



# **TRANSITION REPORT 2018/2019**

VICE-PRESIDENT (ADMINISTRATION)

Kristina Epifano

PREPARED FOR

Sarah Figueiredo 2019/2020

TABLE OF CONTENT

TRANSITION REPORT 2018/2019 .....	1
VICE-PRESIDENT (ADMINISTRATION) .....	1
WELCOME .....	3
CONTACTS .....	4
BOARD OF DIRECTORS .....	4
UNIVERSITY PARTNERS .....	5
FULL-TIME STAFF .....	6
UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES .....	8
WELCOME WEEK .....	8
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART .....	8
COMMITTEE BREAKDOWN .....	9
STRATEGIC THEMES .....	11
DURING THE ACTUAL WEEK .....	14
EVENT PLANNING .....	17
VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENTS .....	17
SERVICES .....	18
TRAINING .....	19
PART-TIME STAFF .....	20
HUMAN RESOURCES .....	22
CONFIDENTIALITY .....	22
HIRING .....	23
DISCIPLINE .....	24
BOARD MEETINGS .....	25
EXPECTATIONS .....	25
COMMUNICATIONS MEETINGS .....	26
STATE OF THE UNION .....	26
HOLIDAY CARDS .....	26
BUDGET .....	27
BENEFITS .....	28



TRANSITION.....	29
TRANSITION REPORTS.....	29
BOARD TRANSITION WEEKEND .....	29
PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS, EVALUATIONS, STATUS REPORTS .....	30
DOCUMENTS.....	32
CLOSING REMARKS.....	32

## WELCOME

Ohhh Sarah,

Congratulations on your new role - you are going to be so incredible and I am so excited to see all that you do. Each year is uniquely different, so take this parting advice with a grain of salt - you may or may not come across what I did but if you do - I hope these few words help.

### **Labor that can't be compensated**

This role has turned into providing an immense amount of emotional labor to students or staff and while it's important because it builds rapport; it can also be a stressful time for you to navigate your own personal stresses while navigating someone else's. What's going on with you is important to unpack because if there's something you're not taking care of in your personal life first, it could permeate into the workplace unknowingly.

### **VP Short Straw**

All your important staff-related decisions are made by EB under your recommendations. When a decision is made, you get the unfortunate and unlucky opportunity to be the bearer of bad news (congratulations, you're now affectionately titled VP Short Straw). Just remember, that it takes (5) people to make a binding decision on EB, yet to others, you made the call. Be strong, be clear and stand by your EB when delivering any news. If it was the wrong decision, that's okay too. Welcome dissent, reflect and discuss it again with EB.

### **Managing managers**

It's different ball game. Your managers have their own teams, own appreciation events, and are consistently doing the most for their execs. I think you were able to see this year that our managers don't always see themselves as a "PTM" or as MSU employees. Try to build a connection amongst PTM's where they can find a community of support within each other.

### **VP Superhuman**



So many people you interact with will forget that you are a mere 20-something year old who recently graduated university. I often found myself forgetting this as well – and made myself feel as though I wasn't allowed to take a break, admit that I don't know something, or have feelings and experiences towards certain things. Remember that you are human you are allowed to tap out, to take a break and to ask for help.

The role of the VP Admin is ridiculously overburdened and I know before leaving I tried to relieve some of the responsibilities so I hope you find this year smoother than I did. Thank you for all that you have done to support me and this union, and will all you will end up doing in this role. This job is thankless – but know that I am thankful for you. Best of luck and be kind to yourself in this job.

Lots of love and minimal hugs,

Kristina Epifano

## CONTACTS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:** Your relationship with the President is outlined in the Bylaws and in practice; however it's unique from year to year.

- **Right Hand:** If the President is absent or unavailable, you're expected to chair their meetings and assume their role when they are no longer able to themselves. Be sure to keep their values in the decision-making if they are absent for only a period of time. This will be fairly easy for you, having been Josh's campaign manager and close friend – just be sure you are keeping him in the loop when you are making decisions and update when possible.
- **Line of Defense:** There should never be a situation where Josh gets caught off guard and is taking heat alone in an SRA meeting. Within the first few SRA meetings, figure out what type of support each of you need – Wooder can assist with this by setting a preparatory meeting. Super important that you are a united front in SRA meetings, meet beforehand with the board and check in throughout the meeting.

**Vice-President Finance:** Your relationship with the VP Finance is the most important one. You both are responsible for running the MSU – I'm not kidding. By the nature of your 9-5 or 9-7 roles, you will spend a lot of your day hours with them and it's important to have a good, healthy relationship with them. You and Alex are both internally facing and will find yourselves being the only ones in the office a lot.

- **Establish a Good Relationship:** Scott and I had a very good relationship and learned to balance each other's strengths and weaknesses. I was a big people pleaser and was very focused on maintaining relationships whereas Scott was very "cut to the chase"

and outwardly open when he didn't agree. Get together with Alex and write out your strengths and weaknesses, so that each of you knows when you need the other and can strategically play out meetings. Scott was a huge support for me as well, utilize Alex when you need to chat or run through something or just need someone to listen. She will be the most present and available to support you as the VP Finance role is not as burdensome.

**Vice-President Education:** Your relationship with the VP Education is minimal although I believe there are two areas in which you rely/work closely with each other.

- **Managing a Team:** You and Shemar both directly manage the largest teams. VP Ed's in the past haven't been great at managing a team because it's not the "priority" of their role. Be there to support Shemar if he is experiencing difficulties in managing his team - you will likely have gone through some situations he is dealing with so support each other through that. There is a good understanding between the two roles so lean on Shemar when you are having difficulties with staff as well.
- **Advocacy in Services:** This year was unique in a sense where a lot of our services wanted to make "statements" on their social media platforms to specifically discuss the decisions being made by the government. I was very okay with services speaking out on these changes as I prioritize their community over our government relations - however these statements (if done incorrectly) could inherently make Shemar's job more difficult. Keep him in the loop and talk about how you can work with services to help deliver statements that still support their community while not hindering our relationship with the government.

## UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

**Associate Dean of Students** - It is valuable to build a relationship with Sean to update him on the changing needs of students, or what emerging needs may exist based on service reports to EB. He is willing to help you in any way, and when you run into issues with departments (i.e. Res Life and their violation of our WWMOU), Sean is the person to go to because he oversees them.

**Office of Student Case Management:** Allison Drew Hassling (Director) helps with complex HR issues as well as mental health issues. Ensure your managers are aware that Allison exists as a support for them. I utilized her to get advice on various HR

situations and also to make her aware of any students I think her office should check in on. Allison understands the balance between peer support and university institutional support - so, go to her.

**University Advancement** - Mary Williams (Vice-President) is very kind and will mostly have a relationship with the President. She is incredibly important to the University; her priority isn't necessarily students. She will ask for support during events and introduce you to meaningful partners and politicians.

**Alumni Advancement** – Karen McQuigge (Director) is the most efficient woman I know, she is involved in SLEF projects as she is interested in pushing forward student projects, such as Community Kitchen or the Ice Skate Rink although don't mention this one, it was the bane of her existence. She is super helpful to reach out to if services are looking for support or additional funding.

**Director of Student Wellness Centre:** Rosanne Kent puts her all into decreasing wait times and is the first to advocate for more resources. Despite being seen as “the University administration that is not doing enough,” she pushes through. She acknowledges the needs of students and wants to improve her department so support her in doing so rather than accusing her of not doing enough. She will ask you at times to sit on the hiring board for a student perspective, and you work with her on one of the SSAC consultation committees for mental health.

**Student Wellness Educators:** William and Taryn will support you during Welcome

Week for the themes, but don't be shy to ask them for more assistance in training development or debriefing cases with part-time managers. If you read their job descriptions, they are the “Full-time TRRA/Peer Support Manager,” we keep crying about.

