding expectations and setting a McMaster record by raising over \$117,000 in donations on behalf of Cystic Fibrosis Canada.

THE SILHOUETTE

The quality of our campus newspaper is outstanding and it continues to improve with consistent reviews and changes in printing quality, as well as an increased focus on online offerings. The Sil provides excellent opportunities for students to be involved in newspaper production, reporting and expression of opinion through writing.

STUDENT COMMUNITY SUPPORT NETWORK (SCSN)

SCSN has established a positive profile in the McMaster Community, being actively involved with the Ainslie Wood/Westdale Community Association (AWWCA). SCSN continues to provide Mac students living in the community with off-campus resources and information.

STUDENT HEALTH EDUCATION CENTRE (SHEC)

The Student Health Education Centre continues to serve students with peer support, health education, referrals and resources. SHEC works closely with on- and off-campus partners and is providing support in the development of the Peer Support Line.

STUDENT WALK HOME ATTENDANT TEAM (SWHAT)

This year SWHAT has seen increased numbers of walks both on- and off-campus. An emphasis was put on increasing SWHAT's exposure throughout the McMaster community and through various partnerships, including the City of Hamilton. SWHAT continues to see benefits from these endeavors.

TEACHING AWARDS COMMITTEE (TAC)

The Teaching Awards Committee has executed an outstanding multi-media promotional campaign and is well on its way to completing a successful year. Fall nomination numbers were above expectations and the process will continue in the spring with a second nomination period, followed by the annual Teaching Awards ceremony in March.

TERRY FOX CAMPAIGN

The annual Terry Fox Run took place this year on Sunday, September 16th. Once again, the McMaster Terry Fox Run had a great turnout from both the McMaster and Hamilton communities.

TWELVEIGHTY

TwelvEighty has been doing well this year, mostly as a result of increased sales at large events and decreases in cost of sales in many different areas of bar operations. TwelvEighty management remains optimistic about hitting the budget set out by the MSU and will likely post a successful year. Much of the achievement seen at TwelvEighty can be attributed to a push to provide more catering functions and hosting more parties and events on top of the traditional bar/restaurant operation.

UNDERGROUND MEDIA + DESIGN

Custom courseware production saw continued success in term one and with current business continuing, Underground Media + Design is looking forward to another successful year. Underground recently hired a new designer who will take on much of the responsibility of the Marmor and will assist in general graphic design and web design.

UNION MARKET

Union Market has had a great year in which it provided the most affordable coffee, snacks and beverages at the lowest prices on campus. Union Market looks set to beat expectations with its profits once again this year. Union Market continues to demonstrate commitment to environmental initiatives and has made great strides to meet guidelines in preparation for McMaster becoming certified as a Fair Trade Campus.

GOAL 4:

AN ORGANIZATION THAT IS FAIR AND JUST, AND PROMOTES A HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT

MSU Full-Time Staff Review Continues

In 2009 the MSU received a report regarding the organization's Compensation and Benefit policies and practices from Pesce & Associates. From this report many gaps in the MSU's employment standards were highlighted, including a lack of standardization in job evaluation processes and job descriptions.

Addressing the MSU full-time portion of this project was made a priority and last year work was done to review and update full-time position job descriptions. This year the MSU pay grid has been updated to reflect current industry standards and changes to job descriptions. The next step will be to complete this phase of the project and then apply this process to MSU part-time positions. Much time has been dedicated to this the project, and follow-through from next year's Board of Directors will be essential to completing this multi-year effort.

Full-Time Employment Policy Changes

In conjunction with the MSU's employment benefits review, the MSU Full Time Issues Committee and Board of Directors have undergone a review of the Full-Time Employment Policy. Changes were made to the policy to reflect the findings and amendments that arose from the full-time benefits reviews. Further amendments to the policy are anticipated as the MSU continues to examine its employment structure and compensation.

Union Market and TwelvEighty Debit/Credit Point of Sale (POS) System Upgrades

Last year, as part of a normal replacement plan tied to the MSU's technology amortization schedule, POS systems in Union Market and TwelvEighty were replaced. The MSU has an amortization schedule for all technology, usually consisting of a five year life span. This means that the expected effective life of computers is five years, at which point they are then replaced my new machines. Old computers, if still functional, are used to supply services that don't have as much access to technology, or to upgrade existing machines. The system installations went smoothly and had little or no negative impact on service delivery.

This year, transaction processing speed was identified as a key concern by MSU retail and business departments. New debit/credit systems were installed to address this concern. The new systems utilize Ethernet rather than phone lines and have reduced transaction processing times significantly, resulting in shorter waits in line-ups at Compass, TwelvEighty, and Union Market. The next step in improving sales service will be to integrate debit/credit systems with the POS systems, which will require follow through by a future executive.

Potential Renovations / Alterations to Union Market and TwelvEighty

During 2011, TwelvEighty and Union Market both underwent professional consultations in order to improve upon the brands that had been built. Union Market continues to be successful, due to many changes taking place in terms of budget reforms, supplier competition and greater diligence in stock management/ market price points. Plans were also developed to modify the layout of the store to address some issues that had arisen because of the length of line-ups. Work on these alterations is planned for 2013-14. In lieu of these substantial changes this year, Union Market was redecorated and two televisions were purchased to complement the existing advertising opportunities offered by the store.

TwelvEighty has seen some great improvements to its business over the past two years. More and more students are utilizing TwelvEighty for lunch, drinks and for club nights. TwelvEighty is establishing itself as the go-to student bar on campus. Given the success of the bar following a substantial renovation in 2010, we are currently looking into more modest alterations that would significantly improve the image and appeal of TwelvEighty at relatively low cost. As with Union Market, the MSU will seek feedback from key stakeholders and student representatives before moving forward.

Paid Committee Commissioners

This past April, as part of the work of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Democratic Reform, the 2012/2013 SRA decided to hire Commissioners of SRA committees, rather than elect Commissioners from the Assembly. The change was intended to ensure accountability of Commissioners and improve communication in the organization. This practice will be reviewed at the end of the current Assembly's session.

GOAL 5:

AN ORGANIZATION THAT COMMUNICATES TO ITS MEMBERS THROUGH SEVERAL WELL-DEFINED AVENUES ABOUT ITS OPERATIONS AND STRATEGY

Website Redesign via Factor(e)

In the summer of 2012, the MSU was shocked to learn our then website provider no longer planned to continue our business relationship. With little time to spare, the MSU immediately began the Request for Proposal process to develop a new site. After considering numerous proposals from web design companies, the MSU selected the Hamilton-based company Factor(e) to do the work.

