



REPORT

From the office of...

SRA Social Sciences

TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Uwais Patel, Caucus Leader
SUBJECT: SRA 17N Report
DATE: January 30, 2017

Hello Members of the Assembly,

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. The past little bit has been extremely busy for myself and my team. We've pushed back some of our platform points due to this but fret not, we are still on track for completion in time for our final report by March 20. As SRA generals are about a week away, I'll be starting my transition report soon to make sure my successor is well prepared to take over in April.

I'd like to take some brief space to thank Kirstin and Aarij for replacing me as Caucus Leader over the past month. You are awesome and I thank you for all that you have done during my absence.

If you have any questions, concerns, or feedback for myself or caucus, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at your earliest convenience.

Best,

Uwais Patel

SRA Social Sciences
McMaster Students Union
srassci@msu.mcmaster.ca

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Joint Office Hours with the MSSS

Starting January 16, 2018, we began conducting joint office hours with the our society partner, the MSSS. Though they don't normally do office hours, they appreciate engaging with students and have joined us in doing our outreach with constituents.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

L.R. Wilson Lounge Opening

With L.R. Wilson Lounge now open, we hope to collaborate with our faculty and society partners to host an opening event to publicize the lounge space. In the month of February is when the opening will be held. The exact date will be confirmed by Feb 4th.

SRA Platform Point Video

Lauren has received feedback from multiple SRA members and communicated with Sarah Mae Conrad regarding a SRA promotion video. Instead of serving as a meeting recap, this video would be a collaboration between the SRA caucuses, featuring one member per caucus highlighting progress/completion of a platform point. Once Lauren has received confirmation on timing, she will reach out to caucus leaders for input and to inquire about participation.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

Kirstin, as you all know, recently ran in the MSU Presidential Election. This has interfered with her ability to attend classes and progress on her SRA year plan. That being said, she is looking forward to getting back on track.

Uwais, as you may not know, has been unwell for the past little bit. Some of our work that was scheduled to be finished this month is being pushed back a little bit due to this. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

SUCSESSES

Kirstin's Presidential campaign was able to raise awareness around crucial conversations on campus, according to students who reached out to her. It also provided Kirstin with the opportunity to work and connect with many constituents and partners on campus, and has been a substantial learning experience all around.

Additionally, joint office hours with the MSSS have been going well. We are appreciative of them letting us use their space and willing to do outreach with us. Due to our relationship with the MSSS, we were asked to sit on their WW planner interviews and will possibly be sitting on future hiring boards when needed.

PROGRESS ON YEAR PLAN

Communications and Engagement Strategy

Developing this protocol for our communications and engagement strategy is on its way and a rough draft that was supposed to be available in January will become available for feedback in late February to be commented on.

MSU 'How To' Guide

In preparation for SRA Generals this February, we will have an FAQ, a class talk schedule, and a lot more resources available on the MSU website to ease some barriers students may face when they run in elections.

Student Representation at the University Level

Kirstin has met with Patrick Deane, and spoken with him, along with other students, about Experiential Education, Open Educational Resources, and paid placement opportunities.

Accessibility for Courses/SAS Capabilities

Kirstin attended a conference on (dis)ability in Hamilton, and specifically in regards to students. She has been advocating for an improved course note taking system, and will continue to do so.

Improved Course Evaluations

There is planning in process to incentivize students to complete course evaluations in collaboration with the MSSS and the Social Sciences Faculty.

L.R. Wilson: Hours & Lounge

This initiative has slowed over the past month, but plans are in place to continue this work and hopefully have the signs in place by the end of our term. We are still planning on doing a soft launch of this space to promote its use, but the details of that and timeline are still in the process of being finalized.

Experiential Opportunities

Kirstin is a member of the Experiential Education Governing Council (for Social Science's EE Office), and they will be meeting again soon. Other updates include progress on this advocacy.

Optimizing Various Rooms for Studying Purposes

In regards to optimizing rooms for studying purposes, Aarij will not be pursuing MUSC space for this as it adds a much more complicated system and since MUSC isn't able to easily transfer to Aarij's proposed plan. Aarij will now be contacting the appropriate Deans of Soc Sci, Humanities, and Arts. Additionally he will be reaching out to Conference and Event Services. The finalized version of the plan should essentially have a unified booking system (much like the Mills, Innis, and Thode online study room booking system) that adds on to the current one with room availability in KTH, TSH, and CNH.

Healthier and Cheaper Food Options on Campus

In regards to this plan Aarij will be working with both VP of Finance and the AVP of Finance to bring students a Healthier and Cheaper food options on campus.

Reconstructing the Application Process for Welcome Week

Welcome Week applications closed just 3 weeks ago and as of last week Monday the 2018 SocSci planners have been chosen! The MSSS reached out to us about sitting on the hiring committee for planner interviews to address concerns of transparency and bias. We had several amazing candidates this year making the decision process quite difficult! We are now currently discussing having one of our caucus members sit in on interviews for hiring reps, which will begin near the end of February to the beginning of March. We are looking forward to our continued collaboration with the MSSS on how to better Welcome Week.

Increasing Engagement with Mental Health Services

In regard to increasing interaction with mental health services on campus, we have collaborated with Maccess on promoting events. Aside from this we have also reached out to diversity services about how to better help them with their events. They both appreciated the idea of collaborating and have instructed us to help with promoting events through social media. We hope to play a larger part in the overall planning of events, but for now are continuing to support them in any way they see fit. Additionally, in our last report we mentioned COPE McMaster and their plans to have an event in the winter term. Paul Hewitt, Vice-President of COPE, has kept us up to date and we will be attending their event this upcoming week. They are organizing an interdisciplinary roundtable discussion about how students experience mental health on campus. The event will be held on Thursday February 1st from 1:30-3:30 in Clubspace! All students are welcome to attend with no sign up required, we hope to see some of you there!

Increase Turnout to Events and Build Relationship with MSSS

As previously reported, we have been sitting in on the core exec meetings with the MSSS. Communication has increased, and we are currently running bi-weekly joint office hours with the MSSS. We have attended and helped to promote their recent tie-die and mug painting events. On January 31, they have their general assembly and we are very excited to get some feedback from students about how they feel about their faculty. We look forward to continuing our collaboration efforts with the MSSS.

Overview of Progress on Year Plan

Objective	Status
Communications and Engagement Strategy	On Going
MSU 'How-To' Election Guidebook	In Progress
MSSS Partnership	Completed
Faculty Connection	Completed
Student Representation at the University Level	In Progress
Accessibility for Courses/SAS Capabilities	
Improved Course Evaluations	
L.R. Wilson: Hours	
L.R. Wilson: Lounge	
Experiential Opportunities	On Going
Rooms for Studying Purposes	In Progress
MSSS Welcome Week Application	Completed
Engagement with Mental Health Services	On Going
Increase Turnout to Events	On Going

Before September Goals	Status
WW Communication Plan	Completed
Calendar of Events	Completed
Open Seat Recruitment Plan	Completed

End of Fall Goals	Status
MSSS Fall GA	Completed
SRA By-Election Transition	Completed
SRA By-Election Outreach	Completed

End of Winter Goals	Status
MSSS Winter GA	Completed
Continuous Caucus Outreach	On Going
Caucus Transition Plan	In Progress
Engagement Report	In Progress
600 Facebook Likes	Completed