**AVP Equity and Diversity:** Arig's role is new but is an amazing addition to the university. Include her in higher level conversations when it comes to improving equity within the organization or policy related questions. Work with her to build a relationship where we can utilize EIO for HR support when needed.

**Meaghan Ross:** As you know Meaghan is leaving, so make sure you build a relationship with whoever the incoming individual is. This role is exceptionally helpful in giving advice and with planning Welcome Week. I went to Meaghan for guidance quite often and she was always willing to lend a helping hand but also just to offer support for me when I needed it. Look for the folks that can support you in the university

## FULL-TIME STAFF

### **Administrative Services Coordinator**

Establish a relationship with Victoria that is honest and open. Talk to her early on to figure out how she can best support you and what role she will play with the PTMs this year. Being on the same page as the two full-time staff that your PTM's will

utilize is integral so ensure you are having weekly or bi-weekly check-in's and write down what happens throughout the week so you can remember to update her. I frequently went into meetings not prepared so they weren't as useful as I believe they could've been.

**Marketing & Communications Director:**

Wooder is exceptionally helpful with providing perspective on SRA matters and potential public relation matters – which I had a lot of this year. If you or your services are unsure what or how to communicate to the public – always go to Wooder. I always went to him when the Silhouette requested an interview because he was helpful in prepping you as well as any conversations pertaining to HR or Legal matters so I was ensuring to say the right things – you never know when someone will be recording so better safe than sorry.

**Comptroller** – Maggie was super useful if you or services had any budget related questions. She also circulated monthly EXEC Budget statements so make sure you check them regularly to see where you are in your personal statements as well as the management-training budget.

**Network Administrator** – Pauline is your go-to if anything the goes wrong with your computer or systems, she is the genius behind fixing it. Never hesitate to send an email if you're wondering how to do something with your email/website or office computer. Another thing to note is that she is so passionate about students and is always willing to lend a helping hand so go to her to gain perspective or just to talk things through, she is a great listener and will support you always.

**Operations Coordinator:** Maddison is your hiring, human resources, employment and

student rec night guru/savior. I recommend you start having weekly meetings with Maddison so you can discuss any management/employee or HR related things. Invite her to Executive Board when you're discussing wages or JD changes – it is valuable to have her in the room as that is under her scope.

**Administrative Assistant:** Emma is so talented and so under-utilized. Make sure John is relying on Emma for support – her role is to support the Board and John with various admin tasks. She has an excellent memory for meetings that she takes minutes in and therefore can answer quick questions regarding what someone's comment was. She is specifically helpful in making flight or hotel bookings, coordinating everyone's schedule for a meeting or providing a perspective in WWAC or Board meetings.

**John McGowan:** John is the epitome of what a GM for a student's union should be. He always takes your perspective before putting in his input and will help you navigate situations in the way you feel most comfortable. Don't be afraid or feel guilty for going to John - he has a difficult job yet has the calmest attitude that I often went to his office just to feel calm too. You can marvel at his people skills, ability to navigate HR matters you are dealing with or general advice you are seeking in your personal or professional life. Use him more often and make sure he is well supported – he won't ask for help so you have to ask him what you can do!!!

## UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

There are a number of committees you are involved with – go to them because very rarely are we asked for student input in major decisions. You and the board members will regularly be consulted on in these meetings, so be present.

**AdminCon:** The Student-Administration Consultation Committee occurs every two months with the MSU Board of Directors, MAPS, GSA and University Administrators (President, Provost, VPs and AVPs when available).

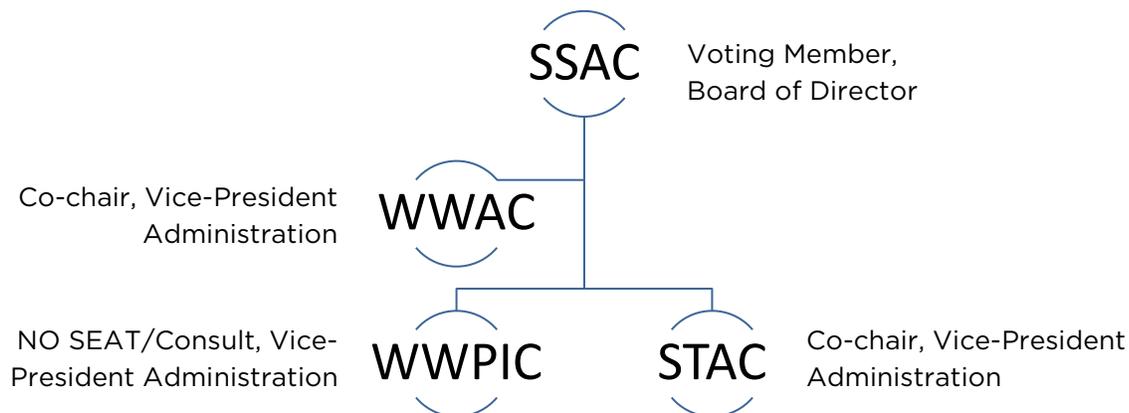
**Student Services Advisory Committee (SSAC):** This committee oversees the CAF Agreement, SLEF Fund, USIF Fund and WW MOU. This committee is also the head of WWAC and can assist in final decision-making or direction that WWAC is unset on.

**Sexual Violence Education Team (SVET):** This committee will be chaired by Vilma and is very new (this year was the first year of meeting). The committee has a lot of great members from campus and the community who all work in a field related to gender and sexual violence. The work of this committee is to standardize what sexual violence education should look like on our campus. This is not limited to students, but also how to educate staff and faculty as well. This year, we created our Terms of Reference and the scope of sexual violence education. Moving forward, the committee will look at different ways to implement effective forms of education.

## WELCOME WEEK

### ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

One of the largest mammoth projects that you will endeavor to pull off with a multi-stakeholder approach and shared vision. There were some governance changes that I pulled off for the benefit and efficiency of all – so review your role on each.



## COMMITTEE BREAKDOWN

**WWAC** is Welcome Week Advisory Committee that is co-chaired by yourself and Gina Robinson as a Student Affairs & MSU Partnership.

Members	Purpose	History	Operations
VP Finance CMPE Director SSC, Michele ResLife, Sean B OCRC, Jennifer K	Oversee WW; Set strategic priorities, mandate and vision; Make large-scale changes; Act as a consulting body; Manage the levy	This year: Clubs Integration; Strategic Themes Advisory Committee; Levy Allocation (Re: Student Choice Initiative); Rep Support Program	Meet regularly to discuss mandate, vision, policy, and receive updates from WWPIC and STAPC

Recommendations:

1. Moving the needle will be difficult with this team. Get your MSU members (CMPE Director, VP Finance) involved with any changes you are making so you have a united front when you propose it to the committee. Always find a way to integrate other partners into your program or project proposal, so it is collaborative in nature and committee is more likely to approve it.
2. Be unafraid to say no, remember that you and the VP Finance are the only folks around the table who will put the student and rep experience first. The two of you likely know what is best, so just make sure you communicate that clearly. Make sure they see the changes as opportunities and you explain the benefit to students.
3. Pick your battles - you will not win them all and these are ultimately stakeholders that you have to continue to work with throughout the year. You do not want to be arguing with them, rather work towards a healthy relationship that's beneficial for students. You will genuinely get exhausted by August if you fight every battle - weigh how detrimental or important the outcome is - and decide how you want to approach the meeting.
4. You are one of the co-chairs of this committee so try to reach out to committee members to check-in before or after meetings. Also make sure you are reading the



room and facilitating the discussion, so everyone's opinions are heard. Make sure you and Gina talk about what each of your roles will be and how you will work together to make sure the committee runs smoothly and is productive

**WWPIC** is Welcome Week Planning & Implementation Committee that is chaired by Michele Corbeil and you can choose whether or not to sit on it or delegate (I sat on it).