In September, the MSU's new web design was launched. The project saw layout changes, as the MSU used initial designs by Underground Media + Design as the framework for the new site and the web developer placed a large emphasis on mobile presentation. The website boasts many key improvements, including a more intuitive layout, better mobile device compatibility and greater ease in customization of modules. In addition, the MSU now owns the content of our website and will no longer face the issues that proprietary software posed. Other features include MACID integration, a more robust survey module, an improved calendar module that includes events from across campus and improved linkage to the MSU's Twitter and Facebook profiles. These changes, along with a cleaner site have improved the usability of the MSU website, and have given more prominent presence of our social media tools.

Social Media Presence

This year the MSU has continued focusing its efforts on growing its social media presence. Within the website, the Twitter feed has been made more prominent, as has the link to our Facebook page. The MSU Twitter account, [@MSU_McMaster](#), has been used more consistently thanks to the creation of a part-time position tasked with managing the MSU's social media presence, so that it now provides useful information about the MSU, McMaster, student services and can engage students on a one-on-one basis. The Facebook page provides photos and information for students. The MSU is currently developing a social media and communications strategy to complement the existing Visual Identity Guide.

President's Page

The Board of Directors continues to make use of The Silhouette as a means of communicating timely information about projects and events in the MSU to the student body. Located on the front inside cover of each issue of The Sil, the President's Page features graphics and articles relating to issues in post-secondary education, updates on MSU events, financial reports and project briefings. The page is published weekly.

Radio Show

The MSU Board of Directors hosts a weekly radio show on the MSU's radio station, CFMU 93.3FM. The *MSU and You* features news and opinions about MSU projects, the political landscape, sports, music and issues in post-secondary education. Airing weekly on Mondays at noon, The *MSU and You* is a great mix of fun and facts, which seeks to engage the wider Hamilton community on issues facing undergraduate students at McMaster.

GOAL 6:

AN ORGANIZATION THAT ADVOCATES FOR THE QUALITY, AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Academic Affairs Council

In an attempt to unite the academic lobbying efforts of students, the MSU solidified the Academic Affairs Council, which is a regular meeting of all Vice Presidents (Academic) of each of the faculty societies, chaired by the Vice President (Education) of the MSU. This is part of a larger effort to strengthen our advocacy efforts on campus and empower more student leaders to take an active role in pursuing the betterment of their education. To date, the council has been discussing best practices, ancillary fees, research funding, student support services, Access Copyright, as well as experiential and entrepreneurial learning within the community.

Quality of Education Assessment

In November 2011, the MSU ran a joint Quality of Education Assessment with the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA). The questionnaire included questions on affordability and quality of education, as well as certain demographic questions to aid in our understanding of the needs of McMaster students. The MSU survey included a number of questions specific to the students of McMaster and had an overall response rate of close to 2,000 students. The information from the survey is being analyzed by the University Affairs Committee and will be formally presented in winter 2013. The results will then be utilized to lobby the University on specific student concerns.

Expansion of MSU Policy Bank

In 2012 the MSU began enhancing our general policy bank through the authoring of comprehensive research and policy papers on tuition, student housing, deferred maintenance and Aboriginal students from a McMaster perspective. While we still have access to and are represented by the educational policies of OUSA and CASA, it was identified that tailoring the priorities from an MSU perspective will allow us greater flexibility as an organization.

Provincial Lobbying Efforts

Based on the governmental division of responsibilities, the provincial government has a considerable amount of control over post-secondary education funding and policy, which makes our membership within the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) extremely important. This year, OUSA held its fall General Assembly in Waterloo where delegates passed policies on Student Financial Aid, Northern & Rural Students and Students with Disabilities – with the former being co-authored by the MSU. This past summer, through OUSA the MSU was also heavily involved in various roundtables organized by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) on the topic of MTCU's Innovation and Productivity Roundtable. Similarly, the MSU Vice President (Education) made several visits to Queen's Park to meet with relevant MPPs on the topic of post-secondary education. This year, OUSA has focused its efforts on tuition, mental health and the quality of education, with several government submissions providing research based policy suggestions that have been well received and cited by the provincial government.

The Hamilton Post-Secondary Advisory Group (HPSAG)

The McMaster Students Union prides itself on the excellent relationship we have with our local MPP. This year, we have continued our meetings with our local Member of Provincial Parliament, Ted McMeekin. The most recent meeting was held at McMaster University where the MSU proposed a tuition freeze.

HPSAG gives the MSU an opportunity to voice many of our concerns in a forum with the other post-secondary institutions of Hamilton (Mohawk and Redeemer), making our voices stronger. These meetings are unique to Hamilton and to our knowledge do not occur at any of our partner student unions. As the former Parliamentary Assistant to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, McMeekin is a strong advocate for students and these meetings give us an opportunity to maintain pressure on our local politicians.

Federal Lobbying Efforts

The MSU joined the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) as a full member in 2011. Since that time, CASA has taken a strong leadership role in its policy development, lobbying efforts and improvements to internal governance. This year's Policy and Strategy conference was held at Mount Allison University, where twenty-four policy and research priorities were set through a vote by CASA membership. At CASA's fall lobby conference, students advocated on such topics as the Canada Student Loans Program and Aboriginal Students, as well as Copyright and Open Access with over 150 MPs.

MSU Meetings with Hamilton-Area MPs/MPPs

The MSU has taken an active effort this year to nurture and cultivate the relationship we have with Hamilton area MPs and MPPs. Apart from our meetings with these decisions makers at OUSA and CASA lobby conferences, the MSU has been active in arranging independent meetings with those in our riding and surrounding ridings, with the aim of advancing the interests of McMaster students. The response to our issues has been extremely positive thus far and we hope to continue these relationships in the future.

The MSU's Relationship with University Administration

The MSU continues to maintain a positive working relationship with University Administration. There have been many changes to the senior management of late. To start, Dr. David Wilkinson was named Provost and Vice President Academic. In addition, we would like to congratulate Dr. Phil Wood, AVP Student Affairs and Dean of Students on his forthcoming retirement. As well, we wish Dr. Peter Smith, AVP Academic all the best as he leaves that particular role. The MSU looks forward to working with both of their successors and we will continue to strive for a positive working relationship with University Administration, in order to advance the agenda of undergraduate students.

GOAL 7:

AN ORGANIZATION THAT PRACTICES STRATEGIC AND TRANSPARENT FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY WHILE OFFERING VALUE ADDED SERVICES TO ITS MEMBERSHIP

Digital Purchase Order

The Digital Purchase Order process has taken significant steps forward and is now in place. This year, we launched a digital form that can be completed and emailed directly to the accounting department for approval. The purchase order is then digitally “signed” through approval from the Vice President (Finance), within our accounting software. The form is then assigned a purchase order number and is returned to the manager in question. When the invoice arrives, accounting retrieves the purchase order number and can process the billing.

