

# **YEAR PLAN**

**MSU Student Representative Assembly**

**Hargun Grewal, Martino Salciccioli, and Andrew Bonk**

**2017-2018**

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## OFFICE OF THE SRA HUMANITIES CAUCUS

### INTRODUCTION

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Dear Humanities students,

It is with great pleasure that we, the SRA Humanities Caucus, bring forth to you our year plan for the 2018-2019 academic school year. It is truly an honour to be on the MSU SRA representing such an amazing faculty. We are very excited to work with you and hope to achieve great things for our faculty together. Our year plan was devised with immense care and took many things into account, such as problems humanities students brought to our attention and initiatives students would like to see implemented. We strive to represent our faculty in the best way possible so if there are any concerns you have, feel free to reach out to us either through email or visit us during our office hours.

The vision we would like to create this year incorporates both leadership and empowerment. We look forward to promoting student leadership positions and opportunities to students in our faculty. We want humanities students to feel empowered, involved, and heard throughout the McMaster community. Our faculty contains a vast array of skill sets we should seek to incorporate into the services and governance aspects of the MSU as well as other clubs on campus. Increased representation in these aspects can have a tremendous impact on how our faculty is seen and heard in many areas of student life.

The empowerment we aim to achieve in our faculty does not only take place through involvement in the extra-curricular part of student life but also the academic side. Many incoming first-years may feel lost when arriving at McMaster and being apart of a faculty with 500 new students every year and over 20 academic paths to choose from can feel especially overwhelming. We are going to work to increase awareness on degree options, specializations, and major/minor requirements to students in first year in order to tackle this problem. Providing students with as much information and support regarding their options in first year will ensure they feel empowered when making decisions regarding their academics.

These are a few but not all of the goals we wish to accomplish this year. In addition, we would like to strengthen relationships with the McMaster Humanities Society (MHS) and our Academic Office while also working with these two groups to improve welcome week for future humanities students. This plan was built on the foundation of student voices in our faculty and a vision of leadership and empowerment. We believe this year plan strongly represents humanities students to the fullest and are looking forward to a great year ahead filled.

All the best and thank you for your support,

Hargun Grewal, Martino Salciccioli, and Andrew Bonk  
SRA Humanities Caucus  
McMaster Students Union  
[srahuman@msu.mcmaster.ca](mailto:srahuman@msu.mcmaster.ca)

## GOALS

Objective 1	<b>Promote Student Leadership Initiatives Across the Faculty</b>
Description	In recent years, we have seen a lack of interest from and representation of Humanities students getting involved with student life on campus. This was seen significantly in the 2018 Winter term when all three of the SRA seats for humanities were left unclaimed for multiple days after the deadline. We are going to advertise and promote student leadership initiatives across our faculty in order to get students excited about being involved. This can range from getting first years excited about and involved in First Year Council (FYC) as well as other clubs to promoting advocacy and research positions to upper years students in the faculty.
Benefits	This would actively showcase the impact and presence humanities students have on campus while also ensuring the concerns and voices of our faculty are being heard on important issues.
Difficulties	There is no doubt that reaching out to students and getting them excited will have its challenges. Multiple Facebook posts aren't merely going accomplish this goal which is why there need to be face-to-face interactions occurring with students throughout the school year to get them excited about being involved.
Long-term implications	This would have significant long-term implications because not only would it encourage students to get involved but this involvement would most likely continue with them into their future years at McMaster. Seeing students in the same faculty getting involved in clubs and services would only motivate other students in the same faculty to do the same.
How?	We will achieve this through continuous Facebook posts/videos of opportunities available to humanities students as well as face-to-face interactions during prominent events on campus.
Partners	We would like to work with the McMaster Humanities Society (MHS) to help extend our reach to an even larger following and outreach from Part-Time Managers when promoting service positions would be a great help.