Members	Purpose	History	Operations
MSU VP Admin MSU WWFC MSU CMPE PC SSC, Michele ResLife, Sean ResLife, ROP OCRC, Jennifer OCRC, Planner	Oversee WW scheduling, event-planning and communications strategy; Report to WWAC; Operate under WWAC direction and guidance;	This year; Implemented Strategic Theme Programming into Schedule; Created efficiencies with parallel programming or collaborating events	Meet monthly, updates heard from every department, busiest in the summer, evaluations and focus groups in September, create events and communications

Recommendations:

1. Just ensure you are advocating for the scheduling of MSU events so they are not placed 9AM during a weekday when students are sleeping or that there isn't an overload of "mandatory programming" - which means no one can plan events over them (IE IRIS or Mac Welcome). Students should have options and the SSC will sometimes try to monopolize on the best times in the schedule and make their events "mandatory."
2. Be an advocate for students in these meetings, so when you don't feel a department is doing something that benefits first-year students in regard to an event or schedule timing - be unafraid to speak up and raise your concerns.
3. Invite Maroons and Shinerama Coordinators to relevant meetings - there is a lot of discussion about Shinerama at these meetings and it can be hard when you are the only one advocating for them. It is also beneficial for them to have a good idea of the scheduling so they understand where decisions for timing is coming from and the rationale behind it.
4. Bring your laptop - multi-task because these are not always the most engaging or useful meetings

**STAC** is the Strategic Themes Advisory Committee that is meant to oversee the development and creation of events and messaging related to our themes. This is a new committee, co-chaired by you, to engage campus partners and student leaders more meaningfully by taking a holistic approach to the integration of the themes - going beyond events and looking at operational or infrastructural changes as well.

Members	Purpose	Operations
4 Campus Partners: Sexual Violence Response Coordinator Two (2) Wellness Educators Community Engagement Educator	Oversee WW Strategic Themes; STAC responsibilities include idea generation for themes, review of past messaging, approval of messaging and theme events	3 campus partners per theme, 3 student managers per theme, 3 student planners for consult, and external partners as needed. Meet regularly in the summer to discuss (1) past programming, (2) potential programming, (3) development of goals and timeline and (4) allocation of responsibilities.
4 Student Leaders: WGEN SHEC Off-Campus Educator Maccess	Student Leader responsibilities to assist VP Administration in event development, administrative work, working alongside campus partners in messaging development (i.e. Ways To Wellness)	Chair responsibilities = VP Admin & Michele Administrative responsibilities = VP Admin/Michele Programming & Messaging responsibilities = STAC
3 Student Planners: MSU WWFC ResLife, ROP ResLife, Off-campus Planner	Student Planner responsibilities to develop communication strategy for coordinating first-year attendance	

## STRATEGIC THEMES

Strategic Themes have only existed for five (5) years and are still in development. This committee has only existed for one year so we are still learning. We have tried things, we have failed in things, and we have succeeded in things and are still in the process of finding a sustainable approach that works. This segment includes four (4) parts: History, Strategic Themes 2018, Challenges and Recommendations.

### HISTORY

SSC has overseen the themes until Board of Directors 2016 who met with Sean to shift stewardship of the themes to the MSU. In my personal opinion, this should not have been a decision at Sean's level; it further created a rift in relations between campus partners and table politics pursued. The Strategic Theme Advisory and Planning Committee was created to build a collaboration between the MSU and Student Affairs.

### STRATEGIC THEMES 2018

*AA = Alcohol Awareness, SVPR = Sexual Violence Prevention Response, MH = Mental Health, CE = Community Engagement*

### EVENT SUMMARIES

You can find my event planning forms and my review/recommendations on these events in my drive under welcome week - take a look at them before deciding whether or not to run a program again (also look at Preethi's because we ran different programming and the events from 2017 may spark some good ideas) Remember - quality over quantity - don't plan too much you are already overworked and overburdened.

<i>Strategic Theme</i>	<i>Event Summary</i>
<b>AA + Substance Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lawn sign messaging created in collab with SWELL Wellness Educator Wil and approved by current committee - both Alcohol and Cannabis</li> <li>- EFRT Recovery Position banner hung on concert venues</li> <li>- What's in your Cup - Monday Night Lights</li> <li>- Put a Lid on It - toilet campaign (not as successful as University of Saskatchewan)</li> </ul>
<b>Community Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wellness Fair: I invited community organizations to come and showcase their services alongside our on-campus services - this is a great way to get students to engage with off-campus resources and organizations</li> <li>- Closing Ceremonies - better planned than executed!!! I worked with Trish on this and we invited local bands to perform, as well as local food trucks (that cancelled last minute) and local businesses to promote themselves. This was a great atmosphere with the open field and picnic tables and music - we tried to recreate a chill WesFest (which no longer exists)</li> </ul>
<b>MH + Mental Illness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Ways to Wellness," branded and overhauled the Feed Your Hippo campaign</li> <li>- Wellness Fair: Mills Plaza featuring both on and off-campus health resources - each table required an interactive piece to engage with students</li> <li>- Ways to Wellness Wall and Photobooth - featured at Wellness Fair, photos and messaging on how to stay well</li> <li>- Other materials: stickers, buttons, banner, and shirts</li> <li>- Shirts were used to give away to Faculty Reps during training - if they used the hashtag #Ways2Wellness</li> <li>- Online Contest - got a graphic made and had people comment their "way to wellness" to enter for a chance to win</li> </ul>
<b>SVPR + Health Positive Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What Were You Wearing Campaign - Monday Night Lights (really well received, we still have the materials so can do again)</li> <li>- Changed "One Love" to "Unpack" and had Scaachi Koul - Unpacking Party Culture Keynote and Q&amp;A - ordered her books as giveaways as well for first 100 students who came - Q&amp;A was really well received and got a lot of questions - added interactive portion to talk - really good event but hot outside</li> <li>- WGEN hosted a Consent 201 event in MDCL a few days after Scaachi Koul for those who wanted to dig deeper into</li> </ul>

---

consent culture

- Wellness Fair – invited sexual assault support centers from community
  - Consent Sticker Wall – stickers were great and cute people love stickers
  - Resource Rave Cards – handed out at various events with WGEN, EIO and SACHA info
  - SWAG: I ordered 500 tangles that had “You Are Not Alone SACHA” and the 24/7 hotline – these were a huge hit – when thinking swag, think fun and useful but also educational
- 

## CHALLENGES

There are three prominent ones: table politics, reaching consensus between campus partners and student feedback, and turnout for events.

- 1) Table politics can be overcome with being honest with one another and seeking each other for support and guidance. The table politics at WWAC comes from each department thinking they can do something better and seeking their advice or guidance can make it seem as though you value their input and can generate a collaborative tone around the table.
- 2) Turnout for events is challenging because there are many events occurring at the same times. There needs to be communication across departments and specifically, the WWFC, ROP and Off-campus Planner to facilitate first-year organization and movement into the event spaces. Please address this at WWPIC to ensure there are no large overlapping events. I worked with Erin on some events to ensure the strategic theme events were also considered Residence Wide Programming and we got more residence students to come out to it
- 3) Reaching consensus was very difficult in my year – as you know. I am hoping that with the adapted decision making rubric and sub-committee this will help in the decision making of events and remove some of the “personal attacks” or “blocking of consensus.” Make sure no one else is involved in the decision-making process – this includes both you and Michele.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

There are two aspects of the committee – the physical events and messaging being developed, as well as the overall approach to Welcome Week’s operations and infrastructure (i.e. enhancing rep training content, introducing Bystander Intervention during SSC training, concert safety enhancements, etc.). Be sure to address both, one requires event planning and the other requires a meticulous scan of what can be done better for WW as a whole. My year mostly focused on events so slowly try to engage the committee more to discuss larger scale welcome week infrastructure.