This system has completely eliminated the use of paper for external purchases, keeping the entire purchasing process digital. Next steps in this process include extending the digital system to internal purchases and looking into digitizing other accounting paperwork. Upgrades to the MSU’s existing accounting software are expected to be released next year, so it will be important for next year’s executive to monitor the industry and respond to changes in software.

KPMG Audited Statements

The MSU continued its contract with KPMG this year and we were very satisfied with the results of our audit. KPMG did note some key areas for improvement to which the MSU responded quickly, most notably by creating an investment policy to outline risk tolerance for the MSU’s investments. KPMG’s audit produced a very healthy financial picture of the organization, with the MSU posting a surplus of \$937,102 across a number of funds in the last fiscal year. The statements were ready for dissemination quickly due to MSU staff being constantly at the ready during the auditing period, as well as KPMG’s team offering excellent service. It is likely the annual audit will be even smoother next year, as the firm now has a good understanding of the how the MSU works. In the next fiscal year, the MSU is expected to approach a break-even point.

Referendum Concerning the CFMU 93.3FM Fee

Concurrent with the Presidential election in January 2013, there will be a referendum question asking students if they would like to reduce the CFMU 93.3FM fee. Currently, students pay \$17.29 to support the operations of the radio station, which has resulted in substantial surpluses being posted on an annual basis. We hope to address this issue by presenting the option to reduce the fee, which would ideally position CFMU to continue its successful programming in the future without the risk of compromising its not-for-profit status. The specifics of the referendum question are included in the campaign materials and available on the MSU website through the Elections department.

Clubs’ Banking and McMaster Credit Union /PACE

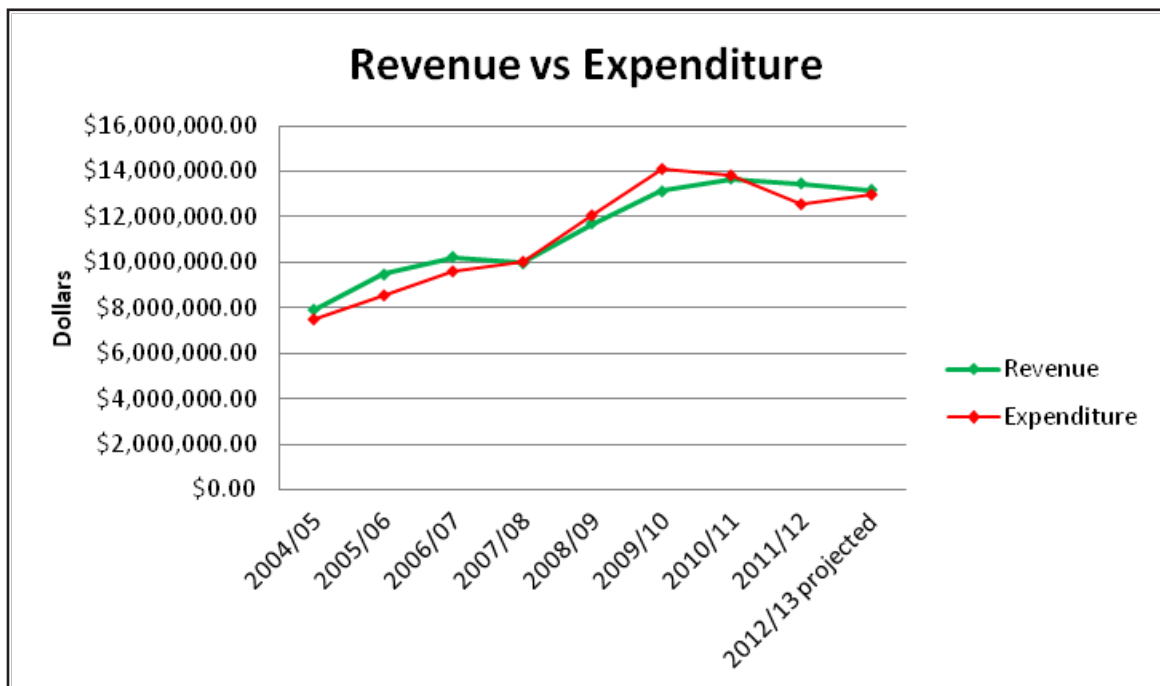
For years the MSU has been looking for a way to lower the cost of administering clubs’ bank accounts. The MSU has now found a more affordable option to offer clubs which saves money for both individual clubs and the MSU. The McMaster Credit Union (MCU) and the McMaster Students Union have worked together to create a system that is tailored exactly to our needs. This banking system was created by the MCU for us and us alone. MSU Clubs now have access to a bank account that costs them less than the cost of most accounts at other banks, offers more in terms of account access and reporting than ever before, and is much more student friendly.

MCU recently underwent a merger with PACE Credit Union, so service for MSU clubs is expected to change slightly over the next year. The MSU Executive and Clubs Administrator continue to work with the McMaster branch of PACE (formerly MCU) to ensure that service to clubs is not compromised. PACE is expected to begin presenting exciting new options for clubs’ banking, including the potential for mobile banking and telephone banking. This relationship will be monitored over the coming years to ensure that service continues to improve.