Objective 2	<b>Increasing Awareness on Degree Options and Specializations Available to First Year Humanities Students</b>
Description	The first year of university is a big transition for students in any faculty and this change can be very overwhelming. The faculty of humanities gains around 500 new students every year and with a vast amount of specializations to choose from, being uninformed can feel scary. A lot of first year students remain in the dark about what they can specialize in within their program and the opportunities available to them, this can limit their future potential. In addition to this, with the high number of electives the first year humanities program offers, many students stray away from pre-

	<p>requisites they don't know they need for some specializations. This is why one of the main goals for this SRA is to increase awareness on the degree options and specializations available to first year humanities students such as the specialized minor in commerce, the social science and humanities double major, the humanities and science double major, and the prerequisites required for all the humanities specializations. All this information should be made easily accessible to first year humanities students as early as possible, either during first year course selection or in the first month of their first year.</p>
Benefits	<p>The benefits of increasing awareness of degree options and specializations available to first year students allow them to make more informed decisions regarding their academics. Increasing awareness can also help make first years feel more empowered because they will feel confident in their chosen path, rather than doing something because it's their only option.</p>
Difficulties	<p>Difficulties we see in this is getting the idea started and obtaining support from our faculty and academic advising office. We would have to get help from these offices because all the content would need to be created from scratch. We would have to ensure all the information in the email and leaflet are accurate as well as visually appealing. However, seeing as most of this information is available online and we would have access to MSU Underground for design, we find that all the difficulties we may face can be overcome. We would only need the faculty office to send the email and the MHS to put the leaflets in their faculty bags.</p>
Long-term implications	<p>After achieving this goal once, repeating it for future first years would be fairly easy to do. This goal can only have a positive long-lasting impact because there is no downside to ensuring everyone is well informed regarding their academic options.</p>
How?	<p>There are multiple ways increasing awareness can be achieved but three of most prominent ways we see is by sending emails, including leaflets in faculty bags, and setting up an information booth in September. Sending emails to first year students two weeks before their course selection date informing them about all of their options would be a great way to get them prepared. Leaflets in faculty bags would be a great way to reach out long with an information booth set up in September.</p>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty of Humanities Office</li> <li>• MHS</li> <li>• Humanities Academic Advising</li> <li>• MSU Underground</li> </ul>

Objective 3	<b>Strengthen Relationships between MHS and SRA</b>
Description	<p>Strengthening relations between the MHS and the SRA is an initiative aimed to improve collaboration amongst both groups to create a stronger sense of community in the Faculty of Humanities. Having a stronger relationship would create a cohesive</p>

	leadership platform enabling us to reach as many Humanities students as possible for a variety of things such as events, campaigns, elections, and opportunities.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased communication and awareness</li> <li>• Increased voter turnout in SRA and MHS elections</li> <li>• Increased student turnout at events</li> <li>• Increased number of Humanities students involved in clubs</li> <li>• Greater faculty to student relationship</li> </ul>
Difficulties	With any relationship, disagreements are inevitable. It may be difficult to tackle problems or create opportunities if both parties disagree on an approach. However, disagreements are also opportunities to strengthen bonds and create compromises which can sometimes lead to even better ideas being formed.
Long-term implications	By improving the connections between the MHS and SRA now, future generations will be able to foster and grow this relationship. This will allow future students to have a cohesive Humanities community which encourages the student body to participate in events and other opportunities. A stronger relationship between these two organizations will allow students to nurture their growing interest in the Humanities and foster a community of inclusivity.
How?	Organize MHS and SRA Humanities events together throughout the year to keep in touch with our constituents while also showing collaboration between the two groups.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MHS</li> </ul>