- Operating STAC: Review past events; decide which are being kept, which are not and which are being introduced. Let the members of the committee decide which events they would like to take lead on – encourage having these conversations outside of the committee on their own and then submitting the ideas to the committee. It is up to the committee to make final decisions on the approved events and communication of various themes, but the entire committee doesn't need to be involved in the planning of events prior to submitting.
- Limit to three major events for each theme, quality over quantity is better and make sure you are delegating to others – don't plan all the events yourself
- Assign a student leader to each major event, so they are the Primary Event Organizer who you can liaise with and support during the week – your PTM's can be planning events too!!!! WGEN was the only group that planned an event last year and it was great so we should be encouraging more from them (they are paid)
- Keep in constant communication with STAC and Michele to ensure everyone is on the same page, ensure there is follow up on programming and frequent meetings – don't let things get pushed back too much
- Get Michele to do most of the agenda making and documentation – her entire job is welcome week and yours is not – so delegate to her when you can but make sure you are chairing meetings and keeping people on track otherwise you will never get through any agenda items
- Don't convolute the process with any application process for ideas from external or student groups – STAC comes up with the ideas, STAC disseminates the ideas (aka no faculty planners should not be submitted proposals – we are nowhere near ready to take that on)

## DURING THE ACTUAL WEEK

You might be wondering, what goes on during the actual week? Six things to watch out for are (1) swag bags, (2) Shinerama, (3) Maroons, (4) Board of Directors and (5) Welcome Week Awards (6) Self-Care.

### SWAG BAGS

You will complete online and in-person training to ride the golf carts, the Board gets their own in addition to walkie talkies. We give out 6000 swag bags each year – Wooder will order them along with preparing material to put in them.

- ✓ Packing these bags will be the Maroons responsibility – this was the bane of my existence and all returning maroons will not be happy doing it again. Get the Coordinator to plan ahead in terms of when and how he wants his team to pack the bags – make sure it is PRIOR to welcome week – after their Maroons training was helpful and offer to feed them
- ✓ Create a Swag Mountain (pile of prepared swag bags) somewhere in the office where it doesn't block exit routes of cabinets
- ✓ Get reps to assist in funnelling the bags downstairs for give-away either during MacPass distribution, Faculty Fusion, or Monday Night Lights. Make piles of bags when

people are leaving events and have Maroons handing them out – after football game, MaConnector, HeadPhone Disco, Airbands – try not to be bringing them all over campus – We had a great system last year – ask Wooder about it!!!!

## SHINERAMA

They will need space in the office to store their money, and will need after hour access to the main office. Feel free to give them permission or be present – I trusted Lauren and allowed her to stay in the office while I was elsewhere on campus BUT I gave her a deadline of midnight otherwise they will be in the office all night.

- Make sure Alexa talks to Sean (Accounting) about where to store the money during welcome week
- Alexa should be having frequent communication/meetings with the faculty shine coordinators
- You definitely do not need buses for Shine Day – save yourself the headache
- Shine should focus on raising awareness and collaborating with faculties on engaging and fun events for during the week – it's not just about fundraising

## MAROONS

Obviously not the most fun topic of discussion but there are a couple of key things to note about the Maroons during welcome week.

- Utilize them – most of the time they were sitting around in clubspace. I reviewed the maroons schedule prior to it going out and requested to have them at certain events during the week (specifically Strategic Theme events) They are your rep team, use them
- Maroons are allowed to help with move in!!!! I don't know who ever said they weren't, but yes get them to help with move in or parking honestly
- Security Debriefs – there are countless negative experiences that Maroons have had with security services during the welcome week concerts specifically. I made sure I was on top of this. Leading up to welcome week I had multiple meetings with Joe Zubek (Security Services) and Trish to discuss the role of Maroons during concerts. THEY ARE NOT SECURITY but they are eyes and ears and a friendly face for students who need it. Make sure you have a briefing prior to the concert with the Maroons and the special constables so everyone is on the same page and there are no miscommunications or altercations between Maroons and special constables
- Watch them with the golf cart – they misused it this past year and got us in a lot of trouble
- There should be NO Maroon missing training – both SSC and Maroons specific training – now more than ever this needs to be emphasized

## WELCOME WEEK AWARDS

Refer to the Bylaw for more guidance and in my folder, you will find my excel scoring sheet, as well as guidelines for points breakdown for each event. Begin this early on by meeting with



Campus Events, WWFC, ROP and the VP Finance to decide what the point system for each event will look like (meet with the respective people for each event – not all of them at once). Scott and I completely changed the grading system to be more straight forward and to emphasize things other than your “typical” welcome week points (shine, cheers, spirit). Once reviewed, circulate the final copy to all Residence Advisors and Faculty Planners before July so they are aware of what to prepare for – they will continuously ask for the grading scheme!!!

During the week, you will need to attend all the events that are being judged and this can be cumbersome and time consuming. I did not judge each of the events – it’s not fair to the VP Admin at all – use your board and swap yourself out for one of them every once in a while.

Check out my folder to see who was assigned as a judge for each event and maybe go from there. Each year the scoring and criteria changes, so do what you think will be best and the fairest.

Find a way to communicate the scores to the reps. My preference was posting photos of the judges some events on the Rep Community Network Facebook page with an update on scores. We only did a “half-way” update after Airbands and that was totally fine. Updating on Facebook is way more beneficial than updating our website, which no one reads.

I met with the committee about 15 minutes before each event to go over it – I didn’t have any meetings prior to welcome week TBH I just emailed them the grading sheet and the times of the events they were required to be at and went from there.

Tallying the scoring for the cups should be fairly easy if you reuse my excel sheet. All of the equations are in there to tally up the points and calculate the residence and faculty with the most points.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

They are strictly around to support you; many of them will be your judges and will attend events with you, provide golf cart services to students or reps, create a presence on campus and support staff at concerts.

Finally, the Board needs to attend every opening ceremony. This is the best way to introduce the MSU to the first-year population. Ikram had prepared a small presidential spiel of how our student union is the best in the world and allowed each of us to introduce ourselves. Get in contact with the ROP and create a schedule of when opening ceremonies begin and what time they are to expect you so your board can attend each of them together.

I created a schedule and colour coordinated it for each board member so they knew when they HAD to be somewhere versus general things that they can attend and free time. I made sure at least one board member was at each of my events with me for support. You can also find the schedule I made in my Welcome Week Folder or Board folder (oops I forget).

## **SELF-CARE**

This is a bible speech passed down from Admin to Admin so read carefully my friend. You will be the most exhausted a VP has ever been during Welcome Week – even though you have

done it again and again – it doesn't get easier. Here are some things you can do to take care of yourself in the process:

- ✓ It's okay to not go to some night events (i.e. concerts)
- ✓ Meal prep or have snacks in the office because the lines are horrendous
- ✓ Prepare a schedule for yourself and the board so you are never late
- ✓ Get sleep otherwise the next day gets harder – I stayed at Ikram's in Eddy so I could optimize the number of hours of sleep I got
- ✓ Be prepared for when you're asked to save the day – go with your gut Sarah, you've been here before, you are a problem-solver, you're the most prepared human I know – you got this no problem

## EVENT PLANNING

### VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENTS

Eggnog and Sangria

Just because we've done things year after year, doesn't mean they can't change. I'm not a fan of Eggnog/Sangria and honestly don't believe it is the best way to appreciate all of our volunteers. I am going to challenge you and Alex to be creative in finding out new ways to appreciate the volunteers. The budget line is under Campus Events – so you will need to involve Trish in these conversations. How to plan it: just in case:

- ✓ Contact Campus Events Director to confirm event name, theme, details – and she will book the photo booth and AvTek for Karaoke and Twelve Eighty event space
- ✓ Email Richard Haja to request the same food catering order as last year – add some fun twists if you want (this year for eggnog I had Rick make gingerbread cookies)
- ✓ Forward event information to Underground to design a digital invitation
- ✓ Circulate digital invitation to all part-time and full-time staff or ALL MSU USERS
- ✓ Remind them periodically to invite their volunteers
- ✓ Show up early to the venue and help campus events with set up