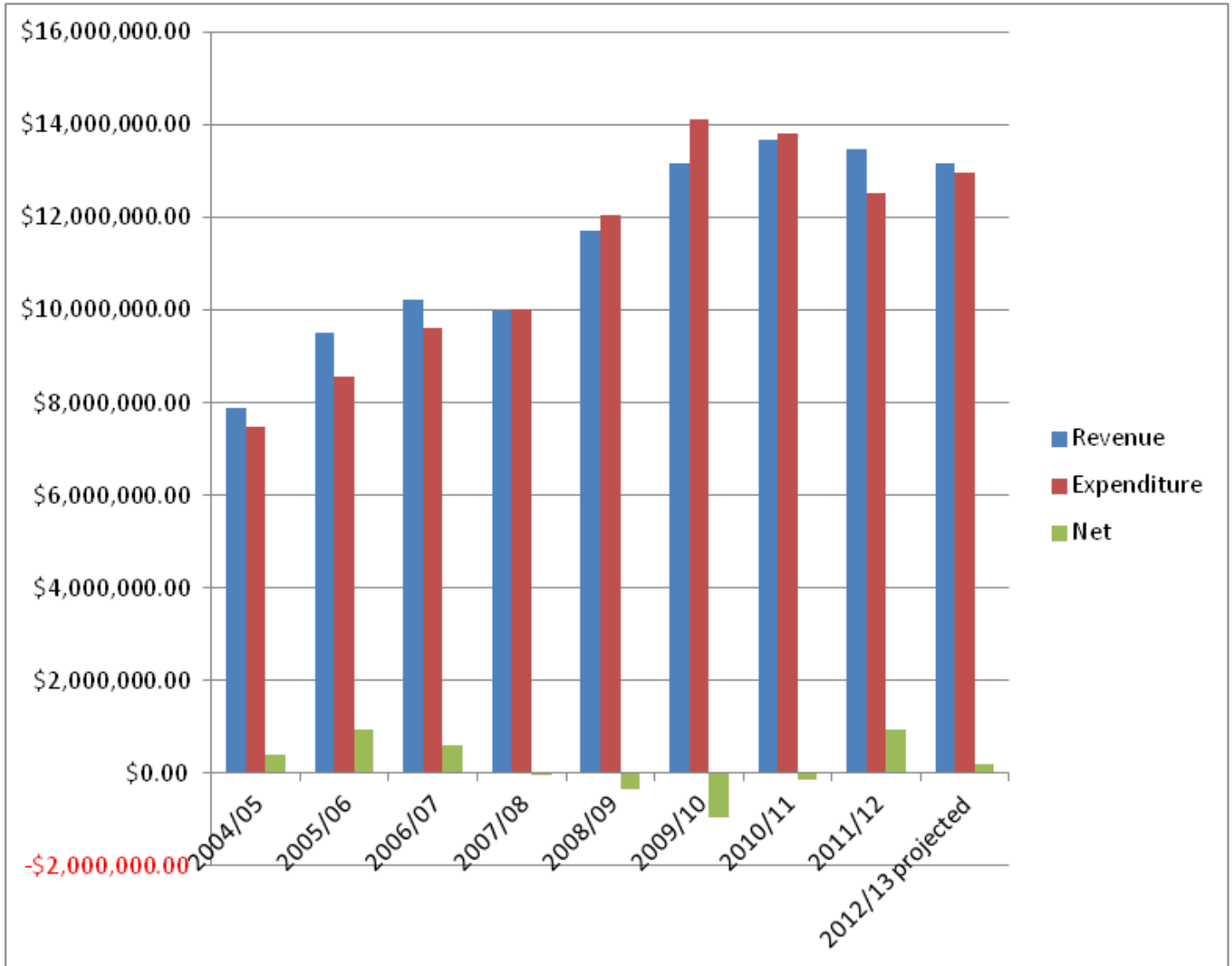
Budget Follow-Up: Why Was There Such a Big Surplus in Fiscal 2012?

The 2011-2012 budget projected a modest organizational surplus of \$120,163, by continuing to carefully manage costs and spending. Sales projections on the whole were relatively modest to ensure our focus remained on cost cutting, whilst maintaining existing levels of service delivery. During the year, the MSU maintained a relatively positive financial position and costs continued to be well managed. The year-end numbers show a significant improvement in almost all categories of our operations, with the end result a \$538,523 surplus in the MSU Operating Fund and a \$937,102 surplus across all funds. This is a significant improvement over year-to-date numbers from the last few fiscal years.

The capital projects that were approved from last year were implemented, such as the purchase of a new grab-and-go fridge for Union Market, the purchase of new tables and chairs for TwelveEighty and the replacement of depreciated computers in approximately ten locations around the MSU. Looking at the graphs below and on the next page, one can see the recent history of the MSU’s finances. Last year’s projection were the first time since 2007 that the MSU expected to generate a profit. This year we expect the approach a break-even point.



Revenue vs Expenditure



NEXT STEPS

Restructuring of Welcome Week

The evaluation of Welcome Week and the first-year transition process will continue to be an important focus of the MSU, particularly in light of the new “Orientation Fee” implemented this year. Through working groups and extensive discussion, the MSU has developed recommendations in three key connected areas of Welcome Week. These areas include: increased faculty involvement, dedicated academic preparations (including the potential for a second “Academic Week”) and emphasis on small group programming. The MSU will be working with the University on these areas with both long- and short-term goals in the coming months.

Changes to Auxiliary Fee Control and Responsibility within McMaster Administration

In November of 2011, the MSU was informed that the University planned to redistribute some of the responsibilities within the portfolio of the Associate Vice President (AVP) Student Affairs. The departments of Hospitality Services, Housing and Conference Services and Titles Bookstore have been placed under the jurisdiction of the Vice President Administration. McMaster officials have stated this shift is in line with the model previously held at McMaster University and practised at the majority of Ontario institutions. In the case of Housing, which the University recognizes is critical to the student experience, the leadership of Housing and Conference Services will report to both the AVP Student Affairs and to the VP Administration.

In addition, the positions of AVP (Academic) and AVP (Student Affairs) have been altered to consolidate responsibilities and clarify the two roles. With the retirement of AVP Student Affairs Dr. Phil Wood expected at the end of this year, it will be important for the incoming MSU Executive to monitor and contribute to the selection process to fill the role and to examine the new structure of University services with a critical eye. Future MSU leaders need to monitor this situation very carefully as net revenues collected from the Bookstore and Hospitality Services have previously been reinvested into other services vital to student life such as the Health Centre and Centre for Student Development (collectively now called the Student Wellness Centre), as well as Athletics & Recreation. The University has committed to particular allocations from the Bookstore to Student Affairs and the MSU must ensure that this allocation is not reduced. The University must make sure that with this change in reporting structure, the same - if not better - service delivery shall be maintained, without an increase in cost to the undergraduate student. Moreover, the revenues from the areas in question should not be used to manage other financial realities facing the University that are not core to the undergraduate experience.

CONCLUSION

As a student union, the MSU faces challenges regarding transition and continuity within the organization. The fundamental pillar of the MSU's identity - that it is run by students - remains both the strongest asset of the organization and its largest obstacle. As such, institutional memory and a thorough transition process are cardinal to the organization's success. Strategy plays an important role in making positive, sustainable improvements to the organization as well. In order to secure the long-term viability of projects and initiatives, the responsible individuals must take the necessary steps to ensure their projects evolve in a strategic manner, whether through a comprehensive transition report, changes to Bylaws and Operating Policies, or a document outlining a long-term plan.

As with any organization, effective strategic planning is contingent on sound financial planning. The budget process conducted by the Vice President (Finance) and the Accounting team has laid a solid foundation for ensuring the MSU operates in a fiscally appropriate manner, which is aligned to our strategy in future years. It is imperative that the work conducted this past year continues to be improved and expanded upon, ensuring that a realistic budget is established annually and that it is regularly visited throughout the year.

The State of the Union also plays an important role in improving continuity by outlining the events and challenges of the previous year while describing areas which warrant further attention and work. Given that the majority of work terms within the MSU last a year or less, the completion of certain projects is not feasible by any one person alone. While it is important to continuously evolve in response to student opinion, the completion of relevant projects already begun is an oft-neglected, but important part of organizational progress.

The coming months will bring forward many new ideas, opinions and criticisms of the MSU. As MSU members, we encourage you to immerse yourself in the debate and devote yourself to making an informed choice in all the forthcoming elections. There are many areas in which the MSU can focus, and which priorities are eventually pursued is determined by the individuals you elect to represent your opinions. Our campus harvests an abundance of different opinions and values. In order to make sure your views are adequately represented, it is essential that you engage in the democratic process and hold your representatives accountable. Thank you for taking the time to read the McMaster Students Union's State of the Union.