Objective 4	<b>Work with MHS to Improve Welcome Week for Future Humanities Students</b>
Description	The Faculty of Humanities, in comparison to others, is much smaller and consists of a fewer amount of students. Due to this, welcome week events for the Faculty of Humanities have been scarce in previous years. This absence of events can cause first year Humanities students to feel alienated or secluded in their new homes. In an attempt to increase student engagement during welcome week, the SRA will work alongside the MHS to create more events facilitated by Welcome Week Representatives. This will allow first year students to better connect with the community and motivate them to try to connect with other Humanities students throughout the year.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased student engagement during Welcome Week and throughout the year</li> <li>• More inclusive environment for students</li> <li>• Better outreach events to connect with more students</li> <li>• Increased bond/relationship with the MHS</li> <li>• More student interest with different positions in the Humanities community</li> </ul>
Difficulties	Regardless of an increase in Welcome Week engagement, there is no guarantee that students will feel any less alienated. The events may not appeal to the diverse range of

	students entering the Humanities program and there is no way to ensure the success of these events. As previously stated, it is also possible that relations with the MHS may bring about disagreements that we will need to overcome.
Long-term implications	As the visibility of the Humanities community increases during Welcome Week, it will be more likely that students will seek out more events throughout the year. This enthusiasm can follow students throughout their years at McMaster, allowing Humanities to develop a strong Welcome Week and overall presence for years to come.
How?	This will be achieved through a collaboration between the SRA Humanities, MHS Welcome Week, and Welcome Week Planners. An in-depth planning process will be required to ensure that (needs to be finished)
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MHS Vice-President Internal Affairs</li> <li>• Welcome Week Humanities Representatives</li> </ul>

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### Long-Term Planning

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Overarching Vision	<b>Continuation of previous SRA goal of Humanities student recognition – Achieving this through implementing a plan for an Arts Tavern</b>
Description	The goal of last year’s SRA to increase Humanities Student Recognition is an extremely important initiative we want to be continued in order to have a lasting impact at McMaster. The goal of Humanities Student Recognition aims to “motivate the SRA, MSU and the University to take deliberate steps to better recognize the contributions of Humanities students on campus and in our community.” (SRA Humanities Year Plan 2017-2018) We would like to follow their implementation process regarding on campus programming as well as space allocation by creating a plan for an Arts Tavern, a room for humanities students to hang out. Space allocation would not solely solve the recognition problem Humanities students face but it would be a step forward in creating a McMaster community where all faculties can feel proud and welcome.
Benefits	This goal and designated area will give Humanities students a sense of belonging and community. It would also allow them to have a central place to meet-up and work or just relax.
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a formal proposal for the Arts Tavern</li> <li>• Discuss the plan with MHS to gain more views, perspectives, and support</li> <li>• Create a survey for students to see what they would like inside of the area</li> <li>• Discuss the plan with the Humanities Faculty Office and talk about the plan’s feasibility, funding, space allocation, and design.</li> </ul>

Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Plan with L.R. Wilson Director</li> <li>• If the plan for the Arts Tavern has enough approval and support then start the implementation of it</li> </ul>
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start physically designing the allocated room for the tavern with decorations and furniture</li> <li>• Have the project completed hopefully within 3 years</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L.R. Wilson Director</li> <li>• Faculty of Humanities Office</li> <li>• MHS</li> </ul>

Overarching Vision	<b>Continuation of last year SRA support of Art Matters Week</b>
Description	Art Matters Week is an important initiative for Humanities students to feel encouraged and supported for their art work. It fosters an environment where artists are able to motivate others and receive support from their fellow students. This event allows students to gain recognition from their work and promotes the talents within the Humanities community.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages more artists to showcase their talents</li> <li>• Promotes visibility of the Humanities faculty on campus</li> <li>• Fosters a more supportive Humanities community</li> </ul>
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim to increase artist participation</li> <li>• Aim to increase the number of attendees</li> <li>• Aim to increase social media presence revolving around Art Matters Week</li> </ul>
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping to Increase the number of partners and sponsors involved with running Art Matters Week</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MHS</li> <li>• Other SRA Caucuses such as SRA Social Science and SRA Arts &amp; Science</li> </ul>