### STUDENT RECOGNITION NIGHT

Maddison will do most of the heavy lifting and planning re: the invite list, sending invites, booking the venue, writing the minute by minute, etc. You are responsible for the following:

- ✓ Going over table-seating to ensure what is best
- ✓ Contacting President's office and Alumni for donations
- ✓ Support Maddison wherever she needs and extra hand – but Emma is also there to help her so take a step back if possible

Regarding awards, you are responsible for the J. Lynn Watson Award and MSU Spirit Award committees. The Speaker will be responsible for advertising all the awards and once applications are in, you are responsible for the following:

- ✓ Strike the committee and go over the criteria for selection
- ✓ Set up a When2Meet and pick a time that has the most members as possible available
- ✓ Arrive at a consensus for which groups will receive the respective awards
- ✓ Let Maddison know so that she can order the awards

## SERVICES

I wrote a detailed service manual that you can refer to outside of this transition report but just some general notes about some services to remember:

- Summer Services: Horizons and Clay will run smoothly; however, the committee room will be a wreck, so set a deadline for when they need to get the place cleaned by. Check in on them and see how they would like you to support them throughout the weekend of conference.
- Peer Support Services: Good luck – make sure they are working to support each other and check in on all of them throughout the year to ensure they are not going over there hours. If they are, get them to log their hours and go over them to see what is “actually” required of them and what they are doing because they “want” to. Peer Support Training should be better organized by whoever it is and incorporates a schedule that delivers generalized training first and specialized training in rotations.

There needs to be a good balance of centralized training and PTM’s creating and planning their own aspects of training. This year there was a lot of negative feedback because I wasn’t present to problem-solve – however your part-time managers are perfectly capable of problem-solving and implementing a training. **DO NOT ATTEND** – delegate and empower your PTM’s or AVPs to plan and implement this training. Under my Peer Support Department email tab – you will find feedback from PTM’s last year. ALSO make sure they are utilizing the infographics that this year’s TRRA created. They are super useful and should help the facilitation of training.

- Welcome Week Services: Check-in with Maroons, Shinerama and WWFC (not service, but staff) periodically as their star moments are approaching in four months. Have a couple of upbrief meetings leading up to Welcome Week all together to discuss communication with you, expectations, support they will need, and peak times they anticipate needing your help during

Every year there will be someone with an idea for a service; just be critical of whether the idea is “unique” and fundamentally needed to be provided through the student’s union instead of being offered by a University department. Find a balance between being friends

and being a manager with your PTMs – it will be challenging but remember at the end of the day they are your employees.

## TRAINING

Training is quite simple to put together when you have the content from previous years to work off of. All my training power points and useful documents are kept in my folder.

Any training word document you require is with Wooder because in his past role, he delivered training to part-time staff. Over the years, some VP Administration along the way thought they could do it themselves and ever since, training has become another added responsibility of the VP Administration. Involve Victoria in the part-time manager training as it will give both of you hands on opportunity to engage with part-time managers

**Recommendation 1:** Develop online training documents that you can store on an avenue account – this is something that has been passed on from year to year. It could be so beneficial but no one has had the time to put it into place thus far. Work with Maddison on this, potentially it can be her responsibility to create or Victoria's. Ask Michele Corbeil for information on how to set up an avenue account the way she does it for SSC REP Training. A VP Admin shouldn't be developing training power points year after year with different content. There should be consistency and accessibility with regards to training and having online modules or PDFs would be a heck of a lot more useful – especially because so many PTM's are not here in the summer and thus miss the original training.

**Recommendation 2:** Give full-time staff more of a role and presence during PTM training. You are not the sole support available to part-time managers and it is important to introduce them to full-time staff early on so they actively use them as a resource. Coordinate with various full-time staff to pop in and give a little speech about their department and what kind of resource they provide. The people in this organization are what keeps things together and are so vital to the operations of the services – this also increases your team and hopefully will make you less burdened with support and navigating situations. Victoria and Maddison should be key players in training sessions – give them each a topic to cover and have them they the entire day to field questions with you.

**Recommendation 3:** We no longer have to facilitate over-night stays as they are largely a waste of time and are not common practice for training days to extend past regular business hours. Save the venue expenses and allocate them towards staff socials throughout the year.

**Recommendation 4:** Keep training on-going. I know we spoke about a refresher training in September and I think that would be great. Training shouldn't start and stop in May so make sure you are incorporating learning opportunities into each PTM meeting throughout the year.

**Recommendation 5:** Work with the VP Ed and VP Finance to create thorough training sessions for PTMs. Budgeting should be the largest focus, as it is the newest thing to every PTM and the most complicated. Make sure you work with Alex to ensure the training is suitable for PTMs and engaging. Most of the services have an advocacy pillar and it is important to explain what that may look like. Have Shemar create an educational advocacy

training session that is more tailored to service related advocacy – emphasizing how to advocate to the university and how to host an educational campaign.

## PART-TIME STAFF

Although you have several student groups to manage, it boils down to your main staff team of service managers. You are responsible for (1) year plans, (2) executive board reports, (3) performance evaluations, (4) staff meetings and (5) the committee room.

### YEAR PLANS

Executive Board expects a year plan from each service manager and they must be approved prior to the school year. You are responsible for the following:

- Send PTMs their year plan template and set a date for a draft to be emailed in
- PTMs send in their draft and you take a week to review and provide feedback
- PTMs send you a final copy of their year plan
- You submit year plans to get approved at Executive Board
- Regularly check on year plan progress in your individual meetings with managers

It goes for the AVPS. The SRA and Board of Directors skip step two and five and submit their year plans to the SRA for approval. Be sure to have EB thoroughly read the reports to critically set the direction for services.

### EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

Reporting to executive board is important, as it is the only way we hold part-time managers accountable at an Executive Board level. The purpose of our services is to fill a gap within the University sphere, these reports are meant to ensure we are doing the work we're meant to as well as leave a paper trail behind for historical context. You are responsible for the following:

- ✓ Create the reporting schedule alongside Victoria – double-check that every service appears twice/thrice in a term
- ✓ Certain events come up during service operations at a particular date, so be flexible in providing extensions so part-time managers can include said events in their reports
- ✓ Whenever EB has follow-ups, write them down as a note and stay on top of things even though it will be hard to keep up with all the discussions and action items
- ✓ If a PTM is not present, summarize the report on their behalf and note down questions to email the PTM for follow up

Recommendations:

1. Try to find a way to edit or adapt the reporting templates or structure – I don't think the current structure is working and EB is not holding PTMs accountable for day to day service operations.

2. John or the VP Finance should be getting the other departments (ie: underground, 1280, compass) to be submitting reports as well. EB is supposed to oversee the union as a whole, not just our services.
3. Related to number 2, the education team should also be submitting reports on what is happening at an advocacy level. This should either be through the VP Ed or the Advocacy coordinator submitting reports. Advocacy is a huge part of our organization and should also be held accountable by EB.
4. Invite Maddison in when relevant. EB does review job descriptions, wage changes and other employment/HR matters so it is important for her to be there for that.
5. Elections should be reporting to SRA, WWFC doesn't need to be reporting at all

## PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Digital evaluation forms are accessible through your Office 365 account. Circulate deadlines for these evaluation forms ahead of time, albeit providing a one-month notice was not sufficient enough for my staff. Your responsibilities are the following:

- Digitize 2-3 anonymous forms: Supervisor Evaluation (for PTMs to evaluate you), Part-time Manager Evaluation (for executives to evaluate PTM), and Self-Evaluation (for your PTM to reflect on themselves) - I didn't have PTM's do a self-reflection but up to you
  - Maddison should collect the Board evaluations and sit down with each board member to go over them. It was weird that I was sending the evaluations to Steph and Scott and just reviewing them myself.
- Circulate links to forms with one (1) deadline for all
- My deadline was before the end of Term 1, so that I could consolidate data into graphs over the break and prepare notes to talk about during my term 2 one-on-ones
- Consolidate feedback and input into the summary evaluation form that Maddison created - print this off and review with PTM's during your January 1-on-1's

## PTM STAFF MEETINGS

I held two-three full staff meetings per term, an individualized formal check-in once per term, informal check-ins regularly and you hosted the cluster meetings.