APPENDIX A:

NEW EMPLOYEES HIRED

Administrative Assistant/Corporate Secretary - Jess Bauman*

Multimedia Designer - Rebecca Arboly

University Ombuds - Kileen Dagg Centurione

**Jess was hired as an Administrative Assistant whilst Alecia Tutolo is away on Maternity Leave.*

APPENDIX B:

BREAKDOWN OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT FEES

McMASTER ASSOCIATION OF PART-TIME STUDENTS SUPPLEMENTARY FEES

(A part-time student is enrolled in less than 18 units)

Organization Fee: \$7.00 per unit
 Athletics & Recreation Activity Fee: \$4.92
 Administrative Services Fee: \$1.15 per unit

Nursing Students add:

Learning Resource Fee: \$8.42
 Communicable Disease Screening Fee: \$26.42
 Respiratory Mask Fitting Fee: \$21.62

FULL-TIME McMASTER STUDENTS

(A full-time student is enrolled in 18 units or more)

McMaster University Fees (approved by referendum):

Administrative Services Fee: \$1.15 per unit to a maximum of \$34.50
 Athletics & Recreation Building Fee: \$4.45 per unit to a maximum of \$133.50
 Student Services Fee: \$4.32 per unit to a maximum of \$129.60
 Athletics & Recreation Activity Fee: \$110.7
 Student Health Services Fee: \$56.64

McMaster Students Union Fees:

Student Organization Fee: \$120.92
 Health Plan Premium: \$56.71 (refundable with proof of comparable coverage)
 Dental Plan Premium: \$113.41 (refundable with proof of comparable coverage)
 H.S.R. Bus Pass: \$126.15
 WUSC Student Refugee Fee: \$1.45
 Ancillary Fee for CFMU 93.3FM: \$17.29
 Ancillary Fee Marmor Yearbook: \$9.00

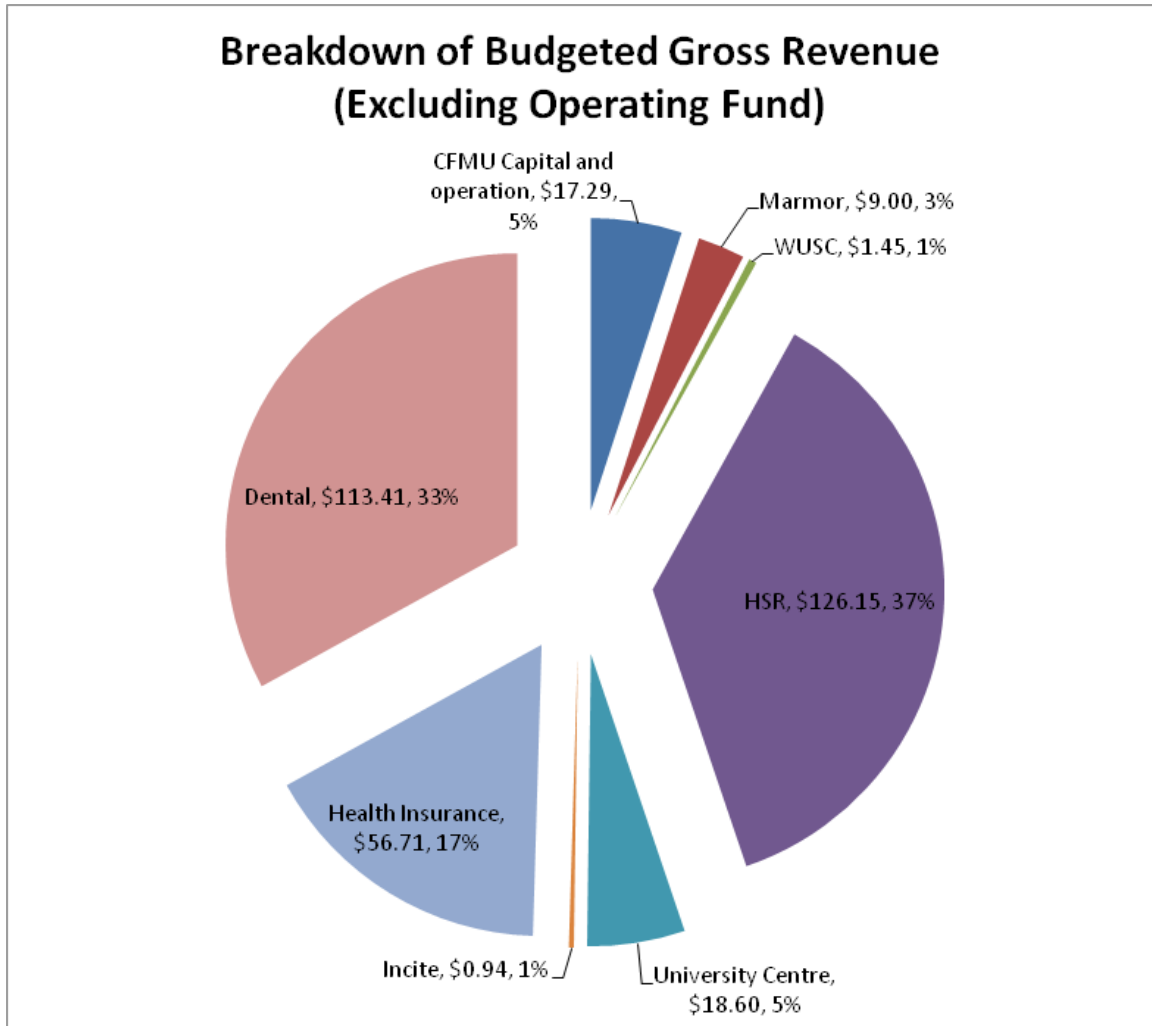
Non-MSU / Non-University Bodies:

Engineers Without Borders: \$0.36
 Incite Publication: \$0.94
 McMaster Solar Car: \$1.06
 Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG): \$7.47 (refundable)
 University Student Centre Building Fee: \$0.62 per unit to a maximum of \$18.60

