



REPORT

From the office of the...

Humanities Caucus

TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Hargun Grewal, SRA Humanities
SUBJECT: SRA 18P Final Year Report
DATE: Sunday, March 24, 2019

Hello everyone,

Congratulations on making it to the end of the year! This year has been both rewarding and challenging and we are glad to have made the most out of it. This report will be to showcase the progress on the goals and objectives our caucus had made for the year.

Objective 1	Promote Student Leadership Initiatives Across the Faculty	Progress
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.	One of our goals was to promote student leadership initiatives across our faculty and we did this by promoting many volunteer positions such as the McMaster Humanities Society's Navy Network Coordinator Position as well as volunteer positions for the Pride Community Centre. We also wanted to focus on getting first years involved early on so we helped promote First Year Council elections and spoke to many students at Elections 1A03 as well.
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	<p>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.</p>	
Long-term implications	<p>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.</p>	
How?	<p>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.</p>	
Partners	<p>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.</p>	

Objective 2	Increasing Awareness on Degree Options and Specializations Available to First Year Humanities Students	Progress
Description	<p>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</p>	<p>One main goal of ours was increasing awareness on degree options and specializations available to first year humanities students and we wanted to achieve this in three ways. Through an email to every first-year student at the beginning of the year,</p>

	<p>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-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>	<p>leaflets in faculty bags during welcome week, and through an information booth set up early on in the year. The first method was a success because the faculty of Humanities did send out an email to every first-year student regarding degree specializations and prerequisites in the beginning of September. The second method was successful as well because we ran an information booth event at the beginning of November that would allow first year humanities students the opportunity to ask any questions they may have had regarding specializations. Not only was it open to first year humanities students but this was an event where any student was given the chance to meet and get to know their SRA Representatives, ask what we have planned for the year, share things they would like to see, and inquire on how to get involved within the McMaster community. We are hoping to have the third step of leaflets in faculty bags take place next welcome week.</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</p>	

	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.	
Difficulties	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.	
Long-term implications	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.	
How?	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.	
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Humanities Office • MHS • Humanities Academic Advising • MSU Underground 	

Objective 3	Strengthen Relationships between MHS and SRA	Progress
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 leadership platform enabling us to reach as many Humanities students as possible for a variety of things such as events, campaigns, elections, and opportunities.</p>	<p>Our caucus also wanted to focus on strengthening relations between the McMaster Humanities Society and the SRA which is why we decided to ask them if we could host our office hours in their space. This initiative is aimed to improve collaboration amongst both groups to create a stronger sense of community in the Faculty of Humanities. We believe that running our office hours within the MHS office would emphasize a central place where Humanities students can find their representatives and ask any questions or give any feedback that they may have.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased communication and awareness • Increased voter turnout in SRA and MHS elections • Increased student turnout at events • Increased number of Humanities students involved in clubs • Greater faculty to student relationship 	
Difficulties	<p>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</p>	

	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"> • MHS 	

Objective 4	Work with MHS to Improve Welcome Week for Future Humanities Students	Progress
Description	<p>The Faculty of Humanities, in comparison to others, is much smaller and consists of a fewer number 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.</p>	<p>We have reached out to the MHS and made some recommendations based on student feedback and our own ideas that we think would help improve welcome week for future first year humanities students. For example, our idea of including information packets and pamphlets as a sort guide to help them navigate through first year. This could include resources they could turn to, information on specializations, or even</p>

		just exciting news that the students would like to know. We hope to see this included in welcome week for the upcoming year.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased student engagement during Welcome Week and throughout the year More inclusive environment for students Better outreach events to connect with more students Increased bond/relationship with the MHS More student interest with different positions in the Humanities community 	
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"> • MHS Vice-President Internal Affairs • Welcome Week Humanities Representatives 	
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Overarching Vision	Continuation of previous SRA goal of Humanities student recognition – Achieving this through implementing a plan for an Arts Tavern	Progress
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.	Changed and updated this year plan goal from implementing a plan for an Arts Tavern to getting Humanities students access of the arts student space in LR Wilson. We wanted all of the Humanities students to either have a code or card to access the space. We knew that a code already exists but many students do not know of it. We achieved this through help from the Social Science caucus and the faculty did send out emails to all students ensuring they knew the code.
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"> • Create a formal proposal for the Arts Tavern • Discuss the plan with MHS to gain more views, perspectives, and support • Create a survey for students to see what they would like inside of the area 	

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

Overarching Vision	Continuation of last year SRA support of Art Matters Week	Progress
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.	Helped out with the promotion and set up of Arts Matters week. This initiative is something that previous SRA Humanities Caucuses have started and continued and since we believe it is very valuable and important, we want to continue it as well.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages more artists to showcase their talents Promotes visibility of the Humanities faculty on campus Fosters a more supportive Humanities community 	

Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to increase artist participation • Aim to increase the number of attendees • Aim to increase social media presence revolving around Art Matters Week 	
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping to Increase the number of partners and sponsors involved with running Art Matters Week 	
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MHS • Other SRA Caucuses such as SRA Social Science and SRA Arts & Science 	

Overarching Vision	Increase Social Media Presence	Progress
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.	Made significant progress on this and increased our social media presence greatly, especially on Facebook. Achieved this by running a Charity Ball Ticket giveaway where students would have to like the post, our page, and tag another person in the comments of the post.
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"> • Aim to get 600 likes on the SRA Humanities Facebook page 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to get 400 followers on the SRA Humanities Twitter account 	
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to get 700 likes on the SRA Humanities Facebook page (an increase of 100 likes) • Aim to get 500 followers on the SRA Humanities Twitter page (an increase of 100 followers) 	
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other SRA Facebook/Twitter Pages help share SRA Humanities Page and we do the same in return 	

Overall, it has been a great year and our entire caucus is humbled to have been able to serve on SRA Humanities for the 2018-2019 year.

All the best,

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 McMaster Students Union
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