Attendance will be an issue despite asking for their availabilities ahead of time because things just come up. During the summer, I sent out a form to get feedback on what they would like to see in PTM meetings so that I could tailor it to their benefit. I made PTM meetings less so me talking and more so a space for them to connect and support each other. I gave minimal

updates, then brought up different topics of conversations around challenges they were experiencing and how they have overcome those challenges. This is a great space for PTMs to ask each other how to approach a problem, no one will understand their challenges better than each other so give them the space to support and learn from each other. Having snacks always helped too.

Socials were hard, I mostly did dinners or socials on campus to make it easily accessible. Remember that you are working with a wide range of individuals so make your socials flexible enough to cater to all individuals. Also reach out to them to see what kinds of things they would like to do.

## THE COMMITTEE ROOM

Ha. Set your expectations for the use of the room and watch them fail, even after my renovations - the room was still a disaster. Just remember that a lot of University Administrators exit from the Committee Room after meetings and when the room is emitting fumes and there is weird liquid on tables, it sets a bad impression. I think my renovations made the room more productive, but didn't help with the cleanliness. I am unsure what to do but something needs to be done because it's gross and creates a bad atmosphere.

# HUMAN RESOURCES

## CONFIDENTIALITY

You have three locked cabinets in your office to store hiring documents and other belongings. People stop by your office frequently, so ensure that important hiring documents aren't lying around despite being kept in folders. Your left computer monitor can be seen from a mile away, so view documents on the right screen when individuals are sitting in front of you. There is a shredder bin in front of Scott's office to toss out any documents. If you accidentally drop something in there, Victoria has the key to retrieve it. If you are archiving digital documents, don't upload them to a public drive, as it has no restrictions on it and can be viewed by any.

With any HR matters or management issues, seek guidance from Maddison first, Board second, John third. Regardless of where you go, hope you can trust them. There is a common practice of information leaking about staff and it is usually Board members, so set expectations with them from the beginning.

The MSU underwent a Full-time Staff Review that led to the creation of Wooder and Victoria's roles plus others. I would read it to gain more historical context to what roles they previously filled and why they are in the positions they are in now.

Office security has also increased so watch out and set expectations for:

- ✓ MSU Elections inviting friends for study sessions or allowing service managers through to the front office
- ✓ PTMs booking meeting rooms in the office after 5 without getting permission from a board member

## HIRING

### PART-TIME STAFF HIRING

Hiring is spread out in both terms. How you divide up the positions is up to you - I recommend hiring the summer PTMs in early October and save Assistant Directors till March.

- ✓ Set a meeting early with Maddison to divvy responsibilities related to hiring and create a hiring schedule for the year
- ✓ Strike Hiring Committees at Executive Board (Victoria has copy of motions and you can find them in my email)
- ✓ Email respective PTMs letting them know that their position is being posted and a list of action items you need them to do (ie review interview questions, take a headshot for promo, fill out their availability)
- ✓ Double-check with the Part-time Managers that the job description is okay for posting
- ✓ Review the How To Hire document that provides Interview & E-mail Instructions
- ✓ Review the Interview questions alongside the part-time managers (only if needed and if time allows, otherwise do it yourself)
- ✓ Utilize the google sheet system of gathering availabilities and determining hiring dates
- ✓ If you require template e-mails for any form of communication, check my e-mail folder on Hiring
- ✓ It would be best to meet in person with the hiring board after you get applications in order to select candidates to interview - I didn't have time for this and it was too much administrative effort so I just took their lists over email - up to you
- ✓ Office Clerks will coordinate interview scheduling (this saves you so much time, but make sure the questions and assignments are sent to them)
- ✓ I didn't send out questions to candidates in advance - up to you if you would like too, different full-time staff have different opinions on this
- ✓ I didn't create and send assignments unless we were torn between two candidates - again up to you
- ✓ Create the Competencies for each interview question to aid in the marking and selecting of candidates
- ✓ You will send out rejections and offers and feedback (templates available)
- ✓ Make sure you reach out to the underground at least **one week** prior to positions opening so you can get your promo assets

Some advice is don't be afraid to re-open a position if you feel it is necessary. A PTM can reapply for their position but if they do, they must apply through the same process as everyone else and they must let you know in advance before they review interview questions with you. Find new and interesting ways to promote the PTM positions Maddison and I tried tabling and some general PTM graphics to help eliminate the barriers of applying for students

not involved in the MSU. Also, don't feel weird about only interviewing folks previously involved in the service – they are the most passionate and knowledgeable about the service so it's not a bad thing at all.

## DISCIPLINE

### PART-TIME STAFF DISCIPLINE

This was the hardest part of the job for me because disciplining staff when necessary is your job but I am not a fan of the typical way to discipline. I didn't give out any warning this year because I knew it was not the way to change the behavior and get across what I wanted to. Instead, I opted to have meetings with staff and openly discuss some of the challenges or missteps and together discuss how we were going to move forward. Again, its dependent on you and your staff – I knew my staff would not be receptive to a warning so it wasn't the way I went about things. The hardest aspect is when EB is ready to give a warning but you are not. I tried my best to vocalize my approach to discipline but sometimes that doesn't fly with EB and they will request that you give a formal warning. The process is simple – read the Operating Policy – DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES. Examples of when staff were disciplined in the past (you can find all supporting documentation in your drive):

- ✓ Part-time staff who was repeatedly reminded to give an early notice of LOA to ensure it didn't impact the hiring schedule and coordination, but did not
- ✓ Staff member who disciplined another staff member without authorization
- ✓ An individual failing to submit multiple EB reports, budgeting for their service and being non-responsive to communication from supervisor

Executive Board is privy to knowing all disciplinary updates; give them an advanced notice when you are disciplining a staff member. I've always disciplined someone when it was correctable behavior, so the punitive measure is meant to help them improve opposed to preparing them to be fired. Sample documents are in my folders.

When disciplining:

- ✓ Let EB know ahead of time and get their perspective
- ✓ Get Maddison to draft up a letter for you
- ✓ Set up a meeting with the individual – let them know in the email what it is regarding so they aren't caught off-guard
- ✓ Have someone else (Maddison) present with you during the meeting

### FULL-TIME STAFF DISCIPLINE

If anything comes up with full-time staff, bring it to John and the Board's attention immediately. Yearly turnover provides staff members a clean slate, but ensure that issues with behavior and job completion should be addressed and is not lost in transfer. Although it's awkward to discipline staff who are much older, we hold each other accountable. While they

bring different perspectives, it's also important to not be taken advantage of because you lack context and age.

## BOARD MEETINGS

These meetings are whatever you want them to be, they can be opportunities for Board members to update each other on projects, to vent, to complain, to strategize, etc. We prioritized these meetings because it was so valuable for all of us to be in a room together to for updates, brainstorming, sound boarding and supporting each other.

I used these meetings to get their advice on staff issues and to complain mostly. Ikram added "support circle" which was mostly used by me – use this time, ask for support and be vulnerable with your board. Use your discretion when identifying something as an agenda item as often times, it may be better to discuss things with John in private in the event your complaint or staff advice is regarding a close friend of a Board member. Some general items that will be similar year to year include:

- ✓ Procedural items such as staff wage increases, request for course reimbursement, late health and dental opt outs
- ✓ Discussions on topics coming to EB or SRA to get feedback or strategize on approach, I always gave the board a head's up if I was adding a closed session item to EB so they weren't thrown off guard and so we can be a united front
- ✓ Updates on each other's projects, especially from Board members who are frequently out of office or have items that are long-term projects with regular updates
- ✓ Human Resources matters related to full-time employment and significant part-time staff issues

## EXPECTATIONS

You will discuss this in your first few Board meetings regarding how you represent the organization and how critical it is for you all to be on the same page. Some important things I recommend that you all discuss are:

1. Work Hours – What will be your business hours? What work environment are you building if you arrive to the office after FT staff does? What is a good reason to miss and SRA/EB meeting?
2. Conduct & Professionalism – You are a corporate officer of the Students Union, how will you be mindful of actions and words outside business hours? How do you separate the times you are being yourself from the times you are being a corporate

officer? What is off limits to chat about in your office that is open-concepted and what is to be discussed behind closed doors? How will you create a professional environment in the Committee Room?