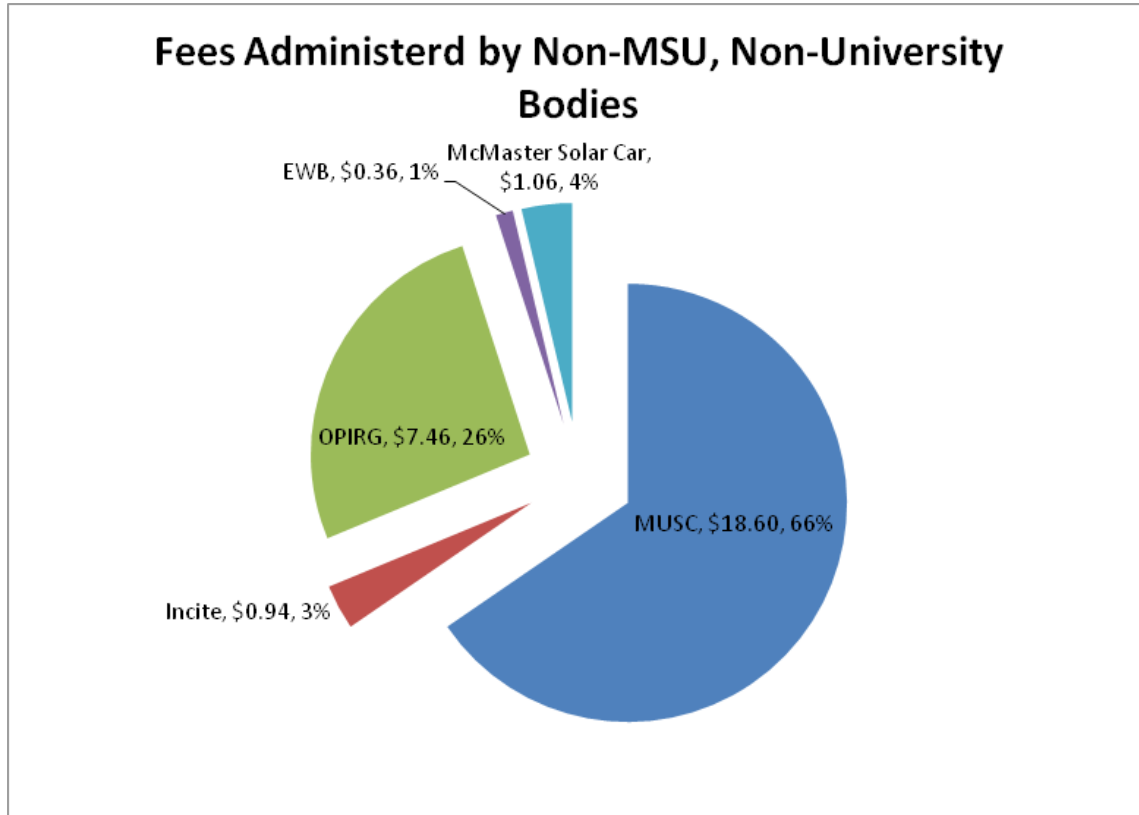
Faculty Society and Support Fees:

Arts & Science Society: \$28.11
 Commerce: \$195.00
 Engineering Society: \$138.77
 Health Science (Honours) Society: \$30.00
 Humanities Society: \$60.00
 Nursing Society: \$187.80
 Science/Kinesiology: \$50.00
 Medical Radiation Science: \$141.97
 Social Science: \$65.60

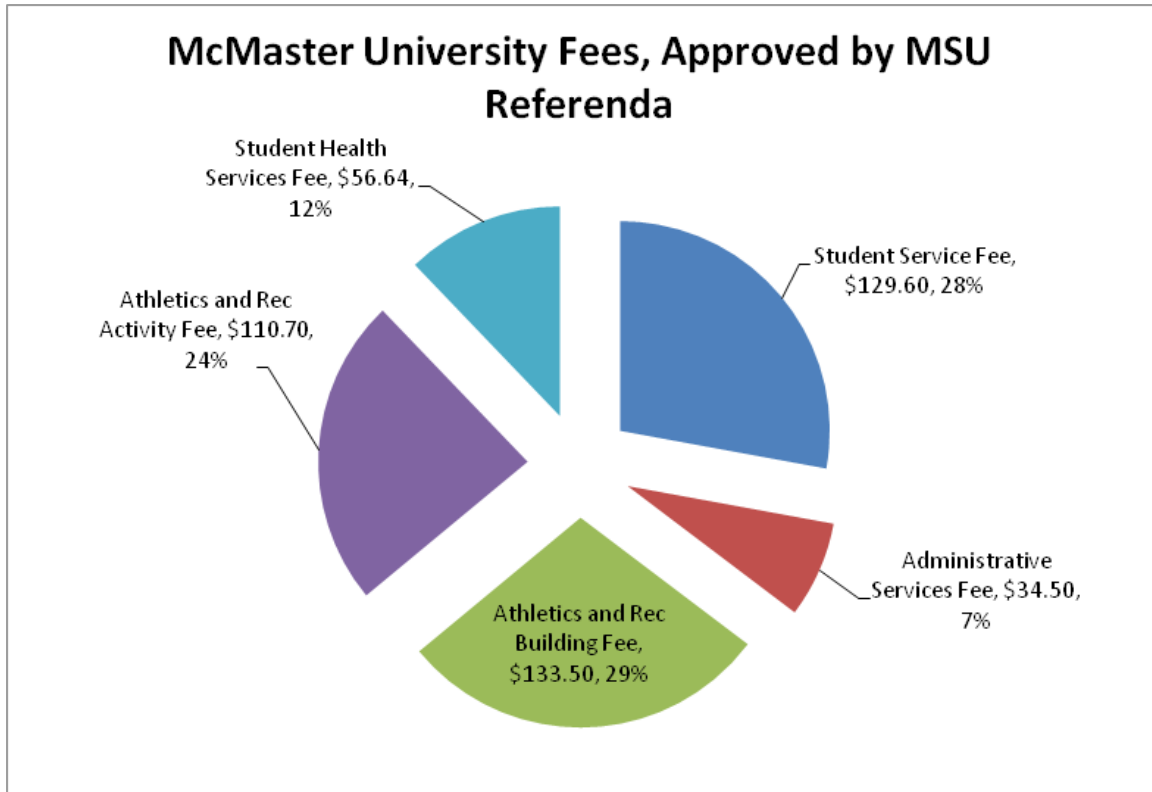
Breakdown of Budgeted Gross Revenue, Excluding Operating Fund