Overarching Vision	<b>Increase Social Media Presence</b>
Description	A large proportion of students use Social Media as a platform to receive updates and news. Due to this, social media is currently the easiest way to get a message across to the largest number of students. By increasing social media presence, the number of

	students made aware of events, opportunities, and initiatives led by SRA Humanities will increase. This will, in turn, strengthen relations between Humanities student and SRA Humanities while also increasing Humanities student engagement within the Faculty of Humanities.
Benefits	Increasing the outreach of SRA Humanities will allow students to be more engaged and aware of events and other information surrounding their faculty and university. This will allow the SRA to also receive more communication and feedback from the student body to enable future events to be catered towards the students.
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim to get 600 likes on the SRA Humanities Facebook page</li> <li>• Aim to get 400 followers on the SRA Humanities Twitter account</li> </ul>
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim to get 700 likes on the SRA Humanities Facebook page (an increase of 100 likes)</li> <li>• Aim to get 500 followers on the SRA Humanities Twitter page (an increase of 100 followers)</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other SRA Facebook/Twitter Pages help share SRA Humanities Page and we do the same in return</li> </ul>

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**GOALS to strive for**

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

1. Update all social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter)
2. Connect with the MHS to establish an early relationship and plan ahead for the school year
3. Meet with MHS to discuss welcome week plans and try to help out if not too late, discuss what we would like to see happen in next year’s welcome week
4. Discuss with MHS and Academic Office if it would still be possible to design and put leaflets in faculty bags for incoming students
5. Worth with entire caucus to create a solid plan, presentation, and proposal for the Arts Tavern.

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

1. Work with Humanities Academic Advising office to discuss sending out information on degree options and specializations to first years by email and by setting up an information booth for first years in September.
2. Meeting with Faculty of Humanities Office and L.R. Wilson Director to discuss plans for Arts Tavern.
3. Meet with AVP Services and some Part-Time Managers to discuss the promotion plans for some leadership positions available.
4. Work with MHS to run at least one event in coalition with them this term.
5. Remain Active on Social Media throughout the semester and make sure outreach is growing.

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

1. Be involved in the creation of and support the Arts Week initiative as much as possible.
2. Work with MHS to run at least one event in coalition with them this term.
3. Make sure SRA Humanities hits social media (Facebook and Twitter) target for the year.
4. Work with Humanities Academic Advising office to setting up an information booth on specializations before second year program application deadlines.
5. Discuss suggestions for welcome week with MHS when they start planning it (near the end of the second term)

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**Master Summary**

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May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorm and gather constituent ideas for SRA Year Plan</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on and develop SRA Year Plan</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit SRA Year Plan</li> <li>• Update All Social Media Accounts (Facebook and Twitter)</li> <li>• Connect and Meet with MHS to discuss Welcome Week and leaflets about specializations in faculty bags idea</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the caucus to create plan and proposal for Arts Tavern</li> <li>• Reach out to Academic Office to see if we can send emails regarding second year programs to first years and if we can set up a booth in September</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up an appointment with MHS to discuss Arts Tavern</li> <li>• If Arts Tavern gets enough support, launch a survey to see what students would like to see in it</li> <li>• Promote Leadership Positions on Social Media</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertise SRA Office Hours</li> <li>• Promote Arts Tavern Survey</li> <li>• Brainstorm with MHS to run at least one event together this term</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At end of November Gather Data from Arts Tavern Survey and Analyze it</li> <li>• Update and Improve Plan for Arts Tavern based on Survey and Write a report summarizing all of its data</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up an appointment with the Faculty of Humanities Office as well as L.R. Wilson Director to discuss Arts Tavern</li> <li>• Try to get approval for the Arts Tavern</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to promote leadership positions and get constituents involved</li> <li>• Brainstorm with MHS to run at least one event together this term</li> <li>• If obtained approval to more forward with Arts Tavern idea then start its implementation process</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with MHS to help promote, support, and be involved in Arts Week</li> <li>• Make sure we are on track to hit our social media target for the year</li> </ul>

March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arts Week occurs in March so have to prepare for it</li><li>• Work with Humanities Academic Office to set up booth regarding second year specializations</li></ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set up a meeting with MHS to discuss future Welcome Week Plans like more events as well as leaflets in faculty bags</li><li>• Continue to Promote Leadership Opportunities and SRA Office Hours</li></ul>