3. Lieu Time - This is any hour worked outside of your usual rotation that you can claim as vacation and take off (i.e. attending Welcome Week training weekends). How will you track them? Will you self-regulate instead?
4. E-mail Response Time - What can be Facebook messaged and what should be e-mailed? What is your goal turnaround time for e-mail responses? How will you balance social media messages and e-mails? Golden rule that helped was if they needed something done and it was an action item, they needed to e-mail me so it's kept as a reminder. If it's advice or conversation, they could FB message me.
5. Dress Code - What is the expectation amongst the Board? Our Board kept it casual. On days consisting of important meetings, we dressed up.
6. Support - How will you support each other? Are you prioritizing board meetings? How are you asking for help? Are you having support circles?

## COMMUNICATIONS MEETINGS

Wooder will set aside time every week to discuss communications and the Prez Page. Your initial meeting will be a Public Relations meeting that will test your ability to speak to reporters, how to respond to contentious issues and matters and navigating difficult conversations. I learned the most in this meeting.

Every meeting afterwards, Wooder will talk about the schedule for who is writing the Prez Page and their promotional schedule for the week. Make sure you are putting different service events on their radar to promote and bring up whatever you think they should be promoting better.

### STATE OF THE UNION

This is a massive document that Wooder takes the lead on to highlight the organization's progress in your year. Your responsibility is getting a blurb from every service and department manager in addition to any other blurbs you may take on. Make sure this gets started early on - don't wait until the last minute.

### HOLIDAY CARDS

These are super nice to do and every department really likes them. Create a vision and tell Connor early on so he can sort out the best way to make that happen. Get Wooder to put your electronic signature on them and then divide up among board members who will write a message to which department.

## BUDGET

The budget line you will mostly be using is EXEC and ADMIN – if you are ever unsure of how to complete purchase orders, ask the accounting department. Double-check with Alex if this is how she wants you utilizing the budget as he may have a different strategy than previous VP's. If you are ever unsure, just ask which line would be best to put it under – but remember that you don't have to ask permission to use your budget, it's just a clarification.

**Exec 6147-0305 - Volunteer Recognition:** Student Recognition Night and PTM socials (Sangria and Eggnog come out of campus events budget)

**Exec 6303-0305 – SRA Special Projects:** Let SRA members know that it is available, but it is up to the discretion of the BoD (in particular the VP Finance) what it gets spent on. Make sure you set up some stern criteria and that SRA members are not just spending this on random cookies and coffee events with no attendance.

**Exec 6402-0305 – Awards & Meetings:** Use this for any of your meetings where food or beverages is involved. If you're taking your AVP's to lunch or you and the board are treating a university member.

**Exec 6405-0305 – Exec Meetings:** Executive Board (EB) transition meetings. I didn't really deal with this as it falls under the portfolio of the President and the Administrative Assistant.

**Exec 6802-0305 – Transition Training -** This is used for paying for BOD transition. Try not to go overboard.

**Exec - MGMT Training:** This is for all your PTM trainings, food, stay and/or any keynote or outside training you're hiring to come in.

**Exec – Services Special Project:** This is for PTM's to access if they have a “new” idea that the service hasn't done in the past – therefore wasn't an expense accounted for when creating the services budget. Make sure you talk to Alex to see where services are at with their budget – if they have room for it, then save this fund for those who need it.

**Exec 6603-0305 – Special Projects:** The catch all page for the BoD, this line is used for any of the projects the BoD may take on that need to be paid for. Vision Conference funding comes out of this budget and any other random expenses that may crop up. In addition, I believe a VP Finance in the past increased the allocation for this budget line because he wanted the board to have more flexibility in the projects they took on and how they expensed them.

**Exec 6615-0305 – VP Admin Expense Account:** Your personal expense account. Use it to pay for conference/event fees you may attend, buying dinner for late night work, and thank you cards or flowers for campus partners, etc.

**Exec 6901-0305 – Travel – BoD:** the line where you would pay for any travel you may do (i.e. gas reimbursement if you drive somewhere) or if you choose to go to a conference.

Random Note: Make sure all services have budget lines that make sense to them – some have vague budget lines and it confuses managers. Feel free to have meetings with your PTMs and Alex to discuss their budget and their plans for the year or any reservations they have.

With regards to budgets, inform yourself of the following:

- ✓ Completing an internal and external purchase order
- ✓ Answering basic inquiries regarding budgeting (i.e. what are pink, yellow and green forms)
- ✓ Basic understanding of reading service budgets in case a PTM asks which budget line to use
- ✓ Guide PTM on process of obtaining a credit or debit card
- ✓ Basic understanding of your own budget lines for your own spending
- ✓ Basic understanding of a standing order and how to place one with business units

## BENEFITS

You have full-time employee benefits and don't hesitate to use them. There is a package from Manulife for you, which explains your benefits package and how to access dental, health and vision care, etc.

1. Expense Accounts: You receive \$1000.00 for your personal expenses, and there is flexibility in how you spend it. Our board was never frivolous with this amount but spent it on late night dinners in the office when we were writing our SRA reports or went to Board dinner socials. Up to you, I also paid to get my laptop fixed cause it broke during the year, anything that is work related feel free to use this line!
2. Health & Dental: You often pay out of pocket and claim the amount online. It's exceptionally easy to set up once you receive your Manulife card with the account details. My favourite massage place is called Everwell Integrated Health Professionals (everyone goes to see Jenna) off Locke Street. They can charge Manulife directly if you don't want to pay out of pocket. These benefits extend one month after your term, so if you're too busy – use it then.
3. Vacation Time: You are eligible up to three (3) weeks vacation, I didn't use mine and chose to get paid out instead because of the sheer lieu hours accumulated.
4. Summer Hours: We set summer hours for the staff and I recommend you take advantage of early closures on Fridays. Take a break or get ahead; summer is the best time to get things done because students aren't around.
5. Other benefits:
  - a. \$400 Education Allowance – can be used on professional courses, GMAT courses, etc. (I took first aid/CPR)
  - b. 4% matched funds to RSSP – can contribute 4% of your salary to RSSP and the MSU will match it, which is absolutely worth it.

- c. Interest Free Computer Loans – can update your computer but payment will come out of paycheque in instalments
- d. Cell Phone Reimbursement – can receive \$80 per month for cell phone bills, but will receive the lump sum every four months
- e. Pulse Membership – you need to physically go to the Pulse to receive your membership but if it's too busy, you can opt out of this to receive a gym membership closer to home
- f. Subsidized Day Care Costs – unless something dramatically changes for you in 12 months, you won't need this
- g. Business Cards – Keep them with you for events, lobby meetings and give them away

If you have any further questions regarding staff benefits, reach out to John or Emma!

## TRANSITION

### TRANSITION REPORTS

Begin a transition report immediately and add to it as the year progresses – a good transition is something you actively think about throughout the job and not confine to report of several pages. Guidelines for the transition report are included in the Bylaw 4 – OFFICERS.

For part-time managers – I recommend having them complete draft transition reports in December, so they keep a running memory of what to mention to their successor. This also helps in curving the challenge of disappearing PTMs in second term. A template of my criteria for writing transition reports can be found in my drive folder.