Fees Administered by Non-MSU, Non-University Bodies

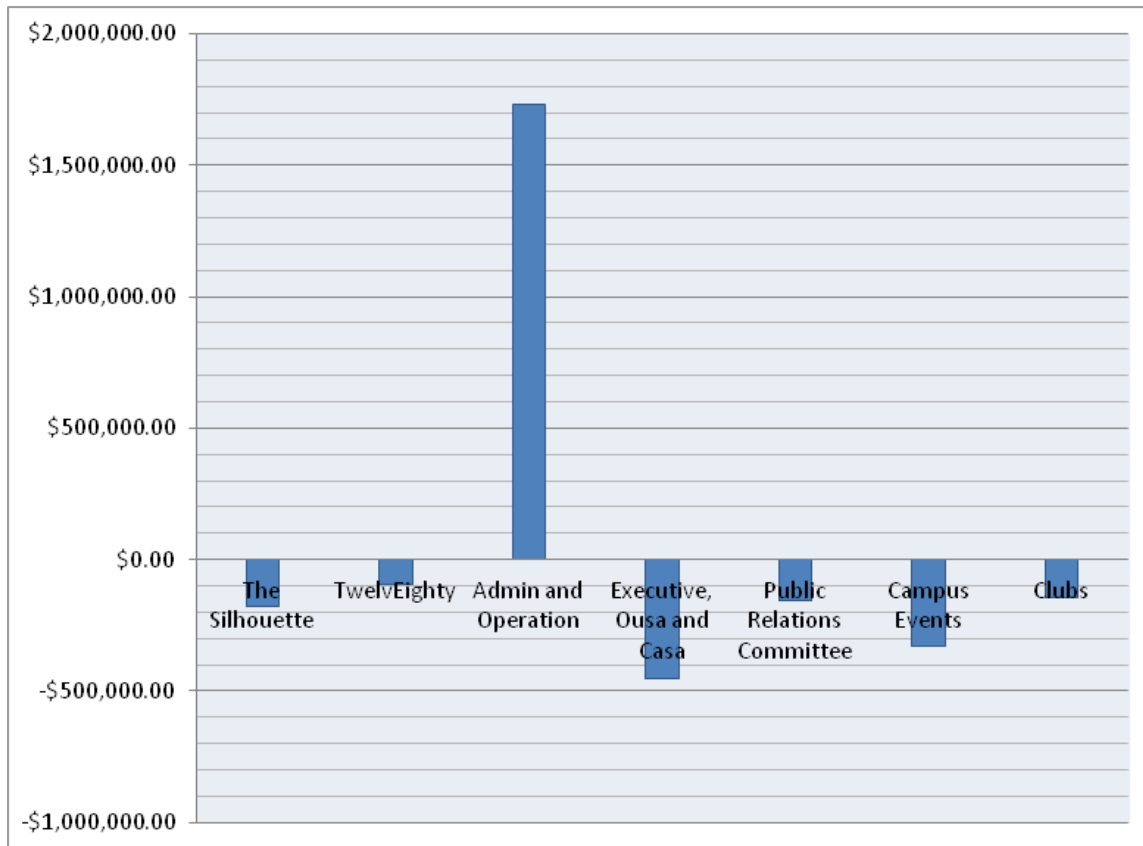


McMaster University Fees, Approved by MSU Referenda

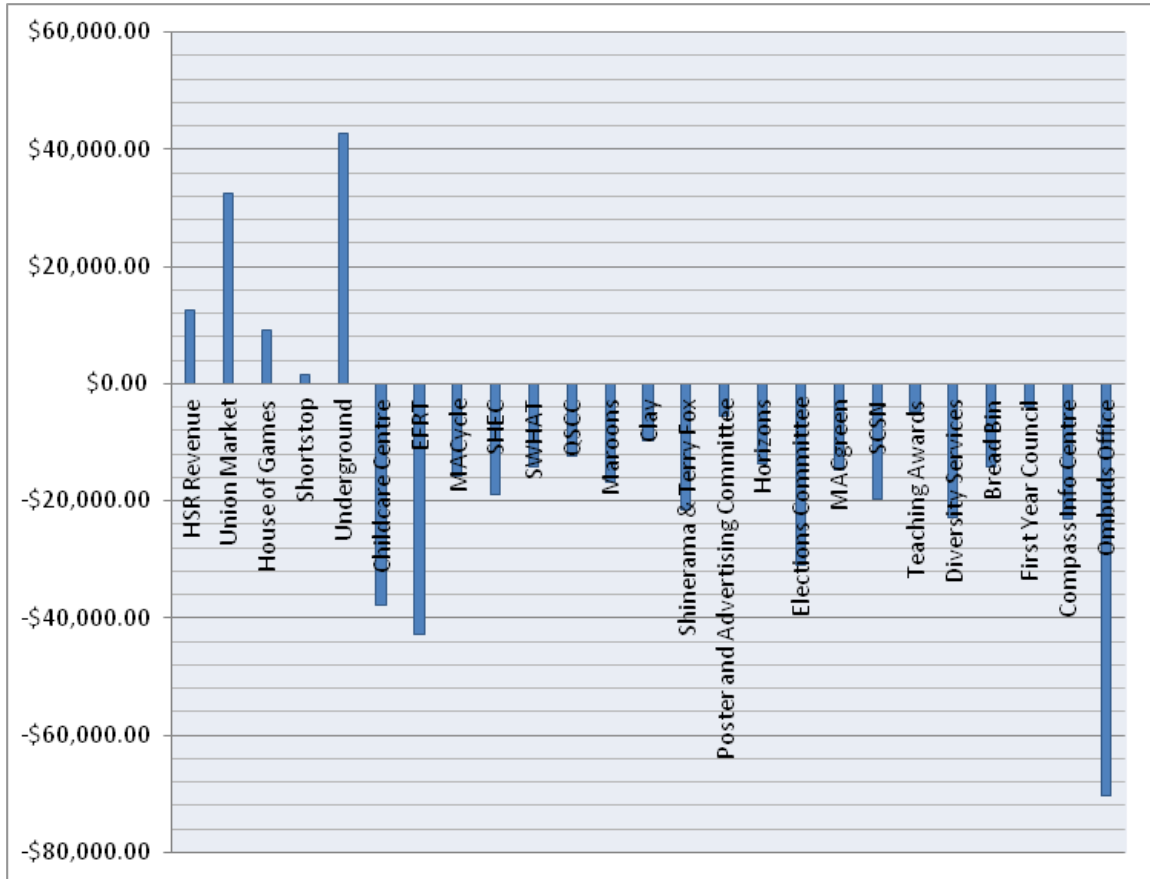


APPENDIX C: MSU OPERATING BUDGET 2012/2013

2012-2013 Approved Operating Fund: Larger Services – Net



2012-2013 Approved Operating Fund: Smaller Services – Net



2012-2013 APPROVED OPERATING FUND**NET**

Admin and Operation	\$1,729,877.00
House of Games	\$9,160.00
HSR Revenue	\$12,600.00
Shortstop (Maroon Shop)	\$1,500.00
Underground Media + Design	\$42,750.00
Union Market	\$32,560.00
Campus Events	-\$328,665.00
Childcare Centre	-\$37,780.00
CLAY	-\$9,840.00
Clubs Dept.	-\$146,250.00
Compass Info Centre	-\$23,216.00
Diversity Services	-\$22,950.00
EFRT	-\$42,750.00
Elections Dept.	-\$31,115.00
Executive, OUSA and CASA	-\$453,438.50
First Year Council	-\$4,050.00
Horizons	-\$13,750.00
Mac Bread Bin	-\$14,340.00
MACgreen	-\$14,770.00
MACycle	-\$15,700.00
Maroons	-\$16,870.00
Ombuds Office	-\$70,350.50
Promotions and Advertising Committee	-\$5,600.00
Public Relations Committee	-\$157,674.00
QSCC	-\$12,435.00
SCSN	-\$19,812.00
SHEC	-\$18,988.00
Shinerama & Terry Fox	-\$21,570.00
The Silhouette	-\$177,280.00
SWHAT	-\$14,158.00
Teaching Awards	-\$4,760.00
TwelvEighty	-\$96,002.00