### BOARD TRANSITION WEEKEND

Over the years, Board members have just winged the transition weekend and used it to unload all their challenges and updates onto the incoming board. You experienced a structured transition weekend because our Board made a concerted effort to improving transition. The itinerary is in my computer folder as well, feel free to use it as a template and ask the incoming board what they would like to see during transition.

In the past, other board members have organized the transition weekend, so this year I took leadership in putting together the itinerary and budgeting. If you choose to organize it in your year, Emma will help book the place of stay and you can choose any locations but be mindful that it is not super far (as Emma and John come up for a bit and you don't want it to be super out of the way).

## Project Descriptions, Evaluation, Status Reports

### **Workplace Accommodation Policy**

Last year Preethi and Maddison started conversations to develop an accommodation policy; however, it was already mentioned in our employment packages and didn't seem necessary for a stand-alone policy when accommodations are provided on a case-by-base scenario. I recommend that you revisit this conversation to see if there is a general process that can be outlined on how to access an accommodation, what criteria determines an accommodation is warranted, etc. as many of our staff are still unaware. Maddison has a lot of documentation from McMaster and the Province on accommodations so the information is there, it's important to talk about how we get that information out to staff and how do we make accessing accommodations accessible to staff.

### **Workplace Anti-Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment Policy**

I started making really great moves on editing this document. You can find it either in my email or saved in my folder (let me know if you can't find it and I can send it to you). Please keep working on this. Once we get the recommendations from HR Proactive, they should be added in to my existing recommendations and then sent for approval. Feel free to also send it to Arig, she has been working with me on this. The main change is shifting towards utilizing the universities resources to perform our investigations. When someone submits a formal complaint, we don't have a body who can determine what the next steps are - the university has an entire assessment team to do that and they can work with Maddison on the process for our specific investigations.

### **HR Proactive Consultant**

Maddison, John and I met with Karen, our consultant from HR Proactive to give her a good understanding of the situations, the MSU in general. Your main role in this process is to help engage service members and other students who would be interested in providing insight and feedback. You know the target audience better than anyone else so make suggestions that will increase the engagement of students in this process. Once the process is finished, Karen will produce a set of recommendations - please know that you do not have to implement every single recommendation but do take her suggestions seriously and see how you can fix the gaps she has identified.

### **Exit interviews**

With the help of Maddison, I created a template for exit interviews. These were super helpful to gain insight on the outgoing PTMs experience and what they would have liked to see differently. A lot of feedback that I got in these interviews shaped the suggestions I gave you in the beginning of the year. No one will be able to give you better feedback and recommendations than the PTMs that just worked for the union for an entire year. Take their feedback with a grain of salt, you know some things are just not feasible or service dependent.

## **SRA**

You should not be planning SRA training – the speaker alongside Emma and Victoria are very capable of planning it. The only other training they need that I would recommend is Communications (by the Comms Officer), how to read a budget (VP Finance) and Advocacy (VP Ed). If anything, get the President to take a lead on this training and supporting the SRA. The more involved you get in the beginning, the more they will rely on you throughout the year. Make sure that Board members are equally involved so the onus is not just on you to support the SRA.

## **Space Allocation Committee**

This committee did an environmental scan and got feedback from the staff in MUSC 201 on their current office space and resources. Talk to Emma about the feedback received and some of the conversations we had which led us to creating 3-4 recommendations on changes to the office space. These changes never got approved by the board (I think you were at that meeting) so make sure they keep being put on the board agenda so we can get the ball rolling on making these changes. The recommendations were all drafted from the results of the survey and full-time staff are requesting that these be looked into.

## **Administration Job Descriptions**

Another project I am so so sorry I didn't get to complete. Emma and Maddison made tracked changes to their job descriptions – you will find them in my folder. These changes should be reviewed by the board and sent to the full-time issues committee for approval. Make sure you talk to John about the changes, and highlight why you believe these changes are important and reflective of their current responsibilities. Maddison should be asked to create Victoria's updated job description – be involved in these conversations so you can speak to what the role should entail and how it can best support your position. Remember you are creating a job description for the Job and not the person.

## **Welcome Week Faculty Rep Training**

I want to include more situational based training in faculty rep training for welcome week. At first, I wanted to run a "REPresent" style of training session but the logistics were challenging for a short period of time. This year the facilitators will be running case studies with the reps to get them to think about situations they may experience and how to approach those situations. These will occur in their groups of around 60 reps (not ideal but a good start). Ideally, next year we are able to sort out the logistics to run a similar represent style session for faculty reps. Sean was very open to allowing us to use difference residences to divide faculties up and give them the space to run this – keep looking into this – Gina and Michele are very onboard so that helps.

## **Peer Support Promotions Working Group**

I chaired this committee and we had a lot of great ideas but never put them into practice due to lack of time and resources. We created a script for a video that would highlight the new SWC website which has a lot of the resources and services we want to promote. We wanted to make it a like screen-filmed video that has a voice over of how to access the website and

how to navigate through it – would be cool to actually get it filmed but Haley didn't have time so try again this year if you're into it. I think it would be best for either your AVP Services or potential AVP Equity/HR to chair these meetings (about twice a term maybe). This committee was created when PSL was rescinded to ensure we were advertising our existing supports to students and not leaving any gaps. This group could be super beneficial at coming up with ideas on how to communicate our resources or increase engagement of the services on and off-campus – but make sure it is realistic and we have the resources to follow through with these initiatives.

## DOCUMENTS

Prominent documents to read are:

- Vice-President (Administration) SRA Reports: September, November, February, March
- Vice-President (Administration) Final Report: Recommendations and Year Plan
- Service Transition Manual (provided via e-mail).
- BYLAW 4 – OFFICERS (RE: transition, your role)
- BYLAW 6 – EXECUTIVE BOARD (RE: your role as vice-chair)
- BYLAW 11/D – J. LYNN WATSON AWARD FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE
- BYLAW 11/E – MSU SPIRIT AWARD
- BYLAW 14 – WELCOME WEEK AWARDS
- OP – PEER SUPPORT PROMOTIONS WORKING GROUP
- OP – DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES
- OP – EMPLOYMENT
- OP – EMPLOYMENT WAGES
- OP – EXECUTIVE REMUNERATION

## CLOSING REMARKS

I hope you find this transition report helpful and easily digestible compared to past reports. I left out anecdotal information, as I believe that every year is unique and you may not have the same experiences as I did. A lot of this role can't be transitioned, how you support your PTMs, how you handle HR related situations and how your board supports each other is not something I can give you a run down on. However, I am completely confident in your ability to fulfil this role, to make the right decisions and to support everyone that has the pleasure to interact with you. This job will be one of the most challenging but most rewarding years of your life. I know I was very vocal about how excited I was to be done and to leave and never look back but in reality, I loved my job and I don't regret anything I did this past year. You will grow immensely and learn so much you didn't know about yourself.

Remember:

1. You can't please everyone: People will be unhappy with your decisions but that doesn't mean you made the wrong one.
2. Ask for help: You genuinely cannot do this job alone, so don't try. You don't have to be the one constantly supporting everyone, let those around you support you, but don't assume they will - ask.
3. Take time off: And don't feel guilty doing it. The MSU can function without you - sorry to say. Take days off when you need too, go on vacation, take half-days, schedule some self-care appointments, you are no good to anyone if you're not taking care of yourself
4. You are human: NOT superhuman. You are allowed to feel and get affected by situations you are facing or things people are saying. I cried so much in this job, I got upset, I was offended and hurt - and you are allowed to feel those things.
5. Trust your judgement: You are going to be a great VP Admin, make the call and trust your gut - looking for reassurance is totally okay but you know what's best and you are in this job for a reason
6. Never let anyone tell you that you aren't good at your job - you are.

During the ups, cherish them. During the downs, remember that you are doing your best and your best is absolutely good enough.

Always here when you need it, sending you lots of love and strength,

Kristina Epifano