APPENDIX D: PERSONNEL

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY (SRA) (MAY 2012 – PRESENT):

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Siobhan Stewart, MSU President
David Campbell, Vice President (Administration)
Huzaifa Saeed, Vice President (Education)
Jeffrey Wyngaarden, Vice President (Finance)

SRA ARTS AND SCIENCE

Naomi Campbell

SRA COMMERCE

Jeremy Bober-Inoue
Gabriel Cicchi
Jimmy Long

SRA ENGINEERING

Jacqueline Cheung
Mukhtar Galan (resigned)
Vivek Govardhanam (elected October 2012)
Brain Jamieson
Liam Morrow (resigned)
Saverio Pietrantonio (elected October 2012; resigned)
Kristen Thomson (resigned)
Rory Yendt (elected October 2012)
Shane Zuchowski

SRA HEALTH SCIENCES

Gabriel Jeyasingham
Justin Neves

SRA HUMANITIES

Matthew Bergen
Lisa Bifano
Elise Milani
Hannah Wayne-Phillips

SRA KINESIOLOGY

Stuart Collins
Corey Helie-Masters

SRA NURSING

Stephanie Gisonni (resigned)
Ayaan Mohamed
Kornelia Palczewski

SRA SCIENCE

Maria Daniel
Nabil Khaja
Spencer Graham
Aaron Morrow
Rodrigo Narro-Perez
Christine Ung

SRA SOCIAL SCIENCE

Mac Armstrong
Hilary Chase (resigned)
Jeffrey Doucet
Simon Granat
Maya Kanani
Tristan Paul (elected October 2012)

SPEAKER

Simon Gooding-Townsend

COMMISSIONERS

Standing Committee on Bylaws and Procedures: Brian Jamieson
Standing Committee on External Affairs: Justin Neves
Standing Committee on Finance: Adnan Ahmad
Standing Committee on Operations: Nabil Khaja
Standing Committee on Services: Elise Milani
Standing Committee on University Affairs: Lisa Bifano

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Matthew Bergen
David Campbell
Maria Daniel
Simon Granat
Brian Jamieson
Nabil Khaja (resigned June 2012)
Aaron Morrow (elected June 2012)
Huzaifa Saeed
Siobhan Stewart
Jeffrey Wyngaarden

FIRST YEAR COUNCIL (FYC)

Chair - Alexander Coomes

Vice-Chair - Yipeng Ge

Advocacy - Dmitri Dobrov

Communications - Sathya Aithal

Events - David Cheng

PART-TIME MANAGERS (PTMs)

Advocacy Coordinator - Shivani Persad

CLAY - Deidre-Ann Gardener

Diversity Services - Priscilla Ally and Nicole Duquette

EFRT - Liam Jackson (summer), William Johnston

Elections Department - Steven Thompson, Melissa Sharma

Horizons - Anna D'Angela

MAC Bread Bin - Gillian England-Mason

MACgreen - Scott MacDonald

MACycle - Connor Bennett & Will Demaiter

Maroons - Justin Koroloyk

PAC - Erika D'Urbano

QSCC - Jyssika Russell

SCSN - Erika Richter

SHEC - Stephanie Assmann

Shinerama/Terry Fox Run - Alyscia McMullin

SWHAT - James Dowdall

Teaching Awards Committee - Rebecca MacDougall

FULL-TIME STAFF**(APPROX. LENGTH OF SERVICE)**

Accounts Payable/Payroll Supervisor - Kevin O'Mara (1 year)
Accounts Receivable Supervisor - Marn Lawton (35 years)
Administrative Assistant - Victoria Scott (5 years)
Administrative Assistant - Jess Bauman (<1 year)
AVTEK Coordinator - Jeff Cudahy (7 years)
AVTEK Office Coordinator - Lauren McCauley (Student Opportunity Position)
Campus Events Director - Al Legault (3 years)
CFMU Administrative Director - Sandeep Bhandari (15 years)
CFMU Program Director - James Tennant (15 years)
Clubs Administrator - Kevin Scott (Student Opportunity Position)
Child Care Centre Cook - Marlene James (22 years)
Child Care Centre Director - Debbie Thomson (31 years)
Child Care Centre Early Childhood Educator - Lisette Ann Madore (29 years)
Child Care Centre Early Childhood Educator - Sharon MacDougall (30 years)
Child Care Centre Early Childhood Educator - Karen Iles (25 years)
Child Care Centre Early Childhood Educator - Michelle Fairbairn (20 years)
Child Care Centre Early Childhood Educator - Peggy-Sue Paterson (16 years)
Child Care Centre Early Childhood Educator - Miranda Doucette (4 years)
Child Care Centre Early Childhood Educator Supervisor - Emily Vanderzanden (27 years)
COMPASS Manager - Debbie Good (26 years)
Comptroller - Maggie Gallagher (4 years)
General Manager - John McGowan (11 years)
MUSC Director - Lori Diamond (18 years)*
MUSC Facility Event Coordinator - Teresa McKay (4 years)*
Network Administrator - Pauline Taggart (21 years)
Silhouette Executive Editor - Sam Colbert (Student Opportunity Position)
Student Life Development Coordinator - Michael Wooder (5 years)
TwelvEighty Assistant Kitchen Manager - Stuart Gold (2)
TwelvEighty Kitchen Manager - Richard Haja (3 years)
TwelvEighty Service Manager - Derek Spekkens (3 years)
TwelvEighty Service Manager - Kaley Stuart (3 years)
Underground Media + Design Designer - Dave Dedrick (5 years)
Underground Media + Design Manager - Sandro Giordano (26 years)
Underground Media + Design Multi-Media Designer - Rebecca Arboly (<1 year)
Underground Media + Design Production Manager - Lesley Lilliman (23 years)
Underground Media + Design Service Coordinator - Alex Pongetti (Student Opportunity Position)
Union Market Manager - Chris Ferguson (Student Opportunity Position)
University Ombuds - Carolyn Brendon (9 years)*
University Ombuds - Kileen Dagg Centurione (<1 year)*

** Indicates a position that is co-funded between the McMaster Students Union and McMaster University*





Designed and printed by Underground Media + Design